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## Law firm hopes app will help it reach younger clients

by **Caitlin Cook**  
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CHARLESTON W.Va. -- A new generation of business leaders has grown up with access to all kinds of mobile devices, and one local law firm is trying to reach them.

This week, Charleston-based law firm Spilman, Thomas and Battle released its Spilman SuperVision smartphone application.

"We saw it as a hole in the marketplace," said Eric Iskra, chairman of Spilman's labor and employment practice. "We saw an opportunity and went for it."

Iskra said the app addresses clients' most frequent questions and concerns in Spilman's labor and employment practice, such as when to pay an employee who left the company, overtime pay and social media complaints.

Working with Pittsburgh-based programming company Quest Fore, Spilman attorneys began creating the decision tree -- the first stage of the app -- and legal language answering questions more than a year ago.

"The caveat is every situation is different, but we wanted to give people who needed help the basics to get started with," said Tiffany Fridley, a marketing specialist for the law firm.

According to Fridley, the number of visitors to the firm's website via smartphone is has doubled in a year -- and the number of visitors via tablet device is 10 times more.

Mobile devices are being used more frequently, "if not by the older generation of executives and business owners, then by the 20-somethings and 30-somethings who are up and coming in the business world," Fridley said.

When creating the app, Iskra's team thought of what legal scenarios would lend themselves to clean discussions and straightforward answers.

Upon opening the SuperVision app, the three main decision tree categories appear. Users select among overtime wages, complaints on social media and final wage payments. Then the app provides a "refresher" on the law in question. Depending on the scenario, users will continue to answer questions the app asks, to gauge where their issue falls on the legal spectrum.

For instance, Iskra explains, it varies on how the employee leaves the company and that really makes the decision tree analogy so clean. Did the employee resign? Was he terminated? The app's decision tree walks users through the nuances of the law they may overlook.

The app also tracks the users' physical location. Spilman has practices in Pennsylvania, Virginia and North Carolina. The app applies the appropriate jurisdiction's law.

"It's certainly a great way to keep folks up to date on changes," said Iskra.

When laws covered in the app change, Spilman -- partnering with Quest Fore -- will roll out a new version with the updated law applied.

"It's something we need to be careful of because you have something out there in electronic form that sort of guides employers on legal issues," said Iskra. "We need to make sure that we're constantly monitoring changes in law."

The app is free and compatible with Apple's iPhone and iPad. The firm sees it as an extension of the firms' labor and employment event series. The seminar series addresses workplace issues in various jurisdictions and is free to clients and friends of the firm.

"Of course the hope is this helps build a foundation to a longer relationship when more complex legal issues arise and where areas are more gray," said Iskra. "They will need some guidance and that's when we hope they give us a call."

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