

Managing My Life as a CEO and a Mayor

Basic iPhone features help me do double duty as an oil brokerage president and a small town Iowa mayor.

by Ed Malloy

[Publishers Note: We have been publishing our mobile computing magazines from Fairfield, Iowa since 1985. Fairfield, one of the most exciting small cities in America, is home to the Steven Sondheim Center for the Performing Arts and Iowa's only professional musical theater company. It is also the home of one of the most unique universities in the country, Maharishi University of Management, which is an accredited university with a student body that practices Transcendental Meditation.

Recently, I bumped into my friend, Mayor Ed Malloy, using his iPhone and asked him to write about his experience. Ed's story illustrates the power of a smart, easy-to-use phone, and provides a glimpse into a great place to live and work. —Hal Goldstein, Publisher]

Fairfield, Iowa, population 9,600, is one of the best small towns in America with an entrepreneurial economy, cultural diversity, and lots of friendly people. I love being its mayor, but the position is part time and pays very little, so I moonlight as the president of an oil brokerage company.

I have been brokering refined oil products for over 25 years and can tell you that it's one of the most fast-paced professions around; one that demands swift and accurate communications. For a long time that meant being tied to the phones, but a few years back the trading community shifted to the instant message as the main form of communicating orders.

IM's ability to respond quickly to many different contacts also helps me with my responsibilities as mayor, allowing me to stay in touch with city hall throughout the day, whether I'm at home, at my business, or on the road. Business contacts, citizens, and city staff are all on my instant messenger lists, allowing me to communicate seamlessly with them. The major challenge with this system is managing multiple conversations.

Enter the iPhone

I had been using a Motorola RAZR with Easyedge for messaging, but realized that I needed a better solution. I've always used PCs at work and Apple computers at home, and have been impressed with Apple's continuing innovations. So when the Apple iPhone hit the market, I got one—it's the best machine I have ever owned. The large bright screen and the easy-to-use touch screen made managing my instant messages effortless and efficient. Now I can field a message about a broken street light and close a million-gallon gasoline deal on the same screen. I also depend a great deal on my calendar and contact list, which I keep in Outlook on my work PC and sync to my iPhone using iTunes.

This combination works beautifully, and the iPhone is a great way to access the information when I'm away from the office.

I travel a lot, both as mayor and company president, and I use my time traveling to catch up on phone calls. It's legal to use a headset while driving in Iowa, and I use the stock headset that came with the iPhone. The clarity is amazing! I have never had a clearer or higher-quality audio experience.

Finally, I occasionally use Safari to browse the Web for personal use, and to read the New York Times and Des Moines Register for all the political news I need. Web access is great and the connection speed is decent over Easyedge. I love the iPhone's tap-to-expand feature.


All in all, the iPhone is a sleek yet solid device with powerful capabilities. It's almost like having a desktop computer in your pocket.

Mayor Malloy discusses local issues with Democratic presidential nominee Senator Barack Obama.



The election's a comin'

Iowa holds an almost sacred place in American politics, holding the first-in-the-nation caucuses. Most of the presidential candidates made their way through Fairfield several times, including Senator Barack Obama shown above. I had a chance to talk with him and discuss local, state, and national issues.

Local elections are held in off-years from the national elections, so I have the year off. I face re-election every two years, so I'm up again in 2009. Fairfield is a pretty tech-savvy place, and the image of a mayor using an iPhone to conduct the city's business doesn't hurt me come election time. You can be sure that I'll be checking the national and local returns on my iPhone! 



Ed Malloy is the mayor of the city of Fairfield, Iowa and is President and partner of Danaher Oil Company. He serves on the Citizens Advisory Board of Iowa State University Extension, the Board of Advisors for Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, and the Board of Directors of Iowa for a Better Future. mayormalloy@fairfieldcityhall.com.