



“News about IT Technologies that can help your business prosper”

Millbury, MA

Telecommuting—Working from Home ANYWHERE

What Is Telecommuting And How Is It Going To Help My Business?

Telecommuting is a fancy word for allowing employees to work from home, in remote offices, or while on the road. While this is not a new concept, recent advancements in remote access technology and security have made it very affordable and easy for even micro business owners. And since so many got a taste of working from home during the pandemic, use of telecommuting has gone through the roof.

Why would a business want to do this? Aside from the obvious quarantine motivation, some businesses are being forced to support remote workers because they've run out of office space or to accommodate "road warriors." But many are doing it for these reasons...

- Business owners (and key managers) working 60+ hours a week are using it as a way to continue working after hours and on weekends from the convenience of their home office.
- Allowing employees to work from home means businesses can cut back on office space, lowering rent and utility bills – and according to a recent survey of small businesses, nearly 40% of small and medium

businesses have (or plan to) cut down office space and allow employee to work remotely from home to save money. Not only is this lowering overhead, but it's making for happier employees who no longer have to fill their gas tanks.

- Telecommuting actually increases employee productivity, lowers stress levels, and improves retention. Contrary to what you may believe, employees who work from home tend to work *more*, not less. Because the computer is right there in their home, they will often put in extra hours during the evening and on weekends when they normally wouldn't be able to access the network. Plus, employees working on detailed programs, graphics, and projects tend to get more done when they don't have to deal with office distractions.
- Some companies are allowing their employees to work from home two or three days out of a week instead of giving them a raise – a bonus many will gladly take over more money. This also works well if you have limited office space because employees can rotate desk usage.
- It allows you to keep great employees that need or want to relocate, need to stay home to take care of a sick family member, or who are sick, injured, pregnant, or otherwise unable to physically come into the office.

- When hiring, this dramatically increases the resume pool, because you can hire a remote worker ANYWHERE. There's a great book, the "4 Hour Workweek" by Tim Ferris, that discusses hiring remote employees in foreign countries to get the best possible bang for the buck. More companies are doing this every day. You'd be surprised how many of them are small businesses.
- Here in New England, we have snow days—days when it's dangerous to drive to work, or at the very least your children don't have school and need to be watched. Telecommuting allows employees to take care of their kids while still fulfilling their work responsibilities.

Getting Started with Telecommuting

Before you go "whole hog" with a telecommuting or remote access, we recommend conducting a small test where you (and possibly a few key managers) are set up for remote work.

Once you are comfortable with the concept, you may start allowing a few key employees to work remotely one day a week or a couple of days a month. Or, you can simply allow employees to use it while traveling or if they are forced to stay home to take care of a child, on a snow day, etc.

But the single most important thing for you to do first is find a very experienced IT consultant who will recommend and implement the right technology to support YOUR specific situation and needs. This is unbelievably important for avoiding expensive mistakes and unnecessary frustration.

But what about...?

Telecommuting does have some downsides, some of which may become apparent after you perform your initial test we mentioned above. With greater physical distance between you and your team, it can be tough to keep employees organized, secure, and on task. These problems are fixable, it's just a matter of finding what solution fits your business. For example, there's a program called ActivTrak that can monitor employee productivity. This can be a big help if you have a bigger team to manage and need help keeping them all on task. We'll have more details on this in a future article.

Want Help Now?

Call us at 508-471-3155 or email us at
info@alphanetsolutions.com

Alpha NetSolutions, Inc.
3 Silver Fox Dr, Fl 1, Millbury, MA 01527