

Small Business News & Notes

A Better Telecommuting Option For Small-Business Workers

(NAPSA)—If you work on your own at home—or would like to—you're not alone. According to research by the University of Oregon, about 6 percent of the workforce (over 8 million Americans) telecommute to company jobs from their homes on either a part-time or full-time basis—and the number is increasing. By some estimates, a full 30 percent of the workforce will be telecommuting by the year 2020.

There are many good reasons for this. For one thing, it saves fuel. For another, it saves time and money for both employer and employee.

One thing making telecommuting easier is cloud computing. It involves several computers connected though the Internet or an Intranet. Together, they can reach out and retrieve data processed elsewhere. Now you can even add business voice service to the cloud through Voice over Internet Protocol, or "VoIP." Essentially, the phone system works over the Internet rather than over traditional phone lines.

That means workers can be at home or on the road but appear to customers to be sitting in company headquarters.

One system that serves nearly 15,000 small businesses, many with multiple locations to be tied together via the Internet and their phone system, offers such features as:

- Business communications that can be provisioned quickly and grow as you grow
- The ability to let workers plug in and get working nearly anywhere they have a broadband connection



Whether your company is going green or getting lean—or both—telecommuting makes good sense.

- Auto call attendant
- Music and messages on hold
- Call forwarding and follow me
- Different greetings according to the time of day and the day of week
- A dashboard that keeps track of real-time status of workers
- Extension-to-extension, click-to-call functionality
- Companywide directory
- Outlook integration
- Mobile command and control through iPhone and Android devices.

All that because the company, Vocalocity, specializes in bringing remote office workers together for virtual collaboration.

As one customer expressed it, "I unpacked the box, assembled the phones, plugged them in and they worked. It was a very simple process. With our headquarters being 3,000 miles away and having to travel a lot, I needed a phone system that worked and that I could count on having no troubles with. Vocalocity eliminated the need for any IT support in my company."

Another, describing how handy the system was when an ice storm shut down his city for a week, said, "We forwarded all phones to our home the night before and remoted in with the computers. We might as well all have been in the office for the whole week."

The storm had left many workers stranded at home and forced many businesses to lose a distressing week of work, sales, profits and production. Roads became ice-skating rinks and driveways became sledding terrains. Public transportation, the post office, schools and donation centers all closed. Gas ran short, as did supplies at grocery stores and city hospitals.

A poll of the people in the community who had the telecommuting system in place, however, found that 92 percent were at full functionality and no one could tell that they were not in the office.

Free Information and Advice

You can learn more and get a free quote at www.vocalocity.com or by calling (877)-VOCALOCITY.