

Title:

Virtual Freedom

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833

Summary:

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Keywords:

work at home, virtual work, virtual living, team double click

Article Body:

How often do you wish to be freer? Living in America, we're afforded more freedom than in any other part of the world. We can go anywhere we want without asking permission of our Government. We can hold any job we want for anyone who will hire us, as long as it's legal of course. We can marry or cohabitate with anyone we want - gender regardless. We can start and run businesses. Our freedom is one of the most coveted rights we have as Americans. Yet we tie ourselves to offices and desks and towns and schools and so on. Why? Why not enjoy more freedom? Why be tied to all of those things if you don't have to be? Why wish; why not do?

Almost 14 years ago, Jim, my now husband and business partner and I were married in the beautiful little mountain town of Ouray (pronounced you-ray) in Colorado. I'd seen the town and fallen in love with it when I was a teenager and I somehow convinced him to get married there, site unseen. Well, he fell in love with the town too. Since that day 14 years ago, it's been our dream to live in Ouray. For many years we couldn't do it. We were tied to typical corporate jobs, desks, land line phones, a business that at the time wasn't mobile, and all of the other things we Americans tie ourselves to. It just wasn't possible.

Last year, while vacationing in Ouray, it was nearly unbearable for us to leave. Our business was mobile (I'll get to that in a minute) so our biggest problem with making a cross country move like we were proposing was school for our

daughter who would be entering 6th grade that fall.

We started looking into home schooling and any other options we could find. We found an online (virtual) grade school, middle school, and high school called Christa McAuliffe Academy <http://www.cmacademy.org>. We enrolled our daughter and started making plans to move to Colorado.

So in addition to our business being "virtual" our daughter's school is virtual as well. Heck, we're a totally virtual family! We could work and school from Timbuktu if we wanted to, if they had internet connection there of course.

Back to our business being virtual. What many of you may not know is that Team Double-Click is 100%, purely, totally, and undeniably virtual. The company has but two employees - me and my husband and we both work from offices located in our home. Because we both talk so much and so loud, yes, we have separate offices or I'm afraid we'd strangle each other! As for our "core staff" as we refer to them, they're located all over the country and work from their home offices. They're contracted - not employees and they work in places like Florida, Missouri, California, Idaho, Wisconsin, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Arizona, and many other states. So true to what we preach as a virtual staffing agency, we are 100% virtual.

To facilitate the virtual atmosphere and the virtual working environment, we utilize virtual phone systems, virtual fax systems, online accounting programs, online CRM programs, and rely heavily on email, instant messenger, and the telephone to communicate and carry on our day-to-day business. Editor's note: If you'd like more information on the components Team Double-Click uses to facilitate their virtual office, such as fax and phone systems, check out Gayle's article Setting Up Your Virtual Office at http://www.teamdoubleclick.com/news/free_articles/SetupYourVirtOffice.html.

So what all of this virtual stuff means is that we can very easily go to conferences and work while we're away - provided we have an internet connection. When we were in the process of moving, we kept in touch by stopping along the way to check email and of course we spoke to our staff via cell phone regularly. We can easily vacation most any time we'd like (though we tend not to because we enjoy our work), again because we can connect anytime via the internet and phone!

The virtual aspects of our life are so liberating and so freeing because we can literally pick up and go anywhere, anytime we want to without worrying about phones going unanswered, about who will open the office, who will do this and who will do that. Our virtual-ness also made our move from Wisconsin to

Colorado a breeze!

If you're at all hesitant about making your company "virtual", or working virtually, any one of our core staff members, virtual assistants, or clients would be happy to tell you how great and how freeing it is. Additionally, our core staff are more than happy to help you take the steps to make it happen and show you the ropes. I encourage everyone to start enjoying the added freedom you deserve as an American and work virtually!