

OK. You've finally broken down and gotten a cell phone with a color screen, camera and a ring that plays 1814 Overture. Your teen age child no longer sneers when you pull it out of your purse or pocket. You delude yourself into thinking that you have finally arrived. Well, get a grip, you technological slug, your phone is nothing. Nada. Zip, etc.

A phone that won't surf the internet, allow you to read books, have all of your Outlook contacts, tasks and calendar handy, and pull up web sites and your emails, with attachments, is pretty weak. And even though you finally managed to get a PDA that will do these things, you now have to worry about carrying and losing both. Enter smart phones. Actually they have been here for some time, but they have gotten smaller, better looking, have greater battery power, and will do lots of stuff. Better yet, the price points have moved considerably. Depending upon the wireless carrier, the prices of some of these phone/pda combinations are less than \$300. When I last wrote about the Kyocera 6035 a couple of years ago, the price was \$600. I was able to snatch a used one for \$200, and have had no problems. But I have had complaints.

My phone will pull my office email, but not the attachments. Since our work product usually resides in an attachment, this has occasionally created problems. And finding contacts with one hand, given my large office database, can sometimes be a challenge. But these problems have not been insurmountable, and the benefits have far outweighed the hassle factor. Checking email on a cell phone from anywhere in the country is a whole lot easier than lugging around a notebook, and the advantages of having your current calendar and contacts at all times are obvious. Better yet, the manufacturers have vastly improved the operating systems, the ergonomics and the functionality of these devices. With some phones, you have a complete desktop system available, if you don't mind working in miniature. These phones are a smart choice for lawyers. Here is an abbreviated rundown of what is available right now.

Verizon (www.vzw.com) subscribers have the choice of two smart phones. The Samsung SPH-i700 has a wireless phone, camera and PDA with a Windows mobile operating system. That means it will run various Microsoft programs including Word, Excel and it will play MP3 tunes. Multiple downloads are also available. It does not have a PDA style touch pad for use with a stylus, but has a touch screen, a speaker phone and voice activated dialing. \$600. The Samsung SCH-i600 uses the Windows Mobile 2002 Smartphone OS, which means it synchs with Outlook, but it does not include the Office applications found in the SPH-i700. It has a normal touch pad, navigation keys and a decent screen, but no caller ID unless you flip open the phone. This phone lists at \$500, but with rebates, you can pick one up for \$300.

AT&T (www.attwireless.com) has several phones, but the best value for the money (\$270) is the Motorola MPx200. Not much bigger than a normal flip phone, it runs Windows Mobile Smartphone OS. It also synchronizes with Outlook, and allows the contacts to be filtered into groups, so navigation is faster. It also grabs email and calendar entries. Another entry is PalmOne Handspring Treo 600 GSM, which is also available through Cingular and T-Mobile. This is a PDA that happens to be a phone, and includes full keyboard, function keys, and a touch screen. \$449. The Sony Ericsson P900 (\$550) has a large touch screen, a dial pad, and captures digital video with sound.

For those of you with Cingular (www.cingular.com) , the Sony Ericsson Z600 is a good choice. It has a camera and numbered key pad, but no touch screen. It also synchronizes with Outlook for calendar and contacts, and email can be downloaded. About \$350. Cingular also features the Blackberry 7280, which has a miniature keyboard, web browsing, and allows access to multiple email accounts. It also synchronizes with your desktop office suite. One feature that separates this device from others is that it is always on. When you get an email, you know immediately without having to retrieve it. \$250.

Sprint (www.sprint.com) offers 4 different smart phones, including the Toshiba 2032 (\$250), Sumsung i500 (\$450), Treo 600 (\$450) and the Hitachi G1000 (\$500). All are rated highly, and, depending upon your personal preferences, will serve you well.

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