

## [There's an App for That: Time to Upgrade Your Project Management](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on January 15th, 2013

Chris Cheatham is a young lawyer I first met on Twitter. We have stayed in touch for several years and I have watched him build a following on Twitter and build his own company. I asked him to share his project management app discovery with you.

Being a law firm associate can really, really suck. Now don't get all bent out of shape. Honestly, I loved working in law firms. I loved the work. I loved (most) of the people. I didn't even mind the billable hours so much.

The problem with being a lawyer isn't the people, the work, or the clients. The problem with being a lawyer is US.

Lawyers are notoriously bad at managing themselves. We micromanage others while letting our own deadlines and objectives slip. We over think and strategize while missing the big picture.

It wasn't until I stumbled into the role of [an accidental entrepreneur](#) that I realized I was absolutely terrible at project management. Thankfully I have discovered a solution:

Getting Things Done + Omnifocus = An Efficient Lawyer

### **Get Things Done With Getting Things Done**

David Allen's 21st Century masterpiece has been a savior to my professional life. [Getting Things Done](#) outlines a new way to manage our increasingly busy lives. Read the book. Seriously. I'll wait here while you go buy it on Amazon.

Okay, now what did you just buy? Here are some of the key components of Getting Things Done:



- The key to GTD is collecting ALL of your waking thoughts, tasks, ideas, dreams, objectives and goals in one central inbox.
- At appropriate intervals, you then process your inbox to zero. This means that you act on tasks immediately or defer them for later. This also means that any objective requiring two or more steps becomes a project.
- You then have a working to do list that you can use to decide on your next action. This frees up your brain RAM so that you can do the more important creative work, the work of the artist.\*

Getting Things Done can work for techies and non-techies alike. A non-techie can carry around a Moleskin and keep a physical inbox on his or her desk.

But I am a techie and I finally found my foundation for implementing GTD.

## **Omnifocus Rocks My World.**

First a caveat — [Omnifocus](#) is a Mac application. If you don't have a Mac then just read Getting Things Done and figure out the best implementation for you (sorry I can't be more helpful).

My favorite part of Omnifocus is the inbox. All I do is hit one button — it's an icon shaped like an inbox — and I can quickly enter my thought, idea or task. This is so important for the busy professional, particularly the young attorney being pulled in a hundred directions. Imagine you are writing a motion to dismiss. Oh crud, you think, I need to finish interrogatories by noon tomorrow. With Omnifocus you just quickly create a new task in the inbox: "Finish interrogatories by noon." Then after you have finished your motion, you can review your inbox to determine what needs to be addressed next, like the interrogatories.

Did I mention that Omnifocus also has an iPad and iPhone app so you can sync all of your devices or input tasks from anywhere?

I love Getting Things Done and Omnifocus so much. I know it sounds ridiculous. But I would be happy to talk to you about it. Or just go get the book, read it and then try Omnifocus free for 30 days. You will love it!

One final thing: Cordell frequently encourages readers to read [Seth Godin's blog](#) and his [books](#). I have taken the idea to heart. Did you know you are an artist? It's true. Check out Seth Godin's marvelous new book [The Icarus Deception](#) to learn more. But I will warn you — it's Seth's fault that I stumbled into being an entrepreneur. Seth awoke the inner artist in me. Read at your own peril.

Chris Cheatham was a construction attorney who hated the messy claim files he received. So he decided to fix the problem and launched ClaimKit. Maybe you could do something similar in your practice area?

**Cordell M. Parvin** built a national construction practice during his 35 years practicing law. At Jenkins & Gilchrist, Mr. Parvin was the Construction Law Practice Group Leader and was also responsible for the firm's attorney development practice. While there he taught client development and created a coaching program for junior partners. In 2005, Mr. Parvin left the firm and started Cordell Parvin LLC. He now works with lawyers and law firms on career development and planning and client development. He is the co-author of *Say Ciao to Chow Mein: Conquering Career Burnout* and other books for lawyers. To learn more visit his Web site, [www.cordellparvin.com](http://www.cordellparvin.com) or contact him at [cparvin@cordellparvin.com](mailto:cparvin@cordellparvin.com).