

Tools for Good Living

Recently I heard that using the term “smart phones” is out. They are now actually just called “phones.” And even if you’ve already picked up on this change in nomenclature, isn’t it still kind of crazy to think just how quickly smart phones have infiltrated our lives?



It’s also worth noting that making actual calls is one of the least used functions of our phones. They have taken the place of so many devices that we used to carry around separately (and some we never had, like texting).

Why bother carrying a camera, a flashlight, a music player, a map, an address book, a planner/calendar, a watch and more. As they say, there’s an app for that, and they’re all right there on your phone.

It should surprise no one that the Saffire team tends to be a little on the techie/nerdy side. When I asked for some favorites, I was deluged with responses from our team!

I know you don’t have time to download a bunch of apps you may never use, so I hope this list helps you narrow down some top choices from the millions of apps available.

Today, we’re going to focus on some favorite general “life apps” and mobile site resources. No matter what your interests are outside of work, they can be enhanced or streamlined by using a digital tool.

Love to (Bargain) Shop?

- Never buy online without searching “<shop name> promo code.” You will almost always find a discount on a site like **RetailMeNot**.
- Even if you’re in a store, you can search “<store name> coupon” or go to the retailer’s app or website to find coupons. Or download **RedLaser** and **Amazon PriceCheck** and scan products to instantly check the price against other re-

tailers. Specifically at Target, if you find an item at Target.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com, BestBuy.com, ToysRUs.com or BabiesRUs.com (all searchable from RedLaser) for a lower price, just show your device to the cashier, and they will match the price.

- If you share shopping responsibilities with a spouse or partner, you’ll love **Shopper**. You each put the app on your phone and it automatically syncs your shopping lists. I even create “check” lists of standard items to use while making my list.

Love to Cook?

- **Epicurious** has amazing recipes from Gourmet, Bon Appetit and more.
- Whether you’re looking for easy, healthy or fancy meals, **AllRecipes** has you covered. You can search by ingredient, utilize a menu planner and more.

Love Movies?

- **Flixter** helps you discover the best movies by using Rotten Tomatoes, the web’s leading aggregator of movie and TV reviews from professional critics. You can see show times and buy tickets at your local theater, or via Vudu, iTunes, Amazon Instant Video and Netflix.
- We also love **Google Play** to rent/buy movies and music, and **Spotify** for listening to music by genre and mood.

Love to Read?

- Libraries have gone digital! As much of an Amazon fan as I am, I am also

a huge fan of FREE. Now from many library websites, you can check out books or magazines to read or listen to on your device (check out **Overdrive** to see if your library participates), learn languages, find your ancestry and more, all while never stepping foot in your library!

Want to Get Fit?

- Most of our team uses **MyFitnessPal** to track food, water, exercise, weight and more. You can even share info (only the good stuff) with friends to help stay motivated, and it syncs with **FitBit**, a pedometer we also love.
- Dream of becoming a runner? **C25k** takes you from the couch to running a 5k or 30 minutes within 9 weeks. It starts gently, with intervals of 60 seconds of jogging with 90 seconds of running and advances slowly. It gives you voice cues and lets you play music from your playlists.

Need Help With Money?

- There are apps for most banks, credit card companies and more, and these can streamline your interactions with them. How about depositing a check from anywhere, by snapping a photo with your phone? Good bye, ATM lines!
- Several of us also love **Mint**, a personal finance tracker that helps you set budgets and more.
- **Venmo** is a great, free alternative to **Paypal** to send money from your bank account or debit card.

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Need Medical Assistance?

- Remember when you had to call the doctor to get refills, make appointments and more? Now all that and more can be done online or in apps. For instance, the **Walgreens** app will call your doctor for refills and text you when your prescriptions are ready. Your insurance company probably also has an app, and your doctor may be online.
- To check medical symptom, **iTriage** is a great app that could save you a trip to the doctor.
- We also like **Pediatric SymptomMD** to help diagnose illness specifically in children.

Are You a Weather Buff?

- In our business, weather is everything, and in addition to nice features like radar, 15-day forecast and integrated weather alerts, **AccuWeather** includes a MinuteCast feature that tells you precipitation chances by the minute for the next two hours! (And if it's raining, it will tell you exactly when it will end!)

There you have it – our wrap-up of some of the best apps and online tools to

enhance your life! Let me know what you think if you use any of these apps. In the next few issues, we'll be sharing work apps, marketing apps, travel apps and podcasts, so feel free to send us ideas for any of these areas as well. Until next time, be well!

Kendra Wright started her career managing non-profit fundraising events. Then in an "about face," she took a job managing global Internet strategies at a Fortune 1000 company in 1995, just as the internet came to being. She left that company in 1998 to found Wright Strategies, working with clients like KEEN Footwear, Nike Jeep, Chrysler, Intel and Panasonic. Then in 2009, Kendra launched Saffire to do integrated online marketing and ticketing for hundreds of events, venues and destinations. It's been a wild ride! Kendra can be reached at kendra@saffire.com, and more information about Saffire can be found at www.saffire.com.

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