

# Litigation Briefcases

*A December 2010 discussion on SoloSez, the email listserv for general practice, solo and small firm lawyers*

Does anybody recommend a litigation briefcase for casefiles? (the kind that rolls) I am killing my shoulders with my current briefcase when I go to court. I have too many files.

Would like one that maybe is on the trendier side (if that is at all possible!) since I feel slightly dorky with a rolling briefcase...

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If you have so many cases that you need a briefcase with wheels, then don't feel dorky at all and roll that baby with pride!!

Michael Costanzo

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How about scanning the files with a Scansnap and carrying your files on an iPad? Pretty trendy and the wheels won't get stuck in sidewalk grates.

D.A. "Duke" Drouillard, Nebraska

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I'm definitely thinking about taking an iPad to court.... Particularly because it makes me feel a little calmer knowing I have the statutes at my fingertips.

Unfortunately, you can't hand the court and opposing counsel an exhibit from an iPad.

Cari B. Rincker, New York

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"Unfortunately, you can't hand the court and opposing counsel an exhibit from an iPad."

Do you need a briefcase on wheels just for the exhibits?

D.A. "Duke" Drouillard

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Not sure it would be considered trendy, but Swissgear makes very sturdy rolling bags. Mine can even double as an overnight bag for short trips (fits my 17" laptop + accessories and some clothes, especially in summertime, when clothes aren't as bulky).

I bought the bag at Sams Club, where it currently sells for \$69.88 (I bought mine a few years ago): <http://tinyurl.com/2c2fmpd> . If you're interested, I can get it through my membership and have it shipped to you.

Lisa Solomon, New York

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Good point.

I'm a little nerdy and like to have a lot of things with me "just in case."

Cari B. Rincker

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I recently invested in a rolling bag after borrowing one from my neighbor (a male attorney) a several times and finding it extremely useful. When I went to look at the bags, I found that the more fashionable types were more like suitcases - and had lots of compartments - this would be great on an overnight trip, but leaves room for only one normal size file. I ended up buying a very boxy, unfashionable case that can hold several redwells. The fact that it looks very serious and unfashionable is fine with me as it serves the purpose. My regular purse which I carry as well more than makes up for the ugly case!

Deborah E. Kaminetzky

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I like a rolling luggage cart better. \$20.00 at Walmart. That way I can carry as much as I want and I'm not limited in any way.

Anthony S. Alpert, California

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I'm currently reviewing a number of bags from Tom Bihn. I've been very impressed with them, as a general matter, but they sell a strap called the "Absolute Shoulder Strap" and it's made of some special springy material. I commend it to you, Cari, only in that you might find the load easier to carry with one of their larger bags, like the Empire Builder, and this Absolute Shoulder Strap.

It's expensive, to be sure. But the Empire Builder is the best bag I've ever used and I'm not just saying that because they gave me one to review and probably won't ask for it back.

I have a rolling backpack from Victorinox-Swiss Army, which I use to transport my "speaking" equipment (projector, audio equipment, etc.) - but my files now come with me only in the Empire Builder.

Either way, try that Absolute Shoulder Strap - it's available for purchase separately from [www.tombihn.com](http://www.tombihn.com)

Victor Medina, New Jersey

P.S. - I don't get anything from Tom Bihn for recommending their products - no money, and the bag is mine either way.

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If you want a rolling bag that's not the typical square, ugly, bulky "man bag" - consider this bag.

I just bought it and been very happy with it. I warn you though, it's NOT for carrying all of your exhibits to court. It will hold a netbook, two folders 1.5" thick, your make-up bag, pens, and other small misc items. I think it's perfect for everyday use.

Jeena Cho, California

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Christmas... list... just... revised.

Richard D. Allen

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If you are schlepping to Queens, Bronx, Staten Island etc from Manhattan, get yourself an ugly rolling litigation bag. You can probably find one on ebay.

Jeena Belil, New York

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Very cute. However, I'm going for function first. I need to be able to stick a few redwells or a big binder full of documents in there.

Cari B. Rincker

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So, if I leave out my make-up bag, it'll probably fit all my files, then? (It takes a lot to maintain this fa 破e.)

-Rick

Richard J. Rutledge, Jr., North Carolina

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What about:

iPad (\$500-\$1,000)

PrintCentral (\$9.99)

HP H470 Mobile Printer(\$160 on Amazon)

Wireless Network Add-On for HP (\$60 on Amazon)

And THEN get a fancy bag to hold it all.

On days you don't think you'll need to print, you can go in with the iPad only. On days where you might need physical documents, you can take the 5-pound printer and print anything on the spot. Of course, that's an expensive way to handle this. But, it IS very cool.

Cheers,

David Allen Hiersekorn, California

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So, if I leave out my make-up bag, it'll probably fit all my files, then?  
(It takes a lot to maintain this fa 破e.)

Oh, no, I think maybe you should leave out the netbook instead.

CJ Stevens, Montana

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You're probably right; never know when I might need to spackle. Priorities and all.

-Rick

Richard J. Rutledge, Jr.

That Swiss bag at Sam's is a good bag at a very good price...

David Rubin, Missouri

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I don't litigate any longer but I did do a Public Inquiry for several months which meant taking lots of boxes of documents through a gravel parking lot, across the street, and up some stairs. In the snow during the winter months. I saw that cart in action, and I was quite impressed.

Michele Allinotte, Canada

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I, too, have the case Lisa has. I do not like it for multiple cases - but use it for a bulky case going to trial. However, that said, I prefer cases without so many "sections." More like what they used to call "magazine" cases. I don't want to dig thru 4/5 different zippered sections to get to everything. I do like the case Lisa has when I am deliberately separating things. The case looks good, rolls good. In fact, was recommended to me by an ALJ at an admin hearing I had. It has been very durable. I use the small, shoulder bag a lot for court - I often do not take the entire file with me. (And sometimes only a yellow pad.) I guess it depends on the case, the court, and the area of law.

Patricia Dennis, Illinois

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Looked at that bag. Looks good. I like the size of the bellowing compartment. Although I like a rolling bag, many times you want to just stick a small case in a bag and be on your way. And I lost my favorite bag. I will definitely look at the empire bag.

Patricia Dennis