

# LEGAL MANAGEMENT

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## If Only It Packed Itself: Bluesmart Luggage

It is no secret that we like all things classified as “smart.” From smart watches and socks to smart light bulbs and coffeemakers, we have it all just about covered. For sure, the one area we could use some extra smartness is during travel.



**BILL & PHIL**

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You know how it is. Long security lines, delayed flights, no power outlets for our drained devices and no comfort for our aching feet. Travel can be a real pain. So when we heard about a new line of smart luggage, we were all ears.

The Bluesmart company has developed a suitcase with embedded technology that we found incredibly intriguing, so we purchased their debut, dubbed Bluesmart One. We are told that this suitcase was featured on the popular television show “Shark Tank,” but we just blindly ordered it based on an advertisement we picked up at a tech show.

At first we thought we had been scammed, as our Bluesmart One suitcase was dead on arrival. There was zero battery life in the suitcase, and when we plugged it in to charge, absolutely nothing happened. To their credit, the customer service folks helped with us some troubleshooting measures, and when all else failed, they shipped us a brand-new replacement suitcase.

Bluesmart One II turned out to be a winner.

First of all, the suitcase is small enough to fit in most overhead luggage bins. It has a hard-shell exterior, which we’re told is water resistant, but we haven’t tested it ... yet. There is an easy-access front compartment for electronics or files, and it has hubless wheels that turn in all directions, making it very easy to roll across the parking lot or the airport terminal. Aesthetically, this is a handsome little case, if not quite as roomy as we had hoped.

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Aesthetics aside, though, we had to investigate what made this suitcase so smart. We downloaded Bluesmart’s companion mobile app so we could pair it with the luggage and watch it do its tricks.

The app has controls for all of the embedded technology. First, we can pull up the location of the suitcase via the GPS tracker function, so when we land in Nashville and our suitcase is on a plane

headed for Chicago, we don't have to wait for the airline folks to track it down. We can tell them ourselves how they screwed up and where to find our luggage. Another useful feature is the ability to lock the suitcase via the app. The instructions indicate that this lock is TSA compliant, and we have had no security incidents so far.

A further safeguard for protecting your luggage is the auto-lock feature. If this feature is turned on, the suitcase automatically locks when it gets out of Bluetooth range from your phone. It will also automatically unlock when you get within range. Very convenient.

With the app, you can also determine the weight of the suitcase. This feature is not terribly useful on this unit because of its size — it is unlikely that you will be carrying anything that will be over the airlines' weight limit. Nonetheless, we would love to have this feature on some of our larger, non-smart suitcases. Perhaps future Bluesmart products will be larger in size.

Another cool feature we really like is the ability to turn on a small LED light on the suitcase via the app. We like to see heads turn in the baggage claim area when our suitcase comes out of the chute with a blue light glowing.

Probably one of the most useful features is the ability to charge other electronic devices directly from the suitcase, via a USB port on the outside of the case and one inside the outer storage pouch. One of our pet peeves is to be on the last leg of a flight late in the day in some far-flung airport with no juice left in our phones. In the crowded waiting area, all of the early birds have commandeered the electrical outlets, and we're left to burn as the last bit of battery drains from our phone. No more. We can simply plug our phone or tablet directly into the suitcase via USB cable, and voila — we have our own portable power supply.

After using the Bluesmart One for several months, we really do like it. As we mentioned, we wish it were a little roomier on the inside. It is, however, perfect for overnight trips. It is a little pricey at \$449, but you just have to pay sometimes for smartness.

If Bluesmart comes out with a larger smart suitcase in the future, we'll probably get that, too — provided it doesn't break the bank.

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**William Ramsey**, Partner at Neal & Harwell, and LogicForce Consulting President **Phil Hampton** are best known for The Bill and Phil Show. The duo tours often and provides technology news and reviews on their website *[www.thebillandphilshow.com](http://www.thebillandphilshow.com)*.

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