Introduction

The importance of technology in our professional and personal lives has grown more dramatically during the lives of those of us over age 65 than any other generation in history. It continues to grow at an ever-increasing rate. Those of us still practicing law must deal with technology in our professional lives, as clients demand the availability that the Internet, e-mail, and mobile devices provide, and many courts have moved to a requirement of electronic filing and communications with the court.

The profession has moved toward recognizing a duty for attorneys to acquire a level of basic competence in dealing with technology. The ABA model rules have recognized that duty. More and more state bars are coming to the same conclusion.

Technology can help lawyers practice more efficiently and effectively. As a result, attorneys of all ages have grown increasingly interested in learning about technology. Some of the more senior attorneys have adopted an ostrich-like approach to technology, operating under the theory that if they don’t use it, they do not have to understand it. That head-in-the-sand approach won’t work much longer (to the extent that it ever did), as we approach the point of concluding that a lawyer’s failure to make appropriate use of available technology can constitute an ethical breach.

For those of us who have stopped practicing law (or are in the process of doing that), technology offers us the opportunity to continue to grow and learn at a rapid rate. It also offers us the ability to take care of mundane chores (like shopping) easily, quickly, and efficiently, without
leaving our home or office. Learning about technology may prevent our children or grandchildren from saying “Grandma [or Grandpa], you don’t know anything about technology” (as one grandmother recently reported that her 12-year-old granddaughter recently told her).

Perhaps even more importantly, learning about technology can make it easier for us to communicate with our children and grandchildren, or with the many friends we have made over the years through our associations with the ABA and other organizations, located in other cities or states (or even countries).

We have done programs presenting tips on technology and practice for many years in locations all over the country. We have also written about technology for lawyers for many years. We often get questions about our tips programs. Sometimes the questions come from people who attended or read an article but want additional information. Many times we get questions from those who could not attend a show, asking about topics we covered or requesting copies of the slide show.

We thoroughly enjoy doing those programs and writing those articles. We were delighted when the SLD asked us to create this book for the division. The purpose is to highlight some of the most popular and important tips we have addressed in our programs, with a focus on making them “senior-friendly” and to augment those tips with some that we felt would particularly interest seniors. We were even more pleased when they told us that they would like us to prepare a new edition of the book every year or so covering the new material we brought into our programs and new technology that comes onto the market.

As we prepared this book, we realized that many younger attorneys (and many nonlawyers) would benefit from the tips and suggestions offered here, just as seniors
can benefit from the tips and suggestions that we have offered in other books that we did not write with a focus on senior readers. In part, that comes from recognizing that the perception that seniors suffer from technological challenges is largely a misperception. The simple fact of the matter is that this generation of seniors learned to adapt to more and greater changes in technology than any other generation in recorded history. We see no reason that as seniors we should not reflect that same adaptability that saw us through the evolution from ballpoint pens (or even fountain pens) and paper to the manual and then the electric typewriter to the computer, from carbon paper to the photocopy machine, from snail mail to e-mail, and from nothing through the VHS and Beta wars to digital video recordings.

We have tried to present the tips in this book as we would in a program. We do not go into great detail as to any of the tips or recommendations. We present them briefly to introduce the information or the product to you for further investigation or consideration. We anticipate that some of you may have heard or read some of the tips before, perhaps at one of our presentations or in one of our articles. We expect that many of you will find much of the information in this book new to you. We also anticipate that many of the tips in this book will prove useful to most attorneys either in their professional lives or their personal lives or both.

We have tried to make this book more senior-friendly by avoiding as much as possible the use of jargon (aka "technotalk", aka "geekspeak") and by using simple grammatical English to address the concepts we discuss in this book. We have also asked the ABA to instruct the publisher to use a larger font so that seniors will find the book more easily read. We hope this approach resonates with you.
We hope that you will enjoy this book and the style of presentation we use for the tips. We anticipate that the book will be the start of a relationship with many readers who will look forward to each new edition of the book, to see what new information they can get, what new technology we have learned about, and what new software and hardware might prove useful to them. For many others, it will continue an already existing relationship that we have with you through our programs and other writings.

We hope that you will find some tips in this book and in our future editions that will help you in your professional and your personal lives by making things easier for you to accomplish, making you more efficient or more effective as an attorney, or making your life a little bit easier or more enjoyable. Please note that while we have endeavored to organize the tips into logical groupings in each chapter, there will inevitably be some overlap because some tips fit in more than one category. We have imposed the following organization on the tips we have collected for you in this book:

1. Tips for using mobile devices
2. Tips for using your computer
3. Tips for using the Internet to communicate with friends and family
4. Tips for sharing media with friends and family
5. Tips for travel
6. Tips to protect your privacy and identity
7. Health and technology (including apps to keep your brain tuned up)
8. Miscellaneous