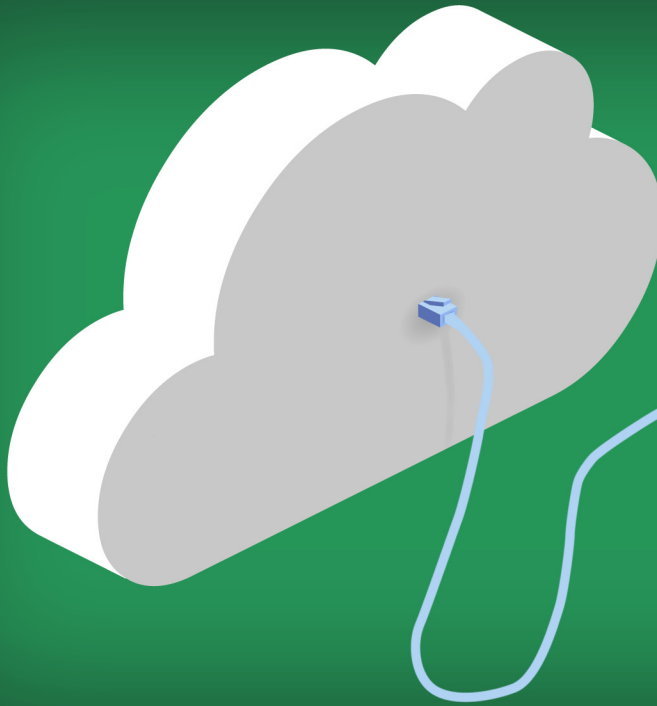




Out of Your Head, Into the Cloud with Evernote



by Brian Patterson

BEFORE I STARTED USING EVERNOTE, the always in-sync note taking software, I would scribble any random ideas I might have onto scraps of paper and cocktail napkins, or I'd open a text document on my computer, or I'd email myself, or voicemail myself, or save a picture on my phone. Or worse, I'd just try really hard to remember, assuring myself that *this* idea was too good, there was no way I'd forget it. And inevitably when I needed the note, it would be elsewhere: on a different computer, at home, at work, in my other brain.

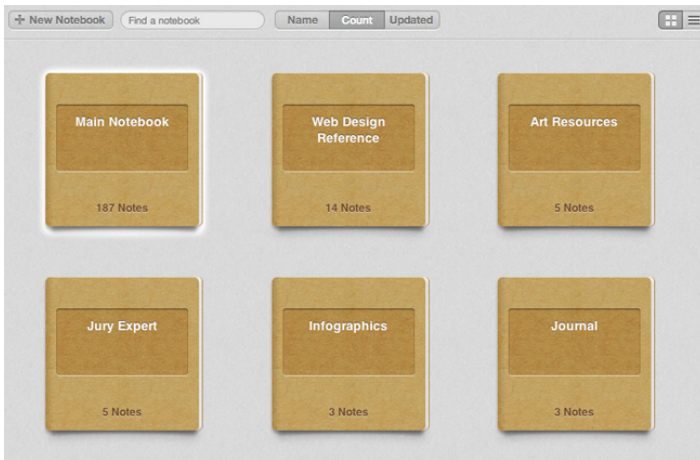
And then there are the other things I tried to keep in my mind. The phone calls to make, the supplies I needed, the tasks to perform. Without a place to put all these things, they just swirled around in my head, giving me a vague sense of dread, afraid I was forgetting to do something. In David Allen's book [Getting Things Done](#), he writes about eliminating this stress by writing things down, instead of trying to hold everything in your short term memory:

You can fool everyone else, but you can't fool your own mind. It knows whether or not you've come to the conclusions you need to, and whether you've put the resulting outcomes and

action reminders in a place that can be trusted to resurface appropriately within your conscious mind. If you haven't done those things, it won't quit working overtime. Even if you've already decided on the next step you'll take to resolve a problem, your mind can't let go until and unless you write yourself a reminder in a place it knows you will, without fail, look. It will keep pressuring you about that untaken next step, usually when you can't do anything about it, which will just add to your stress.

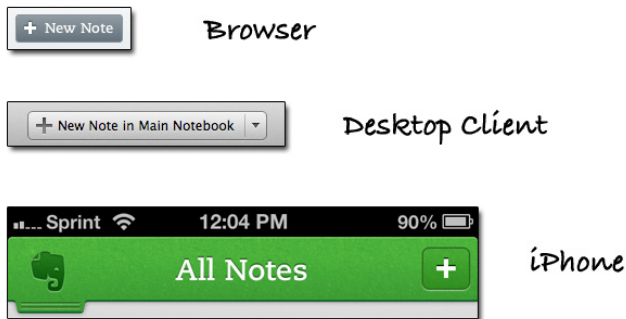
Capture Everything

Now, all my stray thoughts and ideas go into Evernote. As mentioned [previously in The Jury Expert](#), Evernote is a cloud-based tool to help you organize all your thoughts and bits of accumulated information in a single place. It uses a notebook paradigm as its base. You create a new notebook, name it, and begin adding information. But because you can have multiple notebooks, and notebooks inside notebooks, and notebooks that contain not only text notes, but also various other kinds of files, it may be more accurate to think of Evernote as a filing cabinet.



Evernote notebooks in the Mac OS desktop client

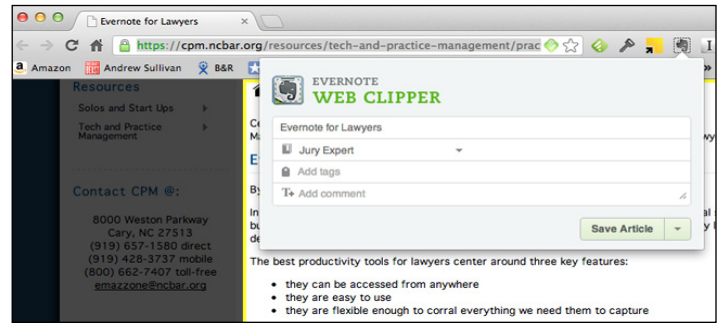
Evernote is constantly expanding the types of things you can do with it and the ways you can input data. If I am in a meeting and notes are being written on a white board, I open Evernote, snap a picture with my phone, tag it, and save it to a notebook. In addition to photos, you can record audio notes directly into Evernote. You can save web pages or portions of web pages. Or upload documents and files. And Evernote is available on just about every platform. For example, you can input data from a web browser at evernote.com, download the desktop client for Mac or Windows, or get an app for your smartphone or tablet.



Creating notes on different platforms

Plus, Evernote connects with a variety of other programs, allowing you to send data from different applications directly into your notebooks. You can find more apps that interact with Evernote [here](#).

Another way of saving information is by using [Web Clipper](#), which once installed, resides in the bookmark bar of your browser. When you see something on the web you want to capture, click the Web Clipper and it saves the info to the specified notebook in your Evernote. You can capture entire web pages, or you can select just the text you want to clip.



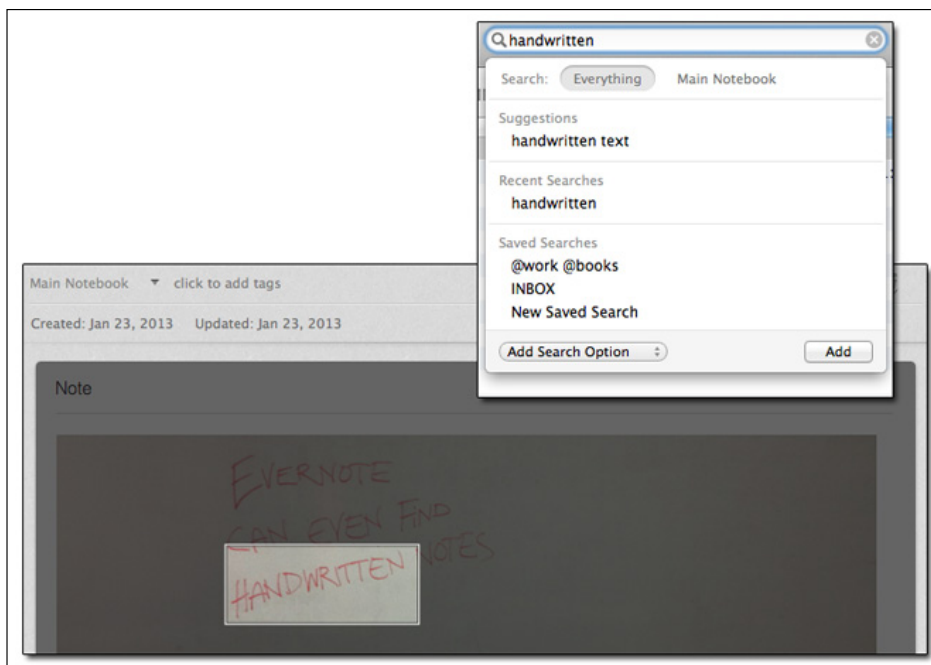
The Evernote Web Clipper

You can also add relevant emails to Evernote by forwarding them to your [Evernote account](#).

Access Everywhere

Then, from the multiple methods and devices of capture, Evernote syncs the data through the cloud, making it available on all your other devices. The white board photo I snapped with my phone in my meeting is waiting for me at my desktop when I open Evernote, and is ready for my next action. No more searching for that lost Post-it, or breaking out the USB cable or email program to transfer your photos or voice memos, or saving your files to a thumb drive to take home work over the weekend. Like other cloud-based apps, your information follows you from device to device automatically. And with Evernote, it's easily organized and searchable.

- ***Find Things Fast***
Evernote stores all your notes chronologically in a Main Notebook. From there, you have multiple options for viewing your notes.
- ***Notebooks***
If you've taken the time to arrange your notes into notebooks for different projects, cases, or ideas, you can open an individual notebook and find just the notes for that specific project.
- ***Tags***
If you've been utilizing tags in your notes, clicking on a tag or searching for a tag will bring all similarly tagged notes together for you to view, no matter which notebook they're in.
- ***Search***
You can also do a keyword search, which will bring up any instance of a word in your Evernote. Search is a key benefit of the software, and anything you input into Evernote becomes searchable, including documents and images which Evernote turns into text using Optical Character Recognition, or OCR. Even handwritten notes, if legible to Evernote, are indexed and searchable.



Evernote can OCR your handwritten notes so they are searchable

You may have saved a note long ago and forgotten about it, as I did with one of the links below. When I started writing this article I did a search in Evernote for notes on “getting things done”, and almost instantly Evernote found an article I’d forgotten I’d saved three years ago. It’s easy to remember the article you saved yesterday, but Evernote remembers the article you don’t even know you’ve forgotten.

More Tips on Using Evernote

This is a very basic summary of some of Evernote’s features. Below, I’ve included links to pages where people have explored various other methods for getting the most out of Evernote.

Getting Things Done

If you are a fan of David Allen and the Getting Things Done organizational system, Evernote is a good choice for implementing it. Here is an [article](#) which discusses this, or if you want something more in depth, this [ebook](#) might be worth checking out.

Evernote Business

In addition to free accounts, Evernote also offers [Premium](#) and [Business](#) accounts.

Evernote For Lawyers

Here are a few links from attorneys and others explaining how they use Evernote to stay organized:

[Evernote for Lawyers- North Carolina Bar](#)

[Evernote for Lawyers- jaymilbrandt.com](#)


[How an Attorney and Dad Uses Evernote for Work and Parenting](#)

[Using Evernote in Your Law Practice](#)

[My Evernote Workflow](#)

[5 Quick Tips to Speed Up Your Evernote Workflow](#)

Evernote Security

Here is an article addressing security concerns when using Evernote: [Is Your Data Safe in Evernote?](#) 

Brian Patterson is a graphic designer and trial consultant at [Barnes & Roberts](#). He has created and overseen production of multimedia presentations for well over a hundred courtroom proceedings since 1998. He is Assistant Editor of The Jury Expert, and is founder and contributor to the blog [Information Graphics & Litigation](#).

Illustration by Brian Patterson of [Barnes & Roberts](#).