

BY JOE STODDARD

## Using Evernote Premium in Your Business

We first looked at **Evernote** (evernote.com) around four years ago (“Faster, Smaller, and More Connected Than Ever,” Dec/09) and were impressed with its simplicity, flexibility, and downright usefulness. At that time Evernote allowed you to capture practically any type of digital or real-world information, then retrieve it at will via a killer search engine. The basic idea is so simple that it’s easy to miss all the ways Evernote can be used to manage your business and personal information, which is the biggest reason I wanted to give it another look.

Evernote is one of a new breed of “cross-platform” applications that store information in “the cloud,” which means that you (and your team) can work with Evernote data from any device that can get online and has a Web browser. Or you can install a dedicated application for your smartphone, laptop, or tablet that will synchronize data between devices for online/offline use.

There are three versions of Evernote: “free” (limited capability); full-featured “Premium” (\$5 per month); and “Business” (\$10 per user per month), which adds a centralized console to control multiple employee accounts. For this column I’m focusing on Premium, because it has some features that are critical to Evernote success in business, such as the ability to extract and index text from photographs and even handwritten notes.

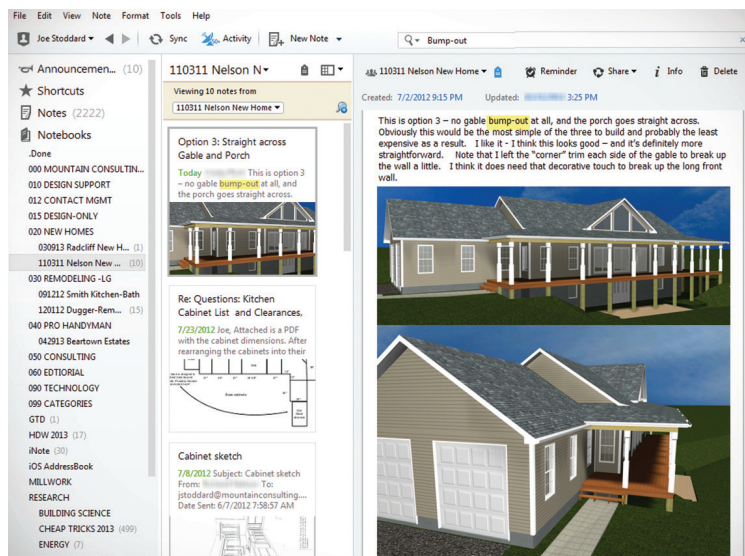
### EVERNOTE BASICS

Since our first look, Evernote has added a few key collaborative features (such as Reminders), and has expanded its stable of “helper” applications, so it’s even more capable. With a little creativity, and without spending much more than your elbow grease, Evernote can be used for almost any application that requires capturing, organizing, and retrieving information, including to-do and reminder lists; jobsite walk-throughs and punchlists; and job specs, contracts, and photos, to name a few.

**Notes.** The base unit of information in Evernote is a Note, which can be hand-typed, clipped from other sources, or a mix of the two. But Notes are not just text—they can be a mix of practically any kind of digital information imaginable, including photos and audio-video. You can also embed PDFs and Microsoft Office or Google Apps documents. A big part of the Evernote magic is the software’s ability to extract text of any kind (including handwritten scrawls on a scrap of 2x4) and make the resulting text searchable.

**Tags.** Individual notes can be further organized by assigning subject matter tags to them. This is a belt-and-suspenders approach because every word in every Note is already indexed by the search engine; but organization nuts will appreciate the ability to add another layer of organization when searching for information.

**Notebooks.** Notes are optionally stored in Notebooks, and they in turn can be further organized into Stacks, as shown at left.



Evernote’s customizable desktop organizes Notebooks into Stacks (left column), and displays sorted notes from the active notebook (center), as well as the active note (right). Search results highlight every instance of the search term (“bump-out” in this example).

### CREATING NOTES

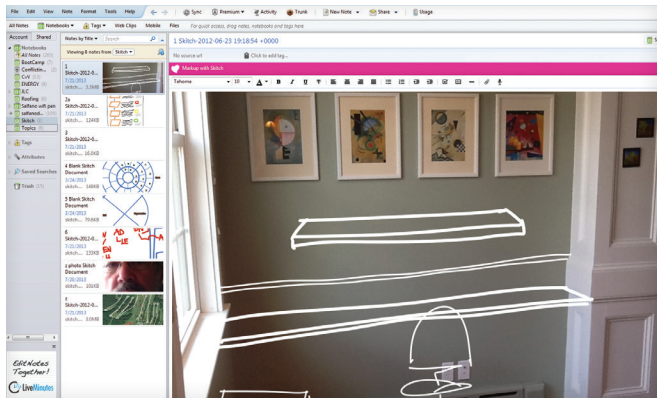
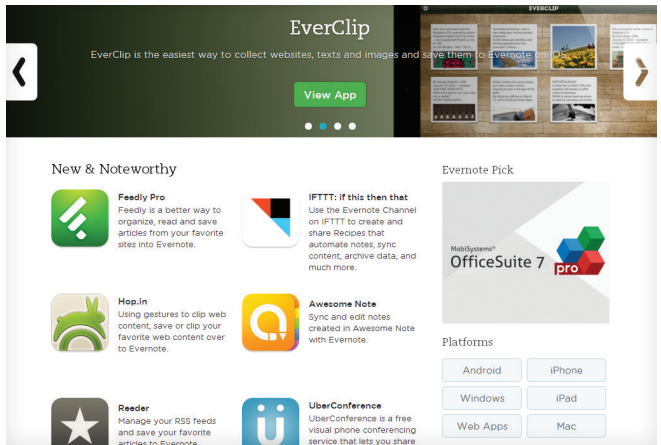
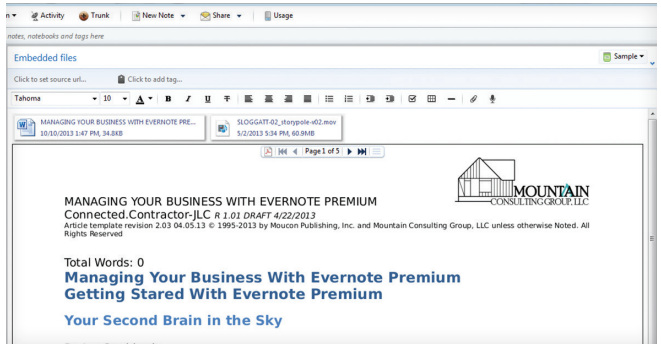
Notes can be created from the New Note menu, but there are also extensions that will send data to Evernote from many popular applications and Web services.

**Email address.** Evernote provides each user with a unique email address. By using the CC: or BCC: fields in your email software, both the body of any message and any attachments can be automatically saved to the default folder in Evernote. This is a fantastic tool for tracking expenses or making sure that no piece of project correspondence falls through the cracks.

**Phone camera.** Forget scanner apps: With Evernote, just take a photo and save it to the appropriate folder. This works equally well for a packing slip, a vendor invoice, or the serial number of an appliance you install, and takes a fraction of the time that keying in the information would. Similarly, a picture of the side of your plumber's truck showing the phone number and Web address will be indexed the same as a picture of his business card.

**Web clipper.** This tool lets you selectively grab any information you encounter online and convert it to a Note. Links can remain live if you want them to, and Evernote provides some markup tools, so you can highlight the important information in the captured clipping. The Web clipper is ideal for creating product notebooks or best-practice manuals.

**Sharing.** Putting the right information in the right hands at the right time is the key to good project communication. Evernote can make any static information collaborative by sharing Notes or Notebooks. Notebooks (and the Notes in them) can be shared selectively, either by individual email address (which keeps the contents relatively private) or by a public link that anyone can reach—for example, from your marketing website or Facebook page.



In addition to text and images, Notes can hold links to document, audio, and video files, and can display full content from PDFs (top). Evernote also maintains a library of third-party apps that integrate or extend the program (center). One example is Skitch (now owned by Evernote), which enables editing and markup of photos on mobile devices (bottom).

### EVERNOTE IN PRACTICE

Too many contractors wind up purchasing much more software than they'll ever actually use. Instead of jumping into complicated building-specific software before you understand what you really need (see "Putting Lean Principles to Work," Feb/11), you can use Evernote as a tool for developing and testing all kinds of business systems.

For example, you might create a simple purchase order or a customer relationship management system to get your toes wet. After using it for a few months or a year, you will be that much more aware of the features you really need, and you may even discover that you don't need to buy a big, powerful application.

Similarly, Evernote helps you make use of what you have. For instance, many contractors have tons of forms and documents they've developed over the years that would greatly improve their operations if they could find an easy way to share those resources with their project teams. Evernote makes it easy to store, share, and retrieve contracts, boilerplate specs, policy and procedure manuals, construction details, and other documents you've already created.

### MORE HELP

This column barely scratches the surface of Evernote's usefulness. The company maintains a wealth of ideas on its YouTube channel, and also maintains an App Center with third-party software and dozens of add-ins that work with Evernote. In addition, I've found these print resources to be helpful:

- *Evernote for Dummies*, by David E. Y. Sarna and Vanessa Richie (\$12.36 for paperback);
- *The Complete Guide to Evernote*, by David Garcia (\$1.99 for Kindle);
- *Mastering Evernote: The 2 Hour Guide*, by Brandon Collins (\$2.99 for Kindle);
- *Evernote Essentials 4.0*, Brett Kelly (\$14.99 PDF at [nerdgap.com](http://nerdgap.com)).

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### APP OF THE MONTH

## HELLO

Forget typing. A contact management app from Evernote called Hello combines an excellent text recognition engine with your smartphone or tablet camera and GPS system to make entering a new contact as simple as snapping a picture of their business card, truck sign—even handwriting on a scrap of paper.

Hello creates a note, logs the location, date, and time of your initial meeting, and builds the contact's background record by scouring Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter for more details (with your permission, of course). A feature called Hello Connect uses audio tones to automatically detect the devices of other Hello users nearby, providing an easy way to document meeting attendance for example, or to sync additional contact information.



Hello is a free add-on and is available for iOS and Android devices at <http://evernote.com/hello/>



**Got a favorite app?** Tell us what it is, how you use it, and why you like it. [JLCtech@hanleywood.com](mailto:JLCtech@hanleywood.com)

## Lien On

BY PATRICK BARTHET

**Two specific requirements** for the filing of a mechanic's lien—time and amount—were addressed in a recent case pitting a contractor against his customer.

The customer signed a contract for \$246,700. When customer-dictated changes increased the price by \$10,000, the contractor simply whited out the old price and inserted a new, higher price on the contract. While he claimed the customer had seen and agreed to the new price, the contractor had failed to obtain a signature or initials acknowledging the change. Sometime after construction had begun, the customer discovered the price increase and ceased making payments. Construction stopped, and the contractor timely filed a claim of lien for the balance still due to him for work done on the project. Two months later, the contractor amended his lien to include additional work he had to perform after initially closing work to protect the partially finished project from the elements.

The customer wasn't happy. She claimed the lien was filed late and for exaggerated amounts. The court, howev-

er, sided with the contractor, finding that the additional work done by the contractor to safeguard the yet-to-be-completed project was done in good faith, within a reasonable time, and pursuant to a contract. The court then determined this subsequent work extended the time for filing a lien; it was not remedial work (which would not extend the statutory deadlines for the filing of a lien), but rather work necessary to complete the contract.

It was a good day for the contractor. His good faith efforts to fulfill his contractual obligations, and his filing of a lien for the right amount and in the right time frame overcame his failure to obtain a fully executed contract with the new adjusted price.

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# Miscalculating Overtime

BY DOUG DELP

## WHAT HAPPENED

Good Guys Construction Co. pays entry-level carpenters a base rate of \$14 per hour. A few of these carpenters have become quite skilled, and when they perform higher-level carpentry, such as trim work, the company pays them an extra \$3 per hour. When the company pays them overtime, however, it bases the calculation on the \$14-per-hour base rate.

## WHY IT'S WRONG

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) states that a non-exempt employee's regular rate of pay for overtime calculation "includes all remuneration for employment ..." (with a few exceptions). This "remuneration" includes incentives or bonuses tied to the employee's work, commissions based on production, and—significantly in this case—different rates for certain types of work or jobs. That means Good Guys Construction cannot pay overtime using the employee's base rate.

## WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Good Guys Construction has two options. The first is to calculate a weighted average of the two rates, then use it as the "regular rate" to calculate overtime pay for that week. To do this, the company would add together total earnings for the week, divide by the total number of hours worked at all jobs, then multiply this new "regular rate" by 1.5 to determine that week's overtime rate of pay.

The other option is to calculate overtime based on the rate paid for any work that was done after the employee qualified for overtime. If during this time the employee worked at jobs paying different rates, calculate overtime separately for each job.

Keep in mind that overtime regulations can vary by state as well. Some states require overtime to be paid when an employee works more than eight hours a day. To stay out of trouble, review your payroll recordkeeping, types of compensation, and overtime computation procedures. For questions about compliance, contact an attorney or a human resources professional.

*Doug Delp is founder of The Delp Group (delpgroup.com), which provides human resources, benefits, insurance, and payroll services to small businesses.*

## Options for Calculating Overtime

	Hours	Base Rate	Base Amount
Monday	8	\$14.00	\$112.00
Tuesday	8	\$14.00	\$112.00
Wednesday	8	\$14.00	\$112.00
Thursday	8	\$17.00	\$136.00
Friday	8	\$17.00	\$136.00
Saturday <sup>3</sup>	4	\$17.00	\$68.00
Sunday <sup>3</sup>	4	\$14.00	\$56.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>		

	Weighted Average	Actual Rate	
Avg. rate <sup>1</sup>	\$15.25	\$14.00	\$17.00
Hours	40	24	16
Base pay	\$610.00	\$336.00	\$272.00
O.T. rate <sup>2</sup>	\$22.88	\$21.00	\$25.50
Hours	8	4	4
O.T. pay	\$183.00	\$84.00	\$102.00
		\$420.00	\$374.00
<b>Total pay</b>	<b>\$793.00</b>		<b>\$794.00</b>

<sup>1</sup> Total base rate earnings (\$732) divided by total hours (48)

<sup>2</sup> Average or actual rate multiplied by 1.5

<sup>3</sup> Qualifies for overtime

The sample Weekly Time Record (top) shows hours worked for an employee who is paid at different rates for different types of work. Weekly pay, including overtime based on \$14 per hour, would be \$776. But this does not comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act, which gives employers two options for figuring overtime in this situation: 1) Determine an average hourly pay rate for the week (\$15.25 in "Weighted Average" example above), then calculate overtime pay based on that amount; or 2) use an overtime rate based on the pay rate for each type of work. Both options increase the employee's weekly pay by about \$18.