

Title:

Top 15 Ways Solo-prenuers Use Virtual Assistants

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Summary:

Your time and money are worth more when you are able to concentrate on what you do best and leave the rest to an assistant. Virtual office assistants work from their own home-based offices and are highly trained in their skill areas as well as a variety of technologies. Many of them have advanced degrees as well as years of professional experience. Not only can a virtual assistant relieve you of mundane, everyday tasks, but also in many cases, s/he can even help you grow your business.

Keywords:

Entrepreneur, Work from Home, Work at home, telecommute, telework, team double click, tdc, small business, home business, home based business, solo entrepreneur, solo-preneur,

Article Body:

Your time and money are worth more when you are able to concentrate on what you do best and leave the rest to an assistant. Virtual office assistants work from their own home-based offices and are highly trained in their skill areas as well as a variety of technologies. Many of them have advanced degrees as well as years of professional experience. Not only can a virtual assistant relieve you of mundane, everyday tasks, but also in many cases, s/he can even help you grow your business.

One of the biggest benefits to hiring a virtual assistant is the ability to delegate work to people who have better skills, and can do work you don't know how to do, don't have time to do, or just don't want to do. The next big draw (when considering virtual assistants over bricks-and-mortar assistants) is that virtual assistants only clock-in and work when you need them and use their own resources. In other words, they're not charging you to sit there and play solitaire on a computer you purchased for them.

Top 15 Ways Solo-preneurs Use Virtual Assistants

1. Your VA receives calls routed to his/her home office phone and your prospective customers do not receive a voice mail. You pay only for the minutes

that the VA is on the phone

2. You need to confirm appointments for the week. Your VA calls the appointments and notes who is confirmed and who must be rescheduled. Your VA even updates your calendar online, if you're using a mutually accessible calendar program.
3. By purchasing a software program that installs a desktop electronic billing system on the VA's computer, billing can be done off-site. The software vendor technical support trains the VA to use the program, then you email or fax information to the VA, who then does daily electronic billing or accounting services to get your billing done.
4. You are preparing a marketing plan and need further information. Your VA can contact possible advertising outlets on the Internet, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, etc. and acquire information on pricing, publishing dates, publishing deadlines, payment policies, etc. All information is compiled into a report for you to review.
5. You are preparing a direct mailing and need to verify your database. The database is sent to your VA via email attachment. Your VA telephones each name and verifies name, spelling, title and address. All corrections are made, old names are deleted, and new names are added. The corrected database is "zipped" and returned to you via email attachment.
6. You need a brochure, business card or flyer for your business. Your VA can design, type and print your advertising material using your own artwork or stock art. Your VA can also make the materials ready to print by a professional print shop and simply email the file to the shop for printing.
7. You have a blog, but do not have time to update entries regularly. Brief ideas and thoughts or links can be emailed to your VA, who then updates your blog.
8. You need a website set up, either on a directory site or using a web-hosting service. Your VA can design a custom site or adapt a template, and can maintain it on a regular basis, adding current articles or information as needed.
9. You need a telephone conversation (i.e., conference call, teleclass, etc.) recorded. The VA records the call and transcribes the tape for the participants.
10. You dictate letters, reports, notes or memos on a cassette tape and mail it to your VA via overnight delivery. Your VA transcribes the tape, prints the letters on your stationery and mails them the following day. Or, send your VA an MP3 file of your recording. S/he transcribes the audio and emails the completed transcript back to you.
11. You cannot keep up with the volume of email and are missing important messages. You or your webmaster set up a general email account (info@mycompany.com). Your VA retrieves all email, sorts, responds to routine requests, and forwards items of importance to you at your personal email account

(myname@mycompany.com) .

12. You are going on vacation, but can't let your customers wait for two weeks. Your VA answers the phone and email and responds to customers. You are called for urgent calls while you are away if you want.

13. You need bill paying services. You simply have all bills mailed to a post office box near your VA. Your VA sets up a checking account with payment authorization for both you and the VA. As the bills are prepared for payment, your VA notifies you how much money to deposit into the account. The bills are then paid. Another option, if available from your bank, is to use on-line bill payment services. Security features can be set up which make this a safe and simple solution.

14. You implement an advertising plan or promo. Your VA can monitor the plan, submits ads by deadlines, track expiration dates, coordinate payment, handle correspondence with advertising vendors, and continually update the advertising report and/or advertising budget report for your review.

15. You would like to write a book, but can't get organized. Your VA can compile rough drafts, notes, fragments, letters or memoirs and get them into an editable form to begin the process of formatting the book, research publishers, and send out queries.

Virtual assistants are here to stay. The above shows that virtual assistants can and do work well for most small and home-based businesses and especially solo-preneurs. Over the next couple of years you can expect your conversations with regards to virtual assistants to go from "What is a virtual assistant and what does a virtual assistant do?" to that of "Who provides your virtual assistant services?"

Implementing the use of a virtual assistant, especially through a virtual staffing agency, is a low-cost, low-risk undertaking. If the virtual assistant doesn't work out, you simply request another, perhaps for a better fit. What's more, coupling the use of a virtual assistant (or several virtual assistants) with your already up-and-coming business can catapult your income and success to the next level and beyond.