As computers and peripheral devices become smaller, faster, and smarter, these digital technology advancements enable easier, and more effective, courtroom trial preparation and presentations. The following list provides an overview of five of the most notable advancements in technology that may very soon impact the legal industry.

1. **WEB-BASED PRESENTATION**

Good communication between the attorney and trial consultant is the necessary underpinning for creation of an effective demonstrative. Some web-based applications have streamlined this process of communication well beyond the ubiquitous marked-up hard copy. Here are just a couple of the software options available today which have revolutionized the ability to exchange presentations and ideas.

**Zentation**

This application is used for synchronizing a PowerPoint slide presentation with a video or audio. Primarily, it is used to enable narration of a slide presentation, an ability which can prove advantageous to attorneys during their creation of neutral summaries for focus groups and presentations during mock trials. The video or audio can be recorded right from a laptop’s webcam/microphone, and then synced effortlessly to each slide. Less commonly used, but likewise a powerful tool, is a feature that enables attorneys to orally communicate edits for demonstratives directly to trial consultants. Instead of writing or typing changes, the attorney can simply speak and record the changes related to each respective slide. Edits can be sent off, virtually at the speed of thought.

**Prezi**

Prezi is the whiteboard of the future. This cloud-based presentation software tool enables a presenter to create real-time, crisp, and clean graphics, that are dynamic, and deliver them to multiple users anywhere in the world. It is a powerful storytelling tool because, unlike a traditional slideshow, in which framed slides dictate the conversation, the Prezi images follow the flow of the presenter’s dialogue. Viewers can pan around the open canvas and zoom in and out of the visuals. Prezi has been used recently at TED conferences and by the World Economic Forum.
2. WIRELESS SCREEN MIRRORING

One of the most interesting advancements in presentation technology is wireless screen sharing. Attorneys often want to quickly show consultants a document or demonstrative they have on their phones or laptops. This technology offers attorneys various ways to cast this content to an LCD screen or projector. It allows the user access to, and control of, multiple sources on one central presentation device (Screen/HDTV). It eliminates the hassles of changing out wiring and manipulating multiple devices to ensure they work properly.

Mersive

Mersive is a leading provider of wireless software-based collaboration solutions. Its product, Solstice, enables any number of users to simultaneously present, share, and control content. This feat is accomplished by meeting participants sending content from their individual laptops and mobile devices onto a single display. Thus, the meeting focus is not limited to others listening to a lone presenter. Instead, a meeting becomes a collaborative, synergistic venture.

3. HDMI/DISPLAYPORT

Interestingly enough, most high-tech courtrooms are outfitted with VGA connections as the physical interfaces for computers and document cameras. While VGA technology is reliable and universal, it is not the most up-to-date version. Laptops are able to output high-definition graphics, yet, most courtrooms are not equipped to enable viewing of this output. The next-generation courtrooms will adopt true high-definition connections as their input source thus enabling the full potential of HD presentation display. HDMI, and the lesser known, DisplayPort, are the current interface connectors that will allow high-definition display to happen.

4. ANNOTATION TECHNOLOGY

Real-time addition of markups and comments to exhibits and demonstratives engages the audience and enhances their comprehensive understanding of material. In particular, physical marking up of a document presented on an ELMO, or other visual presenters or document cameras, has proven an effective courtroom technique. As the effectiveness of this technique has become widely recognized, more attorneys are adopting its usage in the courtroom. Most attorneys I know refer to this as the “John Madden technique”.

SMART Technologies

SMART Technologies provides a variety of interactive whiteboards, flat panel displays, and collaborative software to its users. Using SMART technology during trial, an attorney is armed with mark-up and document saving capabilities well beyond those offered by the standard courtroom annotation systems. This interface allows the user to type text, create icons, make markups, and compare and contrast documents and data. An attorney well-trained in SMART technology can expertly convey his points much more effectively than he could with common pen-to-paper techniques. Adroit information delivery results in interested and engaged jurors.

5. WIRELESS TECHNOLOGY

With the advent of Bluetooth and AirPlay technologies, we are about to witness the long-awaited conversion from a wired environment to a truly wireless courtroom. Soon, attorneys will not need to plug in to projectors or monitors or any interface for the presentation of evidence. Advancements in wireless technology in the consumer world have already occurred, with the popularity of Bluetooth speakers, for example. Today, people can play music directly from their smartphones without having to connect a single wire. The same principle will apply in the courtroom with regard to projection and audio. Eventually, when Internet connections become more reliable, courtroom video and audio systems will be run off of a network or cloud-based technology.