THE MAKING OF
A MOBILE SOLUTION

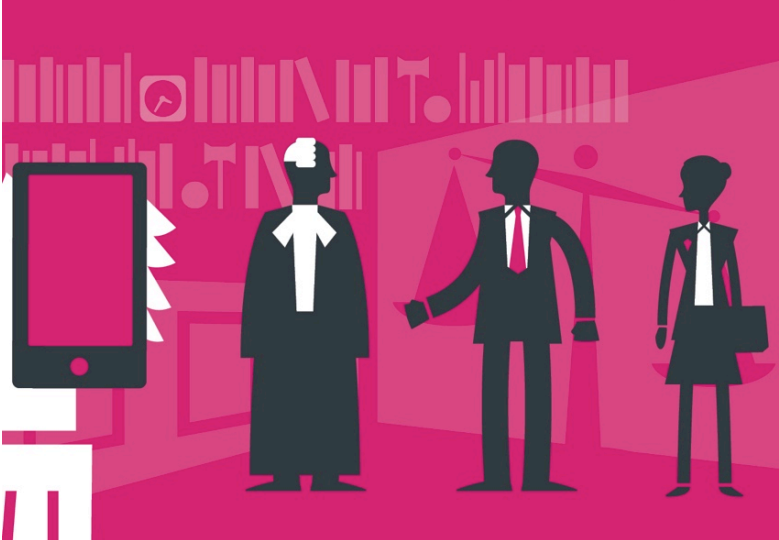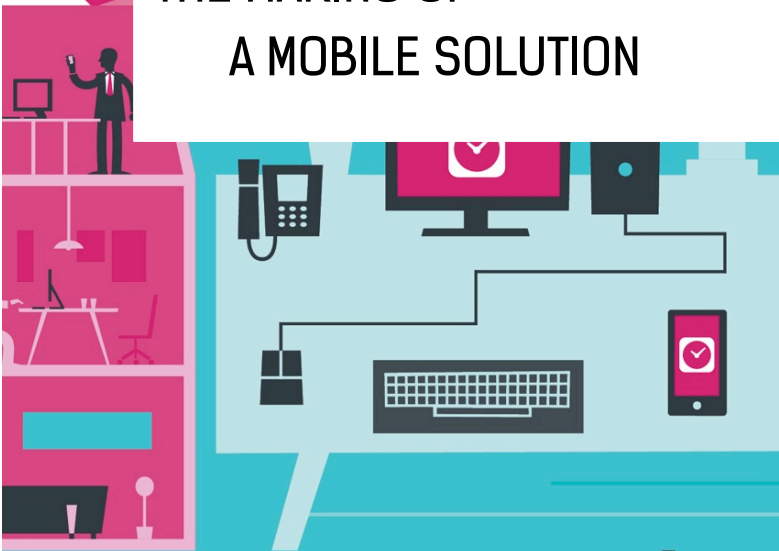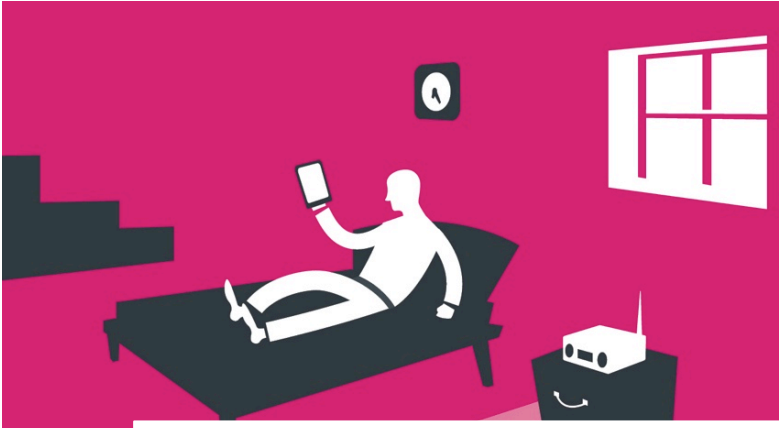Rekoop
More time

When Rekoop set out to design the best possible mobile time capture solution for iOS devices, it wasn't a vanity project, a 'we'll build it because we can' affair. It was undertaken as a direct response to customer feedback and our own assessment of the market, both of which clearly showed that when it came to time recording, the available technology had not kept pace with the changing working patterns of today's lawyers.

A recurring refrain was that with so many client activities now taking place away from the desk, and no simple or foolproof way of recording them, a substantial amount of billable time was being either lost or under-recorded. The emergence of Apple as a credible mobile business technology and the growing BYOD culture pointed the way to how that problem could be resolved. And thus Rekoop decided to create a time recording interface that could be used anytime, anywhere, across any iOS device.

We worked to a clear set of critical success factors:

Usability – If it wasn't simple or easy or quick, if it didn't mirror the functionality of the complementary Desktop product, then positive user adoption would be compromised.

Flexibility – Today's challenge is to deliver a tool that has universal appeal, that flexes to individual preferences. The fee-earning world has is now a tripartite division of those who remain wedded to the traditional clocks/timers-based manual entry method; and those who have moved onto more automated options, where another split sees some favour contemporaneous time entry while others prefer end-of-day review. A successful product has to appeal to all tastes equally.

Light touch – Too many IT projects die a death because of protracted, complex deployments and integrations. The delivery mechanism had to allow for rapid roll-outs with little impact on existing installations.

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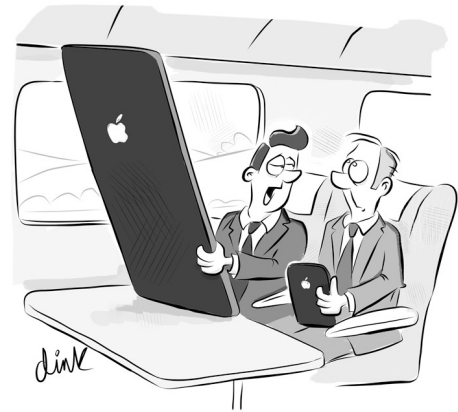
Zero training footprint – The returns on any project can be severely hampered and delayed by the need for extensive, expensive user training. The aim has to be 'get and go' technology without the need for any formal induction.

Return on investment – IT teams are always under pressure to demonstrate a tangible ROI and are especially looking for the 'quick win', the project that delivers early and backs their judgement. And in these straitened times, no firm wants to be throwing its money away.

OUR RESPONSE

We believed those critical success factors could best be met through the design of an app – a slick, fast and fully fledged native app, not the clunky mimicking of web views that has been tried elsewhere. i-devices have changed the way business professionals regard and use software. Technology has become 'consumerised' now – users want that effortless experience and interaction with IT they enjoy as consumers to carry over into their professional life. Why shouldn't time recording be as quick and simple as making an Amazon or iTunes purchase?

By delivering our time capture solution within a native app, we have been able to give them something that is extremely familiar, intuitive and responsive. First, it has allowed us to create an interface that looks exactly like our Desktop product. Secondly, the tools and widgets that surround the core interface are all iOS standards, those same drop downs and spinning dials and gesture-supported actions you use everyday. Users can now take their 'partner in time' with them wherever they go, with the actual time entry task coming down to a couple of swift swipes and clicks. That ticked the usability box.

> **"The slickness of the interface and the sheer ease of use of the Rekoop product were key factors in our decision-making."**
>
> **Alice Creaser, DLA Piper**

Equally important has been maintaining the Rekoop differentiator within the mobile platform. Rekoop is widely regarded as having the most versatile technology when it comes to time recording, with the ability to meet manual, active and passive time entry preferences equally well. That's why within the new iOS app we have ensured

that users can choose from the 'prompt and go' active (or contemporaneous) approach or the alternative 'find and review' passive take, where the onus is on the technology to mine one's daily activity and make 'time suggestions' to help complete timesheets more accurately. We even kept in the classic 'clocks and timesheet' manual entry capability, just to cover all bases. Flexibility box ticked.

> "To capture time as they go has never been so simple. No two individuals are alike in the way they like to record time entries and one of Rekoop's great strengths is that it lets the user choose how to interact with it."
>
> Francesc Munoz, Cuatrecasas

going to be the biggest app around..."

Our mobile deployments, even for the biggest installations, rarely take more than a fortnight. Why? Because after the initial configuration work – work that lives within the Cloud moreover – all it takes to get a user up and running is for them to go to the App Store, download the app, sign in and go. And that takes about a minute. And because it's such a familiar environment, because it's almost instinctive now given our exposure to the i-world, within another ten minutes there's probably nothing more to learn. Get, go, grab more time. Light touch and zero training boxes double ticked.

> "Fee earners now have an intuitive, consumer-friendly interface for time entry that is available to them on any device at any time. And it's not without its benefits for the IT team either – it's a very 'light touch', low impact technology that enables rapid roll-out with minimal training requirement."
>
> Nicholas Eustace, Eversheds

Last but not least, return on investment. Yes, we can tout it as the biggest app around, but does it deliver big? The following comment from David Smith of Anthony Gold is fairly typical of customers' assessment of the Rekoop ROI argument:

"We calculated that if each user captured just one extra unit per month through Rekoop, the system would pay for itself."

Rekoop
More time

That's down not just to the app's ability to capture more time but our whole approach to business, how we've actually set ourselves up as a vendor properly focused on value. We have never been interested in offering a big installed enterprise solution with all the on-cost that entails, charging excessive support, training and project management fees just to 'feed the monster'. Leveraging the Cloud and the app has allowed us to operate 'lean' with software that's eminently affordable – it is the volume that allows us to be profitable so it's a win-win situation all round.

> "Such has been its immediate impact that we estimate the system paid for itself within the first week by virtue of the extra billable hours captured by just one single fee earner."
>
> Jacques Van Zyl, DM Kisch

The mobile project has been a major undertaking but with some brilliant results. We took on a genuine technology challenge and in just one year designed and delivered what is already seen as the class-leading iPad app, an app that is being used in anger by some of the world's largest and most successful global law firms - DLA, Freshfields, Eversheds, Norton Rose, Simmons & Simmons, to name a few. It's helping to lighten the load for today's lawyers while making a heavyweight contribution to the bottom line.

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