

Internet In Our Lives

Online Services Help Busy People Manage Their Lives

(NAPSA)—Technology consultant Dror Amir tried almost everything to get organized. At one point, he even carried a laptop computer, a handheld device and a mobile phone. Even so, like many people these days, he still struggled to keep on top of deadlines, meeting locations and all the other information packed into his hectic life.

He's not alone. A booming life-management industry worth more than \$2 billion has emerged, offering busy people such as Amir a slew of self-help programs, personal organizers and high-tech gadgets from which to choose.

The road to better time management, according to many experts, begins with individuals making small but important changes such as the following:

- **First things first.** Maintain a list of specific things to do each day; set priorities and schedule sufficient time to get the most important things done.

- **Trim the fat.** Analyze how you spend your time by logging all your activities for a few days. This helps you identify wasted time and other patterns.

- **Seek maximum return.** Schedule important activities around the time of day when you are most energetic.

- **Divide and conquer.** Split large projects into manageable, sequential tasks, which can then be fit into your schedule at specific times.

- **Expect the unexpected.** Be sure to build in time for delays and unexpected appointments.

Once you have your work more clearly organized, online services can help you keep on top of it even while you're on the go. Online services offered from sites such as MSN (www.msn.com), Yahoo! (www.yahoo.com) and Franklin-



In search of ways to better manage busy lives, one free service from MSN makes it possible to coordinate personal and professional calendars, to-do lists and address books with a handheld device.

Covey (www.franklincovey.com) are readily available. Amir credits free built-in services from MSN Hotmail for helping him schedule his personal and professional calendars, to-do lists and address books, all of which he can access almost anywhere via his Hotmail account on a desktop PC, handheld device or even his mobile phone.

These and other integrated services make it possible to receive and answer important e-mail and instant messages. Friends and family can also share and check each other's online calendars to arrange family picnics or holiday parties.

Especially valuable for Amir are the timely reminders he receives on his phone and computers before important meetings, birthdays and anniversaries, and when his personal bills are due each month.

"Instead of carrying several devices," Amir says, "I now only need to carry my cell phone to access my Hotmail account and all of the information I need."