

An excerpt from...

# BLACK ENTERPRISE

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YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

[ E-Business ]

## PRIME LOCATION

Give your clients a B.E. 100s impression by opening a virtual office

### TECHWATCH

Charles E. Day & Associates charges its clients thousands of dollars to improve their customer service and call-center systems. So when a potential client calls his office, president Charles E. Day knows his staff must do an excellent job.

*“‘Going to work’ is becoming old school, work is now something you do, and not a location where you do it.”*

**Ralph Gregory**

**President & Founder, Intelligent Office**

"When your business is consulting on customer service, every time a client calls, they are evaluating you too," says Day. His staff gets high praise, despite that fact that in 14 years, Day has never given anyone a raise, paid vacation, or health benefits. This is because his five-person staff comes with a virtual office package.

A virtual office is a location that allows more than one business to share an office address anywhere in the world without physically operating there. The arrangement evolved from executive suites, a form of subleasing or office sharing in which you rent everything from a single desk to an entire group of offices within a building. Customers use common conference rooms, business machines, kitchen areas, and other facilities.

Many virtual office plans include a prestigious business address, a receptionist for answering the telephone, voice mail, and use of an office with high-speed Internet access. Day saves nearly \$18,000 annually using a virtual office instead of renting an office full time.

A less expensive alternative to a virtual office is the virtual phone system, which provides small businesses with an 800 or local phone number, automated message on hold, call forwarding, fax services, and multiple mailboxes for as little as \$9.95 per month.

"It used to be that a phone number equaled a physical location. Now a phone number equals a person and it doesn't matter if that person is in the office, at home, or anywhere else in the world," says David Powers, vice president of communications for GotVMail ([www.gotvmail.com](http://www.gotvmail.com)), which offers virtual phone system services. A virtual phone system is also a great way to manage independent contractors or employees who work from home.

—Merlisa Lawrence Corbett

Virtual Office Services

**Intelligent Office**

[www.intelligentoffice.com](http://www.intelligentoffice.com)

800-800-4987

Price range: \$200 and up

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