

Working Remotely – What Is It and What Does it Mean to You?

What is the difference between remote access and file transfers? Why would you use one service over the other?

As ProAdvisors, we are asked these questions on a weekly basis. For those of us that have been using various services over the years, it may seem like a simple answer; ***Working remotely is a way to work with the clients' data from your office instead of theirs, and file transfers is just transferring files*** ... however there is really a lot more to the story with the ever-changing world of technology. This month we will focus on file transfers, as it is the first step into the 'remote' world of client support.

With the constant change in technology, we now have many choices and ways to work with clients without actually being on their site. Which type of remote access or file transfer services you choose to use will depend on the needs of that specific client; therefore, many of us use a variety of tools or services in our day-to-day practice. If we avail ourselves of the technology that is available, it will allow us to become more efficient and pro-active with our clients, while saving us travel time.

Each month we will look at programs/services that offer more than basic file transferring, and you will begin to see how each one has its place in *Working Remotely* and being efficient while growing your business. Topics will include Remote Access (which allows you to remotely control another computer from your location, using the Internet or phone lines as your 'bridge' between locations, with varying degrees of flexibility), what are your options, how will it help your clients, and most importantly, how can it help you in your business.

In the past, we had to rely on e-mailing back-ups; however, that often resulted in corrupted data files. Not to mention that it is not very secure, and once the file reaches a certain limit, the e-mail servers will not allow you to send or receive the file: yet another frustration and waste of time. I still use e-mail attachments, CD's, or a zip drive at times, and these still have their place in our 'tool box' of choices. I also use services such as www.sendthisfile.com, www.yousendit.com, and www.logmein.com. Several others are similar, offering both free and paid services. Again, these are ALL great choices to have.

Everything mentioned so far is dependant on you and your client, and solves one issue; transferring the data file. If you want, or need, additional flexibility such as: access to other programs, an easy way to send secure files to more than one location, or automatic back-ups, then you must have other options at your disposal. There is no 'one magic solution,' or 'perfect answer;' however, there are choices.

This month we will focus on transferring files. We all do it, and have become creative over the years. It used to be that mailing 3.5" floppy disks back and forth was standard practice; of course, we always asked the client to make 2 or 3 sets, because we just knew at least one of those disks would be corrupt. How frustrating is it to try to restore a client's data file from a floppy, CD, zip, or e-mail download, only to find out that it will not work for one reason or another? It is late in the day, or a Friday, and the client needs the work completed 'yesterday,' and we are stuck. So what are our options?

In our featured Developer article this month with **Business Data Transfer Services**, you will learn about a service that is easy to use, solves the age-old issue of transferring files securely and without corruption, and has the added benefits of automatic back-ups and sending the files to more than one location.

See you next month for part two... we will discuss several options to access the live data file remotely.
Rox ☺

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