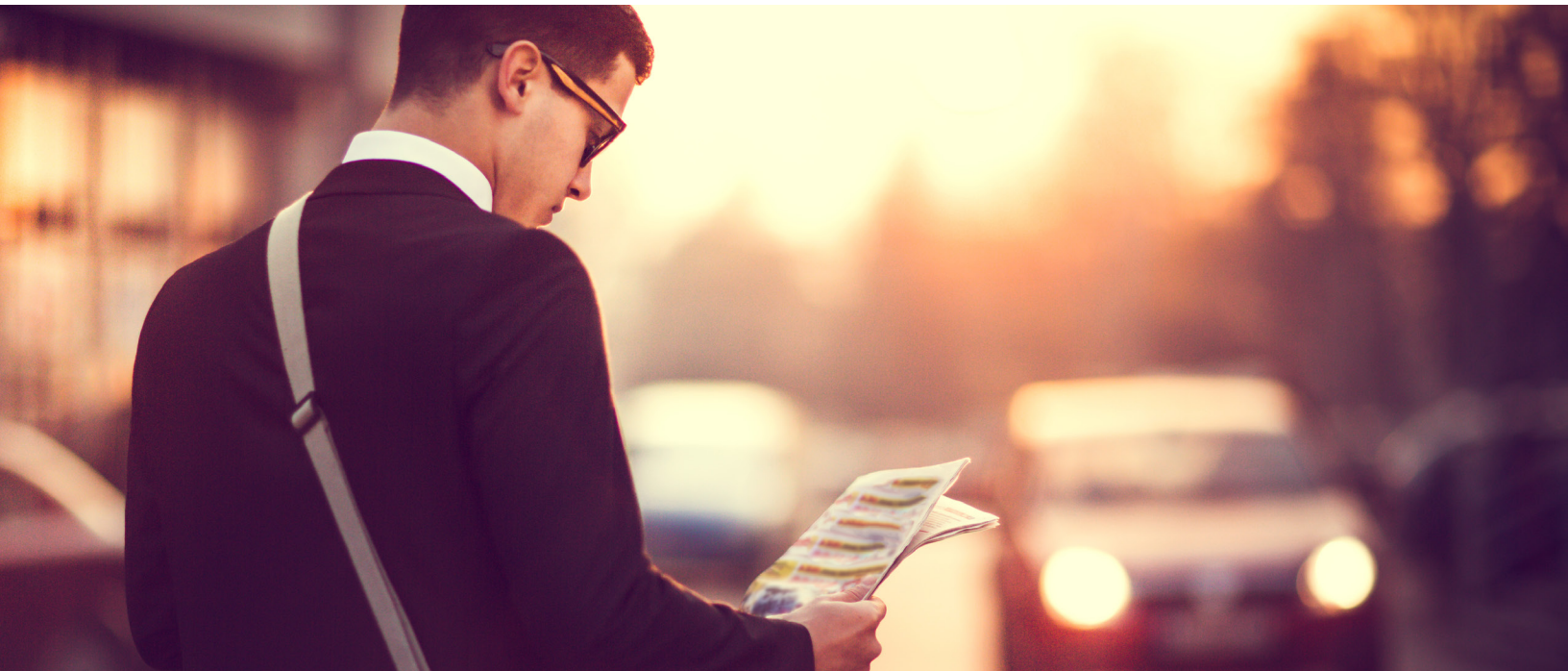




INTELLIGENT OFFICE

Traveling Entrepreneurs

PRESERVING A PROFESSIONAL IMAGE WHEN ON THE GO



As business people and entrepreneurs continually strive to grow their business, doing so frequently involves traveling around the country to attend networking or tradeshow events, meeting clients and prospects on their own turf, and getting some face-time with colleagues, contractors or employees who may operate in a remote location. Preparation for travel to these off-site meetings requires a lot of planning, and busy entrepreneurs may run into certain difficulties when traveling outside of their home base. It can be a struggle to remember the essentials needed for travel while at the same time working to prepare the necessary presentations and conducting research surrounding the focus of their trip.

Keeping It Together When on the Move

When traveling for business, you'll want to ensure that you arrive at your destination fully prepared for the business at hand. While every entrepreneur has different needs while traveling, common things to consider can include:

- » Feeling comfortable knowing you have access to a professional office space or conference room in cities throughout the country, complete with all the amenities you might have at your office headquarters
- » Finding the best spots for entertaining a client or prospect
- » Comfortably navigating the city
- » Keeping up with current tasks and staying organized while on the road
- » Finding adequate conference spaces outside of hotel lounges or coffeehouses
- » Reliable Internet and/or access to office equipment
- » Ready access to be able to quickly respond to phone calls and message
- » Ensuring you and your business are portraying professional image whether at home or on the road

To prevent chaos and headaches when out of town, an entrepreneur should consider doing the following:

- » Plan out the week: when visiting a new city, do the research ahead of time. Use sites like Yelp, Google Reviews and TripAdvisor to find hotels near meeting or conference locations, the best restaurants in the vicinity to take clients to for lunch or dinner meetings, other places for entertaining and the like. Map out all of the locations, and add the maps to a mobile device so they're always available.
- » Learn about the location: Research the location you're heading to to find interesting facts that can be used for small talk during meetings or networking events. Create a list of interesting locales to visit. Figure out the local customs, especially in terms of transportation. If traveling to another country, this latter tip is very important since bus or ferry schedules may be involved. Always have some local currency on hand in case a location or travel method only takes cash.
- » Keep a calendar of sessions and meetings and schedule free time: Most events have session schedules. These can be added to calendars on mobile devices like smartphones and tablets. Alerts should be added (15 to 30 minutes before the scheduled event) to remind you of upcoming trip events. Additionally, schedule "free time" to take care of phone calls, get prepped for meetings or even perform the needed tasks of the day.
- » Pack ahead of time: Create a list of everything that's needed for the trip, and pack at least 2-3 days ahead of time. Bring a mixture of professional and casual clothing. Weigh your luggage to determine if it's too heavy, and check the weight limit for the airline (generally around 50 pounds). If it's too heavy, transfer some items to a carry-on, check a secondary bag, or ship items to the location (i.e. presentation materials, swag, etc.) Verify that all important electronics and charging devices are packed, especially smartphones, tablets and laptops.

Outsource some work: Make sure you don't get backed up on your daily work and communications. Delegate daily tasks to an assistant or employee. Get some work done on the plane, or simply schedule a "catch-up" day when your trip is completed. Get some sleep! When you're exhausted from trying to do manage too much at once, it shows. Go to bed early a few nights each week before travel, especially if traveling to another time zone. When at the meeting or conference, try to get back to the hotel as early as possible each night to relax and wind down.

While these are all necessary tips to for the traveling entrepreneur to consider, one thing stands out; making sure that you present yourself and your business in a professional and reputable manner at all times is essential. So how do you manage your time from both your base headquarters, whether it be from a home office or a company office, while you're on the road? Take advantage of a virtual office space. Virtual office services can provide the traveling entrepreneur with all of the amenities and space that they need to maintain a professional image when on the go, ranging from access to meeting areas and conference rooms with all the essentials (WiFi, refreshments, printers, fax machines, etc) in cities where your business doesn't have a permanent presence to providing reception and administrative duties either at home or on the road.

Why Consider Virtual Office Services?

A Virtual Office service can be an excellent solution for both the start-up entrepreneur looking to keep overhead expenses to a minimum as well as an established business person looking to maintain a professional presence while traveling. Virtual office services provide all of the requirements and amenities of a traditional office at home and on the road. Additionally, if your business is operating in a smaller environment, or maybe even a home office, a virtual office can provide your business with a physical address to use on your company's business cards, website, and to meet clients and receive deliveries and mail. These spaces also usually come with all the latest technologies, including video conferencing, projectors and WiFi.

Virtual spaces are designed for entrepreneurs with different needs. Some entrepreneurs may actually have a physical location in their home city, but need an additional space for meetings and getting work done in other cities. Other entrepreneurs, however, may only ever work in non-traditional office spaces like their home or restaurants. They don't have an office or company headquarters, but still would like to meet their clients in a professional meeting space as opposed to the previously mentioned non-professional spaces.

These virtual spaces are also perfect for the traveling entrepreneur who wants to maintain a professional image when meeting colleagues and clients.



The Benefits of Using a Virtual Office

Why are so many entrepreneurs considering using virtual office space, especially when they're on the go? The reasons for this are many, including:

- » Having an office to meet customers and get work accomplished in cities across the country.
- » No long-term contracts – Entrepreneurs can use the office only when traveling; no need to invest in an out-of-state location. Entrepreneurs can use the space for only as long as they need it.
- » A professional space whenever the entrepreneur needs to get work done.

The Benefits of a Virtual Assistant When on the Go

Virtual assistants are available on demand. Unlike employees, virtual assistants don't take sick days or charge when they're taking a break. They're available whenever they're needed, and their clients only pay for the time that they actually work. This is especially useful when an entrepreneur is attending sessions or meetings, and can't answer every call, email or text.

Virtual assistants can:

- » Answer calls when the entrepreneur is unavailable, i.e. traveling to the location
- » Provide pertinent information about the business, i.e. product/service information, hours, etc.
- » Answer general questions about the business, allowing the entrepreneur to go to meetings and network while out of town.



On-Demand Office Space and Virtual Address

Many entrepreneurs have an office at an established business place. Others establish their 'office space' locally to save the expense of a permanent office and work out of a coffee shop or home office. Virtual office spaces have recently come into popularity because they provide solutions for both types of entrepreneurs; whether it's reception services, administrative help, or physical space to utilize on a temporary or regular basis.

Virtual office spaces can be rented hourly, daily or weekly depending on the entrepreneur's needs. For example, an entrepreneur at a conference may only need to rent an executive office suite for a couple of hours to meet some new contacts.

These turn-key virtual office spaces are available in a variety of sizes and can be personalized to the entrepreneur's needs. Plus, virtual office providers often offer different types of office spaces, including standard and executive office suites and conference room and meeting spaces, with services mail delivery, kitchen amenities and conference phone lines included.

Other features of these offices include:

- » Multiple locations
- » Access whenever an entrepreneur needs to use the space
- » White boards
- » Move-in ready
- » Quiet environment to have meetings, get work done or make phone calls
- » Access to office equipment
- » Delivery services
- » Coffee/tea
- » Reception services
- » Longer term leases available if needed

For entrepreneurs that need to get work done when they're away from their office, a virtual office space has everything that they need to be successful and stay up-to-date with their customers, colleagues and employees.

Always Ready Meeting Rooms

Finding a place to host a meeting can be difficult when traveling. Meeting with a client in a hotel lobby or a 'bar' area can be distracting and unproductive.

In most cities, virtual office spaces come with conference or meeting room rentals, which can be rented by the day or hour. Entrepreneurs can show that, even when they're on the road, they mean business and are serious about growing their company.

These meeting spaces come with full amenities like:

- » High-speed Internet
- » Copier/scanner/fax services
- » White boards
- » Flat screens
- » Conference phones
- » Coffee, tea and water
- » Projectors
- » Video conferencing

These rooms can be reserved with catering, water, coffee or tea already waiting, just like a traditional office. Conference rooms of different sizes can be rented depending on meeting size needs.

Appointment Scheduling

Entrepreneurs are busy – especially when networking or going to events in a remote location. A traveling entrepreneur may meet a number of new contacts that want meetings immediately. Waiting until someone is back at home may not be soon enough.

One of the many virtual services available is appointment scheduling. A virtual assistant can contact leads and set up appointments while the entrepreneur is still networking. These assistants can also follow up the day before the appointment to confirm it with the contacts.

Reception Services

Traveling isn't easy. Business travelers need to plan for everything from their personal travel needs (packing appropriate clothing, toiletries, etc) as well as work materials needed for their meeting. Forgetting any of these essentials can be frustrating for an entrepreneur that has to provide business cards or materials to prospective clients, or needs to give a presentation.

While materials can be sent to a hotel, hotel staff may not be as interested in taking care of the items and may misplace or damage them. Virtual offices have reception services to sign for all deliveries, and packages will be held until picked up. Needed materials and documents will always be received, allowing entrepreneurs to save their reputation when items are forgotten. Another benefit of reception services is that entrepreneurs can always have someone greet current or potential clients or other guests at their virtual offices. This adds a level of professionalism that is not available from a hotel conference room, restaurant or staff at other potential locations.

Administrative Support

When traveling, an entrepreneur can't answer every phone call or respond to every message. Entrepreneurs may be tied up with clients or in meetings, and can't answer the calls. This may frustrate some callers. To prevent portraying an unprofessional image, a virtual assistant can answer every phone call and respond to messages. They can answer questions about the business, products or services, and provide general customer service. They can also be trained to only transfer calls to the entrepreneur when absolutely necessary.

Virtual assistants can also be trained on the business so they can answer common questions about product offerings or services. Virtual assistants also work remotely. Entrepreneurs don't have to create office space for them, including purchasing equipment and having an in-house workspace. Instead, the virtual assistant is responsible for this. Entrepreneurs only pay for the time that is worked.

Other services provided by virtual assistants include:

- » Sales
- » Social media management
- » Meeting preparation
- » Research
- » Notary services
- » Mass mailings
- » Online chat
- » Cold calling
- » Intake questions
- » Reservations
- » Surveys
- » Order taking



Cost Savings

Virtual services can save entrepreneurs thousands of dollars each year. Since the meeting space or office is only used on an as-needed basis, entrepreneurs don't have to pay high monthly rent locally and remotely for frequent travel destinations. According to Entrepreneur.com¹, the average cost of office space is over \$23.00 per square foot, which means about \$2,300 per month for a 1,000 foot office.

Another major cost advantage of virtual services is that entrepreneurs only pay for the services that they use, including the time spent inside the office or meeting space or the time that the virtual assistants actually use or perform/provide services. For example, when someone has an in-house assistant, generally that person is paying for a lot of downtime, i.e. coffee breaks, sick days and chit-chat. With virtual assistants, people only pay for the time in which the assistant is actually working – no salary requirements or health insurance to worry about. For traveling entrepreneurs, the knowledge that a virtual assistant is always available can be a real comfort –no need to worry about phones not being answered for a day if an assistant is out sick.

Entrepreneurs also don't have to pay for office equipment and furniture. Since all of this is supplied by the virtual office provider, it's included in the fee. No more maintenance costs, upgrade fees or software licensing fees to worry about.

¹ Brian Patrick. "The Best and Worst U.S. Cities for Renting Office Space." Entrepreneur.com. <http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/227319>

The Perfect Virtual Package

Traveling entrepreneurs should consider using virtual services when out of town. The perfect package for most entrepreneurs would include the following services:

- » **Virtual office space:** An office space should be reserved for the entire time that the entrepreneur is going to be out of town, especially for extended stays. It will provide a quiet environment with consistent WiFi where work and phone calls can be done.
- » **Virtual meeting space:** Entrepreneurs have a dedicated space to meet clients that has all the amenities that they need for conferences, including: Coffee/tea/water, phones, projectors and WiFi

Reserve these spaces for meetings and presentations to add an air of professionalism.

- » **Virtual assistants:** These assistants will handle all calls and simple requests, ensuring that no calls are missed or client needs ignored.
- » **Appointment scheduling:** An assistant can schedule all appointments for entrepreneurs before they reach their destination or during an out-of-town event.
- » **Mail support:** Get presentation materials, contracts, presentations, etc., mailed to the virtual office space beforehand. No need to bring materials on the plane. Entrepreneurs can also receive forgotten items shipped to them.
- » **Reception services:** This person can professionally greet all guests like a real receptionist.

On-Demand Staffing and Office Solutions

Intelligent Office is the leading virtual, professionally staffed office space for mobile executives and small businesses in North America. The company is headquartered in Denver, Colorado, and has nearly 60 offices across the United States and Canada. Intelligent Office helps clients grow their businesses and work smarter by combining professional staffing with the physical and technological infrastructure of a virtual office.

Intelligent Office has all of the on-demand staffing and office solutions that you need to look professional no matter what size business you own or where you end up in the world. The Intelligent Office staff is ready to assist you with any virtual office, conference or assistant services that you may need.

Entrepreneurs are looking to maintain a professional image even when they are out of town, traveling for business. A virtual office setup provides everything that an entrepreneur needs, including physical office spaces, reception services and conference room rentals. Virtual assistants can also assist with phone calls and day-to-day duties that the entrepreneur cannot get to when traveling.



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of Intelligent Office's many services.**

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