

Breaking Free: Take More Vacations And Work Remotely ☺

(NAPSA)—When Tom McGlynn, founder of Focus-N-Fly, started his own personal-training company in 2002, he needed to maintain his freedom and flexibility. As a professional marathon runner, he always had the liberty to travel and compete at a variety of events all over the U.S., as well as go on fishing and golfing vacations.

Now that he was going to train marathon runners himself, he wanted to give them the one-on-one coaching they needed, attend peak races in cities like Boston, Chicago and San Francisco and still take vacations. Tom therefore knew that he had to find a way to run his office while on the road.

By using the right tools, over the past six years, Tom has been able to train successful athletes, efficiently run his business and work remotely for weeks at a time.

A recent QuickBooks survey found that 72 percent of business owners would take more vacations if they were able to manage their businesses remotely. With a bit of creativity, any business owner can find a way to work remotely. Below are Tom's tips on how to set yourself free:

Get Wired

The right technology can liberate you from your desk and make it easy to run your business from anywhere.

- **Buy a laptop.** Feeling stuck at a desk with the various plugs and cords can weigh you down. Lighten up and get a wireless-enabled laptop so you can get out and see the world and find new customers.

- **Manage your finances online.** QuickBooks Online (www.quickbooksonline.com) gives you the flexibility to manage your business finances anywhere, anytime—especially while traveling. It lets you send professional invoices and estimates via e-mail and easily track money coming into and going

out of your business. It also gives you peace of mind knowing that your data is online, backed up daily on secure servers, in case anything happens to your computer.

- **Be resourceful.** There are free Internet terminals everywhere. Tom has accessed his entire business and even sent invoices via QuickBooks Online from stores, cafés and computer terminals at the airport. If you want more control, go ahead and subscribe to mobile broadband through your favorite cell phone carrier so that you can get online whenever and wherever you want.

- **Get a smartphone.** Stay organized and in touch with your clients and employees at all times. With a smartphone, not only can you make calls but you can instantly respond to e-mails, send instant messages (IM) and easily keep track of your appointments. You can even get online and make restaurant reservations or look up an address.

- **Purchase an all-in-one photocopier, fax and scanner.** Reduce paperwork. Upgrade your office photocopier to an all-in-one photocopier, fax and scanner so you don't have to send paperwork via snail mail. If you have employees, this also helps them scan documents and send them to you via e-mail while you're on the road.

One Step At A Time

For Tom McGlynn, the steps listed above did not happen immediately. However, as a dedicated entrepreneur who is passionate about achieving his goals, he found that these steps, with some fine-tuning along the way, helped him effectively run Focus-N-Fly remotely.

With some thoughtful planning, you too can run your business remotely. Just take it one step at a time and, before you know it, you'll be living the life you want while running your own successful business.