THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

FROM INSTANT FLASHLIGHTS TO STREAMLINED PROPERTY SURVEYS, PHONE AND TABLET APPS HAVE BECOME VITAL FOR SURVEYORS. **HERE'S OUR SELECTION OF THE BEST**



SHARING FILES

NAME: Dropbox
FOR: iPhone, iPad, Android
PRICE: Free

Dropbox allows easy access and easy sharing of photos, documents and videos. Anything saved to the app is automatically synced to connected computers, devices, and the Dropbox website. Users can also invite people to share a folder in their Dropbox, making it ideal for team projects. In fact, last year Dropbox launched 'Teams', which features administrative controls and plenty of space for secure workplace collaboration. More than 50m users save around one billion files every 48 hours, and because Dropbox keeps a one-month history of work, users can undo changes and rescue deleted files. Dropbox offers 2GB free to start, with the option to pay for an upgrade to a Pro account with up to 500GB.

dropbox.com

SEEING IN THE DARK

NAME: Flashlight
FOR: iPhone and iPad (Similar apps available for Android)
PRICE: Free

This handy app by i4software turns your device into a torch. And whereas some torch apps simply turn the screen white, Flashlight uses your device's camera flash, which is 10 times brighter, although extended use is a drain on the battery. Some of the 22,000 five-star reviews demonstrate how users have relied on the app during power cuts caused by tornadoes or earthquakes, but graduate surveyor Lee Askew, from Roche Chartered Surveyors in Norfolk, finds it useful on a much more day-to-day basis: 'Flashlight is invaluable when inspecting premises with disconnected electricity supplies,' she says.

i4software.com

EASIER AUDITS

NAME: iAuditor
FOR: iPhone and iPad
PRICE: Free

iAuditor, by SafetyCulture Australia, streamlines workplace safety audits, pre-start checks and inspections. It also encourages a collaborative environment: 'The cloud-sharing facility within iAuditor means that users can share audit templates and checklists,' says Luke Anear, managing director of SafetyCulture. 'No matter what you're about to audit, there's a good chance that someone has done something similar and you can benefit from their experience.'

iAuditor has transformed the reporting process at NCT Estate Agents in Cornwall: 'We used to dictate our reports, which were then typed in-house, printed and posted out to clients. But as the business expanded, this became too time-consuming,' explains senior property manager Daniel Roskilly. 'iAuditor has enabled us to create customisable report templates with a checklist to which you can add a drop-down list of answers, a score, a picture or free-flow text. We can now record information on-site and send a completed report as a PDF file to our desktop via Dropbox or email. The report is filed and emailed direct to the client, enabling a faster turnaround.'

safetyculture.com.au/iAuditor

QUICKER SURVEYS

NAME: Kykloud
FOR: iPad
PRICE: Free demo, monthly subscription

Co-designed by chartered surveyor Ed Bartlett MRICS, this condition surveying and inspection app allows asset data to be collected on site for instant reports. Users can build their own survey templates, set a condition scale, take notes on site and take photos as evidence, which can be tagged against noted defects. 'With the linked-up mobile technology service through the kykloud app, users spend up to 60% less time on asset data collection and reporting, which improves competitiveness and profitability without compromising on accuracy,' says Bartlett. kykloud is currently in discussions with RICS about offering users a selection of survey templates within the app that are in line with RICS guidance.

kykloud.com

MAPPING SUNLIGHT

NAME: Sun Seeker
FOR: iPhone, iPad, Android
PRICE: £5.99 (iPhone and iPad); £3.79 (Android)

The position of the sun is an important consideration for home buyers and renovators, which is why Graham Dawson created Sun Seeker, by ozPDA – an app that shows the sun's path, its hour intervals, its winter and summer solstice paths, and rise and set times using GPS and the device's internal compass. This information can then be viewed in an augmented reality camera 3D mode, which uses the device's camera. User's can also see the sun's path for any day at any location, which not only helps real estate buyers and architects, but also gardeners and photographers.

ozpda.com

STAYING SAFE

NAME: StaySafe
FOR: iPhone and iPad. Android devices with GPS (Lite version only)
PRICE: Free (StaySafe Lite); £4.99 (StaySafe Premium)

Described as 'the new three rings when you're home', StaySafe provides protection for anyone working or travelling alone. Graham Mills, managing director of surveying company Technics Group, was inspired to create the app by his own business needs. 'We have surveyors working alone all over the country and we have a legal responsibility to protect them,' he explains. 'They often go straight to a site from home, and spend up to eight hours there without making contact with the office. So I created an automated checking-in app.'

Users import details of journeys, meetings or activities into StaySafe, choose emergency contacts and select how long they expect it to take. If they fail to check in before the specified time, StaySafe notifies the assigned contacts via email or SMS, sending them the device's GPS location. There is also a panic button, which instantly triggers an emergency message.

StaySafe Lite can be upgraded within the app to StaySafe Premium (iPhone and iPad only), which notifies five contacts and sends detailed GPS tracking.

staysafeapp.com

:HAVE AN IDEA?

HERE'S HOW TO TURN IT INTO AN APP

Words by **Samantha Whitaker**

1 Understand the market and test your idea. See what already exists, how successful it is, and find out what people think of your idea (ask people who'll be very honest).

2 Who is your audience? Understand your intended audience and what makes them tick. What apps do they already have? And why would they want your app?

3 Define a budget. Apps can vary in development and marketing costs from thousands to tens of thousands of pounds. Hold back 30-40% of your total budget for the initial marketing push.

4 Find an agency to help you develop your ideas that has a proven track record. Be wary of companies quoting low prices – like most things, you get what you pay for.

5 Deploying your app is only the beginning. Just submitting to the store will get you very few downloads, if any. You must have a strong, coherent strategy for how you will target your audience and measure success, including PR, social media, search engine optimisation, mobile advertising and video. Your app should also have its own microsite.

One Result is a digital agency that offers innovative and commercially successful web and mobile solutions. For more information, visit **oneresult.co.uk**.