

Written by Mark (Admin)
Sunday, 05 February 2012 22:11

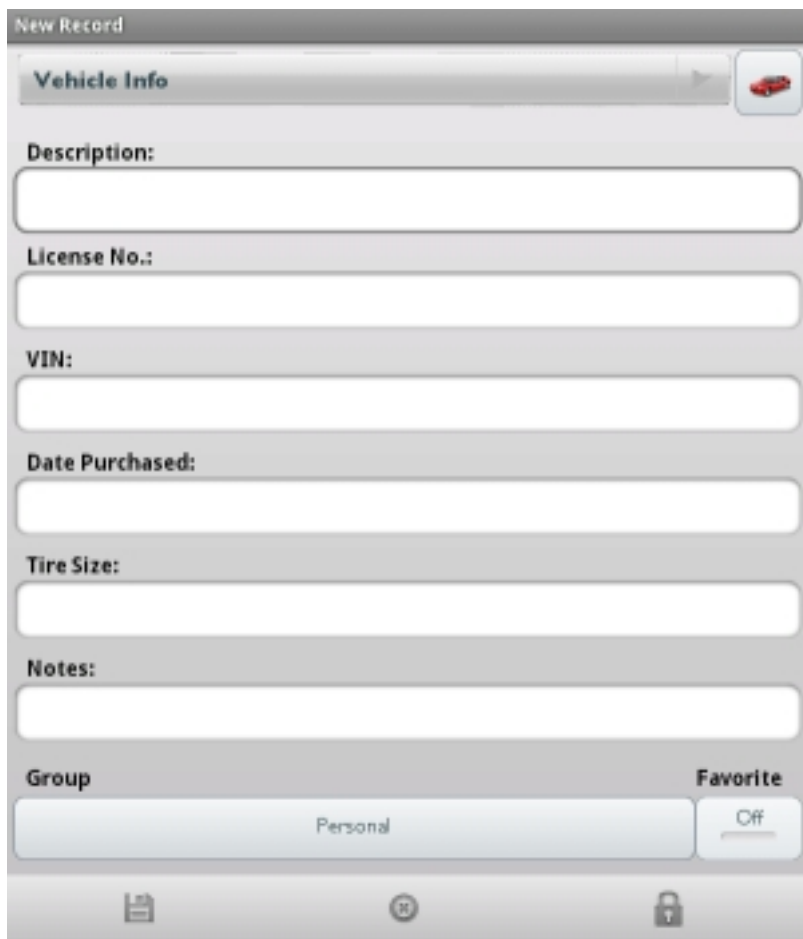
"Password managers" are useful tools that let you put all your **passwords** and **account information** in

an "app" and then protect that app with

one central password

. Using a tool like this is far better than having a single password you use on all your accounts - but you need to pick a tool that fits your needs that has acceptable encryption (security).

Describing the nook [mSecure](#) application from [mSeven Software](#) as a "password manager" tool may not do it justice. It's really a multi-platform personal information manager (PIM) that can sync your data with the mSecure application on all your devices and computers. In my case I've got it installed and synchronizing on my iPhone, iPad and nook! I can put in a password for a new online website on my iPhone and later lookup that password on my MacBook when I get home. In addition to keeping my passwords securely stored in the application, I can keep my family members social security numbers, car information (VIN, Licence, value), or any type of record I like. Let's take a look at how this application works on each platform starting with the nook.



nook Version

At the time of this post the nook cost is \$6.99, but it was less than \$4 on sale recently. When you start up the application you have a blank screen because you have no records defined yet.

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A record could be vehicle information, a web site login, or many other pre-defined templates. To create a record click the "+" symbol at the bottom of the screen and select the type using the drop down box at the very top (the default is a non-intuitive "Unassigned" type). If none of the types work for you it's quite easy to create your own type with specific fields and an icon. I was disappointed there was no "date" field with a calendar widget to easily select a date. After adding a new entry/record/account it appears on the main screen. You can sort the records easily by type (default types are personal & business). There are also options to copy fields to the clipboard so you can easily enter them on other nook Apps (think copying your password to a web page login in the nook browser). The mSecure app *always requires you to put in your password/pin at startup* and can be

locked with a tap of the icon. There is

no

need to add a password to your nook just to protect this application.

After trying the iPhone, Mac, and Android/Nook platforms supported by mSecure I found the nook/Android version to be the least intuitive of the mSecure versions and the iOS to be the best due to it's intuitive user interface guidance. There are some advanced sync options for "discovering" devices to sync with that are simply not supported yet on the nook. That being said, it worked very well on the nook and did what it advertised.

Syncing and mSecure

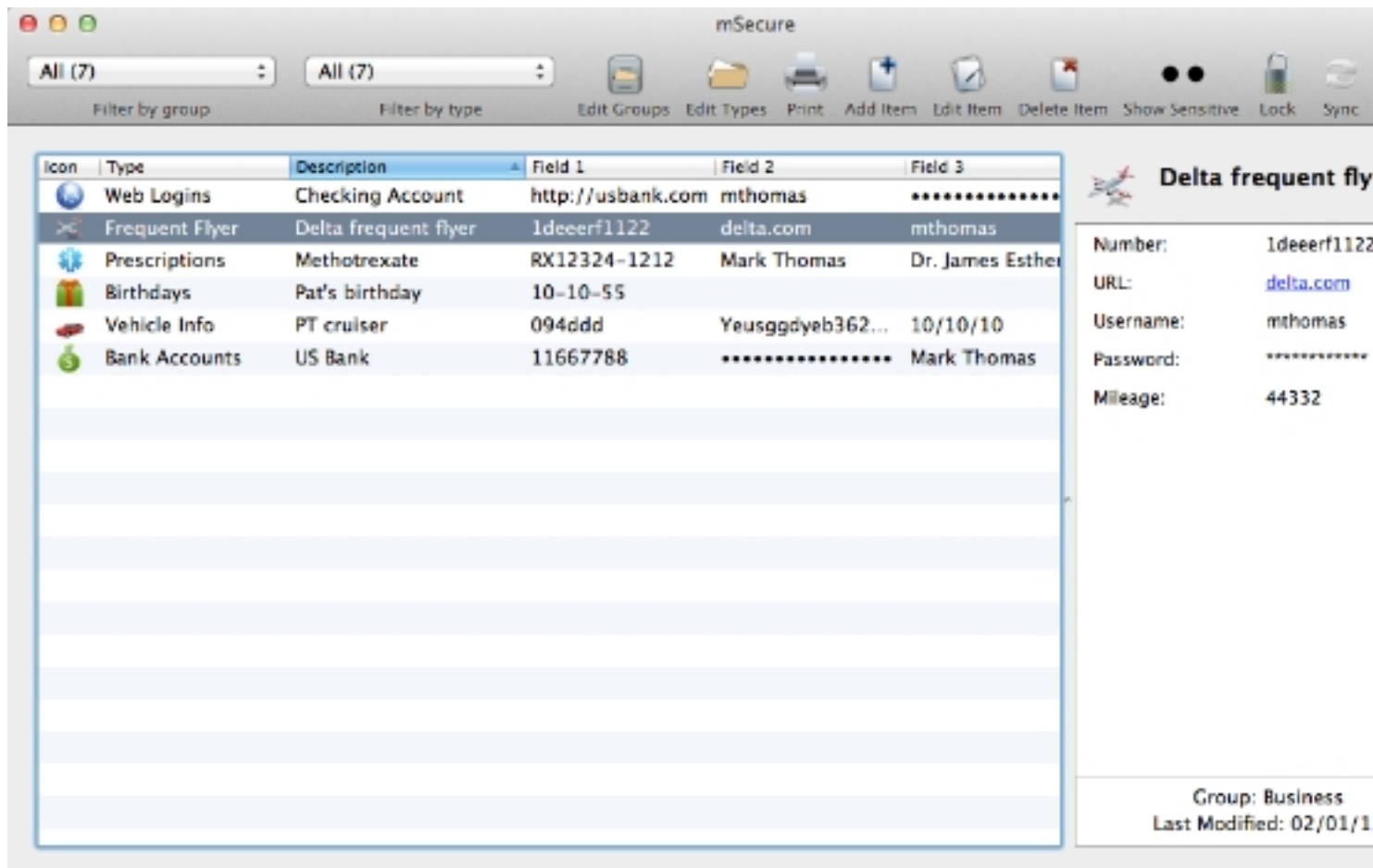
How does the "sync" work? The best approach is to sign-up for a DropBox account (if you don't already have one) and link it to your mSecure app. When you sync it syncs to that DropBox account. So if you update the iPhone you have to sync, and then go to your other mSecure device apps and sync those too (doesn't happen automatically). I verified the file it created on my DropBox account is an ugly encrypted mess nobody can use. There is an option to sync by connecting your devices directly to one another over a wi-fi network. This option might appeal to some because the data is only on your devices but it seems to be a bit complex to setup (you have to know IP addresses and ports on your network).

What gets synced? Everything. New categories, types, and records.

There is a backup/restore option for Gmail. This is not a sync option but a way to save your data off device. If you don't plan on sync'ing multiple devices this is an acceptable way to backup what you have. If you don't mind having one device as a "master" you could just backup to Gmail, then restore from Gmail on your other devices (a way to keep devices in sync but not technically a sync)

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Mac Version



The Mac OSX interface is *tidy and functional*. The left side shows the list of items with the icon, type, description, and some of the initial fields. When you click on an entry the full details with the proper field names shows on the right. If the entry has a link you can launch the browser and/or copy/paste your ID and password. The features and function on the mac are the same it seems as the iPhone and nook.

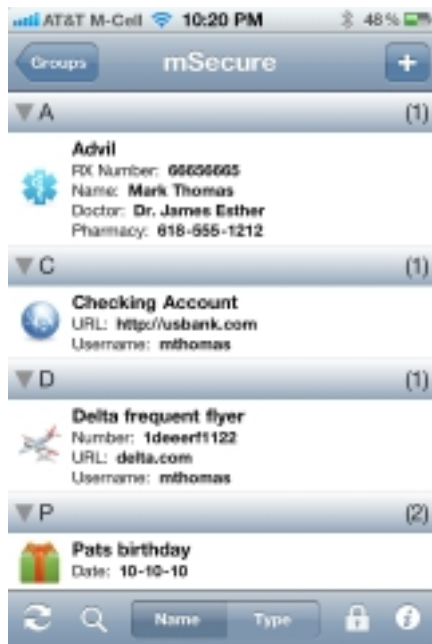
I'm not sure why the cost is twice as iPhone/nook much since it seems to have the exact same functionality.

There is also a Windows application but I use a Mac
 :)

iPhone/iPad Version (iOS)

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The iOS version was the nicest interface mSecure runs on mostly due to the attention Apple has in the base user controls - but it also had hints in the app of how to get it setup when I first ran it. I consistently find most apps work/look the best on the iPhone over their Android versions but ... the app works roughly the same everywhere.

The **Apple AppStore** version of mSecure runs **9.99** which is on par with the other "full" version Password Managers - but they don't have Android, Mac, and Windows versions like mSecure.

Conclusion

There are other password managers out there but I was unable to find one that would work on all the platforms I would want and had a synchronization mechanism to keep my computer and devices on the same page. The nook-specific alternatives were contributed by individuals rather than a software company. My preference is to use "vendor software" for something of this nature (where security is most important). I think the user interface worked well but found it most enjoyable to use on the iPhone/iPad. I hope they add the ability to auto-login to some sites by pre-filling the form and add support for a date field. For \$37 you could get mSecure on all the Mac/iOS/Nook devices in your house (if you share app store ids) and start getting that data in a safe secure location (no, the paper under the keyboard is NOT secure). ***If you just need it for the nook it costs less than a couple of lattes at Starbucks.***

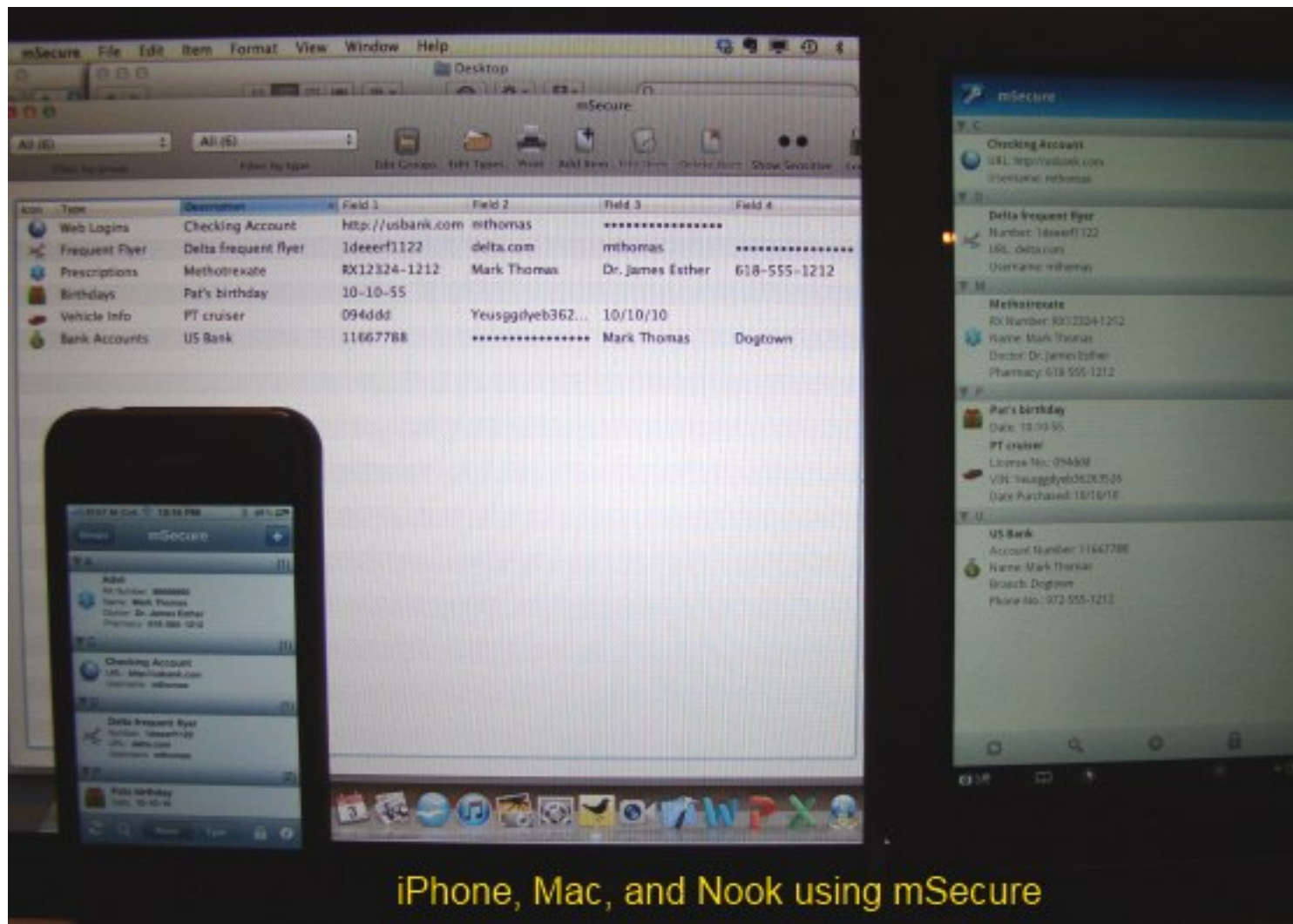
;))

We give mSecure 4 out of 5 stars on this application and think for nook owners it's the

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best option.

Here is a screenshot of all the applications together (Mac/iPhone/nook)



Thanks to mSevenSoftware for providing courtesy copies of the software for review.