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Masculine names help female lawyers get ahead

What's in a name? Shakespeare once queried. For women lawyers, there is apparently a lot banking on a name. According to a recent study, in South Carolina a woman lawyer makes more money and increases her chances of becoming a judge if she has a masculine name. While a quick review of American and Canadian top female judges with decidedly feminine names — Ruth, Beverly and Sonia — contradicts the study, one of the researchers was so swayed by the findings he and his lawyer wife decided to give their new baby a masculine name — Collins, reports *The Vancouver Sun*. Whether this move will help baby Collins remains to be seen.

Palm Pre good alternative to iPhone, BlackBerry



HI-TECH

**LUIGI
BENETTON**

There's a new smartphone in town, and it's good enough to go toe-to-toe with the BlackBerry and the iPhone.

It's the Palm Pre. The folks who arguably invented the handheld computing market are back with a redesigned combination touchscreen and physical keyboard gadget.

I've owned several Palms myself, and I was pleased to start using a device that was just as easy to learn. (Palm abandoned both its original Palm OS and Windows Mobile for its WebOS platform.)

At first glance, the Pre rivals the iPhone in design simplicity. It isn't quite as radical, though: a physical keyboard, a smidge narrower than that of a BlackBerry Curve, slides down from under a bright, legible screen. An opaque "gesture area" sits where BlackBerrys sport trackballs.

iPhone owners will quickly understand the swiping and zooming gestures on the Pre, but they may be surprised to learn that they can multitask, and not just listen to music as they write an e-mail. The button below the screen "minimizes" the current application so that it appears to be a "card" that can be swiped left or right to switch to other active apps (also shown as cards), or swiped up to close the app.

Palm also sent me the separate, custom-made TouchStone, a squat cylinder that sports an angled top surface. It magnetically holds the Pre in place so it can be used as a speakerphone, all the while recharging it wirelessly.

Jonathan Ezor has relied on Palms and applications built for them for years. "As a lawyer, I use TimeReporter for

timesheets," he says, mentioning Documents to Go and notes as other indispensable tools.

"I use notes for everything," he says, "messages, short drafts, the fact we're speaking today. I can hit 'Find' to search through my 8,500 notes going back to the 90s."

(Full disclosure: Palm recognizes Ezor, the director for the Touro Law Centre's Institute for Business, Law and Technology as a "Real Reviewer," or Palm evangelist. He tweets for the cause @PalmPreLawyer.)

The Pre is close enough to what David Lilienfeld originally wanted (an iPhone, not available from his firm's carrier) that he bought his Pre in September.

"The cards are just enough of a positive," says the partner at Atlanta's Manning Lilienfeld LLP. He also likes the multitasking. "In the car, I have Sprint navigation and music going," he recalls. "When the navigation tells me to turn, the music fades out. After, the music fades back in."

My longstanding leeringness of multitasking claims led me to download and run numerous applications at once. The Pre did slow down under load until finally it told me to shut down applications I wasn't using, but it didn't crash.

Those who distrust moving parts might look askance at the slide-out keyboard. Ezor has lost the plastic USB port cover several times. "I leave it uncovered," he says.

Lilienfeld points to wonky text selection procedures and a lack of video as other flaws.

Long-time Palm users (including many lawyers) will be happy to learn that they can use their old Palm OS-based soft-

ware on the Pre using a free tool called Classic, available via Palm's App Catalog, the analog to Apple's App Store.

Which leads to the Palm's greatest present weakness — the dearth of third-party Pre applications. (Law-specific apps are no exception.) During my two weeks with the Pre, the App Catalog passed the 100-app mark. Even counting the legacy applications that Classic enables, other smartphone application stores, to say nothing of Apple's App Store, dwarf Palm's current app collection.

“**Is there a feature you need that the Pre doesn't yet have? Wait a week or so — it may arrive in an update.**”

This could severely hamper the Pre's market penetration. Other phones do what the Pre does, and even if the Pre does many of these things just as or more elegantly, Palm still needs more third-party software titles to lure consumers to the Pre.

Ezor expresses hope. "Palm is ramping up to support developers."

In a break from previous models, Palm does not ship desktop software or enable direct syncing with Microsoft Outlook. (Third-party software handles desktop syncing.) Instead, Pre owners can have the phone pull down mail, calendars, tasks and

so forth from free services such as Google Apps, as well as Microsoft Exchange.

"There's no install, no software management. It's less complex," Ezor claims.

Unlike Ezor, Lilienfeld isn't impressed by this cloud-computing setup. "Not everybody is there yet," he says. Indeed, for some non-Exchange-using lawyers, being forced to store business data outside a firm's firewall could make the Pre a non-starter.

In a calculated gamble, Palm made the Pre sync with Apple's popular iTunes — at least as I write this. When I first received the Pre, I plugged it into my Mac, and nothing happened. After one particular update (the second to the Pre in the two weeks I had it), I again plugged the Pre into my Mac. iTunes sprang up, recognized the Pre (albeit using the image of an out-of-date iPod) and synchronized my media.

Expect Apple to "update" iTunes soon to shut the Pre out yet again — and Palm to work around that Apple defense in turn.

(The Pre also becomes a USB drive when you plug it into your computer, so you can copy files to it without needing other software.)

This Palm-Apple game of cat-and-mouse joins other signs as evidence that, however reliable the Pre seems to be, its makers pushed it out the door somewhat half-baked. Is there a feature you need that the Pre doesn't yet have? Wait a week or so — it may arrive in an update.

Still, it's a credible contender in the smartphone wars. Palm did a lot right out of the gate. Now it's time for software developers and the market to determine the Pre's fate. ■



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