

45 IDEAS: Gadgets, Gizmos and Apps Streamlining or Changing Your Workflow

MODERATOR

Pat Trowbridge is English Group Publisher – Equine Network, LLC — Practical Horseman, Dressage Today and In Stride. He began his publishing career in 1996. During his over 20 years, he has held many positions including Advertising Sales Representative, Advertising Sales Manager, Advertising Director for Equine Group Publications, Director of Corporate Special Project, Associate Publisher for Trade Titles and Vice President/Group Publisher: Equine & Farm. Pat grew up riding horses on his family's small farm in Kansas. He resides in Southern California with his family.

PANELISTS

Abigail Boatwright is a lifelong horse-lover and an award-winning freelance writer and photographer for mainly equine publications. She also does editing, proofreading and copywriting. Her photos have been featured as cover images 25 times. During her 10 years as a freelancer, Abigail's work has been published in more than 20 magazines. She lives in Fort Worth, Texas, with her husband and two children. Abigailboatwright.com

Katie Clinebell is the Equine Network's Tier Membership Program Manager, which includes client relations, marketing expertise, deliverable implementation, and performance reporting. Her specialties include media strategy and metric analysis, but she also has an affinity for more creative work like building ad campaigns and writing catchy copy. In addition to client management, Katie also oversees a handful of other, talented marketing specialists at the Equine Network; collectively, her team produces events such as Horse Week, traffics all paid media, and oversees all client relations (Tier Membership Program or otherwise). The cherry on top of Katie's role with the Equine Network is that she is also the host and producer of a podcast called Beyond the Saddle, where she interviews professionals from across the equine industry about their careers.

Kristen M. Janicki, MS, PAS, was born and raised in the suburbs of Chicago. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Sciences from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She later attended graduate school at the University of Kentucky, studying under Dr. Laurie Lawrence in the area

of Equine Nutrition. Kristen worked as an Equine Extension Associate at the University of Kentucky for 10 years before transitioning to Mars Horsecare. She is currently the Associate Digital Brand Manager for the BUCKEYE Nutrition brand, responsible for all digital content and consumer inquiries.

Jeremy McGovern, based in Wisconsin, is the executive editor and publisher of American Farriers Journal, where he's been for 14 years. He is also the conference director of the International Hoof-Care Summit, an annual convention for the farrier and equine veterinarians. He is the vice president of American Horse Publications.

Allison Rehnberg is an award-winning equine journalist and equine photographer, videographer, and marketing professional. She earned her master's degree in equine science from Middle Tennessee State University. In 2012, she served as the summer publications intern for the American Quarter Horse Association. She has been writing for publications as a freelancer since 2008. From 2018 to 2021, she worked as a full-time freelance equine journalist and photographer. Her bylines include Horse Illustrated, Horse & Rider, The American Paint Horse Journal, The NRHA Reiner, Chrome, Reined Cow Horse News, and more. In 2021, she became the marketing coordinator for Equine Affaire. She continues to write for assorted equine publications on a freelance basis. Allison lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with her husband, daughter, a beagle, and a very large orange cat named Hamilton.

1. Toggl: Toggl is an app for your phone or computer that tracks time. You can use it for personal or business, you can set it up by client and by project, and it's a great way to track time for hourly rates. It also keeps me focused on tasks with a running clock pulled up on my screen.

2. Asana Project Management: Asana is the project management application our team uses. In Asana, we create a project board for each client, and the board is home to the client's media buys and deliverables. Each deliverable is its own task, and each task has its own subtasks which serve as the sub steps and processes to fulfill the deliverable. Asana allows each task to have its own due date and can be used in the calendar view so, at any given time, our team knows what the next steps are and who is responsible in just one click.
Links: <https://asana.com/product>, <https://asana.com/guide/help/views/boards>

3. Alexsys Team: project management tool that helps you complete complicated projects by recording and assigning responsibilities with due dates for tasks in one database.

4. Boomerang: We use Gmail as corporate email server; Boomerang is a fantastic extension for managing schedule of emails.

5. Rev.Com: Journalists should outsource interview transcription tasks to Rev.com or another transcription platform. Outsourcing your transcriptions saves you valuable time. A task that may take hours could be returned to you within a few minutes for just a few dollars, especially if you opt for the more affordable computerized or automatic transcription option. Computerized transcription may have some errors, especially with equine terms, but you can correct those fairly quickly with a quick proofread and the judicious use of the find and replace function.

6. Photo Mechanic: This is a photo browser tool I didn't know I needed. It allows you to view every photo in an album incredibly quickly, even with large raw files. You can view them all as a contact sheet or individually. You can rate and categorize photos and delete within the app. I quickly cull photos in a first round, star photos for editing, and categorize them for editorial use.

7. Asana Workflows and Dependency Tasks: Within Asana, our team can set up workflows and dependency tasks to reduce questions like, "Do you have those materials for me yet?" For example, Rachel must provide email content to Suzy so that Suzy can set up the HTML. In Asana, Suzy's task to set up the HTML depends on Rachel providing the content. Once Rachel inputs the content and completes her task, Suzy is notified that she can begin setting up the HTML. No internal team emails or chats back and forth are needed!

Links: <https://asana.com/product>, <https://asana.com/guide/help/premium/task-dependencies>

8. Microsoft Teams: Another project management tool with meeting, chat and project organization and collaboration capabilities.

9. Zoho Notebook: You have dozens of app/web-based notes options, but I like this because the features I need are truly free (no add-ons).

10. Adobe Premiere Pro: If you already subscribe to Adobe, you can access a free voice transcription software within Adobe Premiere. Import your audio file into Premiere, then use the “Captions and Graphics” tab to auto-transcribe your interviews. Auto-transcription can have errors with horse terms, but it’s an easy fix. Again, outsourcing transcription saves you time.

11. Temi: This transcription website has literally transformed my workflow. You pay \$.25 per minute of audio, and using AI, it will transcribe to the website in minutes. You can quickly locate sections of the interview by time slot and listen to only what you need to hear audibly. You can download the entire interview to a word doc, or the way I use it, I keep that screen up as I’m working in a word doc and simply type the interview quotes as needed. It’s also handy for podcast notes. This has cut my work time by more than 50%, and it’s the only way I can produce the amount of work I do today.

12. Asana Feedback and Proofing Tool: Within Asana, I can provide visual feedback to my team straight on the document or image we are working on. For example, a sales sheet can be uploaded by our designer for review. Once I open the PDF, I can click on the exact word that needs to be changed and leave a comment. This creates a subtask for my designer to easily work through and check off requested design or copy changes right within the platform.

Links: <https://asana.com/product>, <https://asana.com/guide/help/premium/proofing>

13. Adobe Spark (now Creative Cloud Express): Quickly and easily make standout content from hundreds of templates for social media, web, etc.

14. Descript: Monthly subscription service for corporate management of editorial transcripts, but variable on industry-specific nomenclature.

15. Block and Easy Organizational Habits: Use the block method for your calendar to slot time for writing, interviews, transcribing, and more. Share calendar invites with tech-savvy sources to ensure you never get stood up for another interview. Color-code blocks for clients, stories, or by other categories. This streamlines your workflow to ensure you’ve always got time to do what needs to be done; saves you re-scheduling interviews with sources who forgot your appointments; and more.

16. Word Swag: If you’re creating social media content for your company, this is a great little app for some fun and basic graphics. Kate Byars introduced me to it. The fonts are fresh, there’s a variety of options, and you can choose from your own photo or one from their robust free library. You can also add your logo. It’s a bit funky to work with and doesn’t work for every situation, but it’s a great tool. I use it for Freelance Remuda and my own business.

17. Loom: Loom is an app that allows you to record and share messages of your screen, camera, or both and enables the recipients of your message to react and comment in real-time right within the site. Loom is great for providing feedback on design projects because it allows you to record your screen to highlight things that you like or things that need to be changed. It’s great because it allows the viewers to add emoji reactions and comments in real time during your feedback video so you can quickly gather a consensus and the group’s thoughts without having to schedule a formal meeting time or going back and forth via email.

Link: <https://www.loom.com/>

18. Promoboxx: A digital asset marketing tool that allows a brand to create campaigns and unifies the look and feel of that brand in an easy-to-use format for retailers.

19. Express Scribe: A USB foot pedal and software system that allows you to transcribe various file types — when accuracy is a must.

20. Password Storage Systems: Use LastPass or another password storage system to save your passwords for everything everywhere. Forgotten passwords can be a huge hassle and slow down your workflow by cutting you off from your work in progress.

21. DropBox – to scan receipts: I'm sure many people use DropBox for various reasons, but I mainly use it to create a folder with article, photos and photo guide for an article and then send the link to my editor. I also use it to scan documents and receipts. Using the app on my phone, I scan a receipt, save it to my receipts folder on my phone, and can access it easily on my computer.

22. Present PowerPoint in Microsoft Teams: You can present PowerPoint presentations in Teams meetings without losing everyone's faces on your screen. Step 1: Join the Teams meeting. Step 2: Open your presentation in PowerPoint. Step 3: Click "Present in Teams" in the top right corner of PowerPoint. Your presentation will appear within the Teams meeting. The other people in the meeting will see a full-page view of your presentation and minimized video feeds of the other members across the top or side. As the presenter, you will see your current slide in the center, any notes from the PowerPoint "Notes" section, your full slide deck across the bottom, and the video feeds of the other members across the top, giving you all the tools you need for a successful presentation while still interacting with the group!
Link: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/present-from-powerpoint-in-microsoft-teams-28b20e74-7165-499c-9bd4-0ad975d448ad>

23. Tawk.To Live Chat: Live chat software allows you to monitor and chat with visitors on your website, mobile app, or a free customizable page.

24. Fiverr: I used voice talent to improve a video, but other freelance services were offered.

25. Canva.com: Are you shy with Photoshop or just short on time? Canva is a powerful, free website that helps you make easy, social media-friendly graphics in a snap. You can also edit photos, drop in watermarks, add custom colors, etc. Canva streamlines your workflow because it is intuitive and doesn't require you to download software. You can even use Canva to make an attractive resume from one of their templates.

26. Mile IQ: I don't drive to work every day, but this is an easy way to track mileage for photo shoots and meetings. You can easily categorize your drives and download a spreadsheet when it comes time for taxes. It's an app for your phone and also the computer.

27. Microsoft Teams “Wiki”: When you create a Team within Teams, you will notice the default views across the top are typically “General”, “Posts”, “Files”, and “Wiki”. We use the “Wiki” tab like Wikipedia! We put all the relevant, overarching information and resources related to the Team or project on this page for easy reference. For example, my Client Management Team’s Wiki page holds basic account contact information, links to our media kit, the print issue schedule, and our sponsorship planning spreadsheet for quick reference. You could also use the Wiki for lists you often need to refer to, such as accounting codes. You could use it to keep requests and processes consistent by outlining material needs that the team can copy and paste.

Link: <https://www.customguide.com/microsoft-teams/use-wikis>

28. Salsify: A digital asset management tool that allows brands to manage, syndicate, and optimize product content.

29. Teleprompter: A user-friendly, free teleprompt on your laptop – I love the large font and variable speeds.

30. Commitment: Make appointments with yourself for important things. This isn’t a gadget as much as a habit.

31. Quickbooks Online – invoicing, expenses: Quickbooks has been around forever, but I use the online version for invoicing and tracking my income/expenses. I have instant insight on how much money I have owed to me at any given moment and when it’s coming in, how my income has been this year versus last year, and every expense can be tracked and categorized. I add receipts (already scanned in Dropbox) to each expense, but you can also scan them in the app. It makes tax time much simpler.

32. Microsoft SharePoint & Teams “Files”: My Team uses the “Files” tab within Teams (and, by extension, SharePoint) to keep track of project documents and to collaborate. Think of “Files” like Google Drive: not only does everyone have access to the files in one central location, but they can also collaborate and work on those files together. My team and I often use Teams to work on presentations together by adding our own slides and editing and adding comments to other team members’ additions. This prevents version control chaos because we are all working on the same document in real time, and it keeps us focused by having all our files in one place with no need to leave Teams. (Side fact: Did you know that when you create a new Team within Microsoft Teams, it also creates a SharePoint site? The two are synced. Actually, they are the same, so any changes you make in one will automatically appear in the other.)

Link: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/file-sharing>

33. CRM: CRM stands for customer relationship management, a set of integrated, data-driven software solutions that improve how you interact and do business with your customers.

34. Monofratto XPRO Monopod: A monopod that can take a licking; possibly the best feature is how well it travels when faced with TSA restrictions.

35. Chrome/firefox/browser Programming: Program your browser to open with all your favorite apps and sites immediately to save time and remind yourself of the most important things to check first. This streamlines your workflow by eliminating distractions and putting what you want to look at first right in front of your face – and makes you less likely to type in Facebook.com first, for example.

36. Lightroom – for Keywording: I do the majority of my photo editing in lightroom. After choosing images in Photomechanic, I will import them into lightroom and edit them before exporting them as Jpgs. Shelley Paulson taught me to keyword each image in the “import” screen. You can keyword all images at once, individual images, or both. These keywords stay with the image. It’s much easier than opening photos one at a time in Photoshop to do this.

37. SocialBakers Approvals and Scheduling: The Equine Network uses SocialBakers as our social media marketing platform. SocialBakers allows our team to build social posts, approve the content, and schedule posts across many different platforms and accounts. Our digital editors can build an entire month-long social campaign across Facebook and Instagram (and other platforms). Then the managing editors can review and approve the content, and finally, the content can be scheduled and published all in one centralized place.
Link: <https://www.socialbakers.com/platform/publishing-and-scheduling>

38. Microsoft OneDrive: Save, access, edit, and share files and photos wherever you are in cloud-based storage.

39. Lumecube Triple Shoe Mount: When you need to take photos and record videos while taking notes, this bundles your equipment on one camera.

40. Adobe PDF: Use Adobe PDF’s Fill & Sign to streamline the exchange of contracts between yourself and clients. This eliminates printing, mailing, or scanning contracts and ensures there’s always an electronic copy of key essential documents for both sides of an agreement.

41. Tape Recorder Mic: I absolutely can’t live without this piece of equipment. It plugs into my digital recorder, and the mic fits in my ear like an airpod. Then you place your phone over your ear, and the mic will record both sides of the conversation. This is how I do all of my phone interviews. It’s \$16 and crucial!

42. Chrome Extension: GoFullPage: When building custom web pages or eblasts for clients, permissions to view preview links can be tricky. The easiest solution is a high-resolution screenshot for quick progress and layout questions. However, a web page and long eblast often require you to scroll to see everything, making a traditional screen grab clunky. My favorite solution is the Google Chrome extension called “GoFullPage.” GoFullPage appears on your Chrome extension bar so you can quickly access it anytime you are online, and it takes a screenshot of the entire page by scrolling automatically. When it’s done, you are left with a .JPEG image of the entire length of the page that you can download and email for approvals. You can even annotate the image to highlight the most important things if you’d like. Best of all, this extension is free!
Link: <https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/gofullpage-full-page-scre/fdpohaocaechififmbbbbknoclclcl?hl=en>

43. Air Bar: Turns your laptop into touchscreen capable.

44. SmugMug: Cost-effective (corporately) web-based photo management system, which helps when someone on the outside wants a picture.

45. Notes – story ideas, shot list in a pinch: I use my Notes app on my iPhone to jot down story ideas when I'm out and about. I sometimes put an editorial shot list on Notes in a pinch.

Bonus: ZOOM, SKYPE, OBS: Use the native recording options within Zoom or Skype to record interviews and make sure to have a backup recording running, such as OBS Studio, which records your screen. Having double recordings of interviews helps ensure you've always got that key interview handy. TIP: Label interview files and backup interview files with "O" for original and "BU" for backup.

For example: O_Ken McNabb_4152022_HorseandRider.mp4 and BU_Ken McNabb_4152022_HorseandRider.mp4.

To read additional tips from equine media professionals, visit <https://www.americanhorsepubs.org/45-ideas-in-45-minutes/>

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