

## How Can A Virtual Office Help My Home-Based Business?

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This article is intended for the professional who operates out of their home or for the home-based business owner. The convenience and economy of working from home is nice, however, as the business grows the need for an office located in a "business location" will increase. However, you currently cannot afford nor need all the services of an executive suite or serviced office. A virtual office is an excellent alternative which can save up to 78% of the cost of traditional office services. Perhaps you've experienced the following scenarios:

"Where is your office?"

During your initial sales meeting, you've convinced your prospect that you understand their needs and you look forward to providing a solid proposal of your solution to their problem. They like your personal professionalism and your team appears as competent as the competition. Then they look down at your business card and ask "where is your office"? Suddenly you are on the defensive, only as big as your 8' X 10' home office. You can't afford nor need to invest in office space, but what can you do? A virtual office is an excellent way to present a bigger company presence. Suddenly you are as large as a multi-story office building located in the prestige business districts of your city.

"We don't do business with home-based companies."

You are able to deliver the goods or services the large Fortune 100 company needs but they don't do business with a "home-based" company. How can you arrange for your phone and mail to be serviced with an address within the "business district"? A virtual office is an excellent way to present a prestige address for your home-based business.

"Let's hold the meeting at your office!"

You must host a team collaboration or presentation meeting. Any gathering with more than 3 or 4 people in attendance typically requires the meeting to be moved out of the "office room" and into the kitchen or living room. Such a casual environment takes away from the professionalism of the message you are delivering. A virtual office facility will provide quality meeting room facilities at an economical fee when compared to hotel conference room rates.

The availability and use of white boards or audio-visual equipment to support the meeting activity might be limiting at your home office. Parking might be difficult to accommodate. You will need to provide restroom and possibly beverage or food service which means time and effort to prepare. Wouldn't want your boss or prospect to see the "dirty laundry"! A quality virtual office facility can provide the equipment and facilities needed for most any meeting or presentation, often these are provided at no additional cost with the meeting room fee.

What is a Virtual office?

A Virtual office is a service provided by many full serviced or executive suite providers. Typically, they will offer Virtual office services with options so that you purchase just the services you need to enhance your business. Examples of these packages are:

1. Virtual Office Address Only - Includes the use of a prestigious business address, receiving mail,

handling and receiving shipments, signing for mail when authorized.

2. Full Virtual Office with Live Answering - Includes all features of the package above plus live personalized telephone answering, including voicemail box with remote access.

3. Full Virtual Office with Live Answering and Conference Room Time - Includes all features of the package above plus conference room time.

Additional services should include mail forwarding to an outside address or call forwarding to an outside line (home office or mobile phone).

A quick checklist of the features/benefits you should expect to find with a quality Virtual office provider would include:

- A prestigious address
- Upscale contemporary reception area
- Fully-equipped conference rooms and common areas
- Access to an association network to support your out of town activities
- Professional receptionist to greet clients
- Full administrative and secretarial support services
- Kitchens with complimentary beverage service and vending machines.

If you like the economy and convenience of working out of your home but have encountered the need to present a professional, business "storefront" you now know there is an alternative to the traditional business office or executive suite lease options. The Virtual office from an Executive Suite provider is that alternative.

Additionally, if you find an increasing need to host meeting or presentations and want to provide a more professional option outside your home or the neighborhood Starbucks and a more personal option than a hotel, you now know there is a solution. The Virtual office from an Executive Suite provider is that solution.