

101 Ways To Use A Virtual Assistant

By:



Team Double-Click®

Matching *TOP* Virtual Workers With *TOP* Companies

preferred virtual assistant company of



Team Double-Click®

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Introduction

This White Paper examines:

- 1) What is a virtual assistant?
- 2) What is a virtual staffing agency?
- 3) What are the benefits of hiring a virtual assistant?
- 4) What are the benefits of hiring a virtual assistant through a virtual staffing agency?
- 5) 101 tasks a virtual assistant can do for the small or home-based business
- 6) Case studies of business professionals using the services of virtual assistants
- 7) Comparison of virtual staffing versus “bricks-and-mortar” staffing

Many business professionals have adopted the use of virtual assistants over the past three years. This growing trend has significantly changed business processes within many industries. The following White Paper examines the impact of the virtual assistant trend and explores the various ways business professionals can use virtual assistance to benefit their businesses.

What is a Virtual Assistant?

“Virtual Assistants are independent entrepreneurs providing professional administrative, creative, managerial, technical, business office and/or personal support services. Virtual office assistants use the most advanced means of communication, and the newest and most efficient and time-saving office products and work delivery, regardless of geographic boundaries. Virtual Assistants work from their own offices, on a contractual basis, and abide by an established Code of Ethics requiring integrity, honesty and due diligence.”

~The Alliance for Virtual Business

Many small businesses and associations suggest the use of virtual office assistants so their clients and members can concentrate on their core abilities. Even *Inc. Magazine* and *Entrepreneur* discuss the benefits of using virtual help.

"... gotta love the detail and quick conversations! I love not paying for people to be sitting in an office filing their nails!"

Dave Schiman

Small businesses and self-employed individuals are turning to virtual office assistants, graphic designers, and web designers to stay on top of those tasks while eliminating the need to fund a full-time staff. As *USA Today* wrote, "The savings come from being able to concentrate efforts on building the business instead of balancing the checkbook and typing envelopes."

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.

Depending on the level of service you choose, a virtual assistant can do virtually everything necessary to support you and your administrative needs and marketing efforts.

Virtual office assistants work best as an extension of you. In other words, if you are using a marketing method or target market that works well for you, it's best to use your assistant to duplicate those efforts in those markets.

Virtual assistants typically work in the following areas:

- ✓ Virtual receptionists
- ✓ Travel arrangements
- ✓ Appointment setting
- ✓ Topic research
- ✓ Marketing
- ✓ Event planning
- ✓ Executive-level assistant
- ✓ Data entry
- ✓ Customer support
- ✓ Web site design and set up
- ✓ Cold calling
- ✓ General administrative assistant
- ✓ Appointment reminder calls
- ✓ Letter preparation
- ✓ Meeting arrangements
- ✓ Mailing preparation and processing
- ✓ Bookkeeping
- ✓ Accounting
- ✓ E-mail screening and processing
- ✓ Writing
- ✓ Closing assistance
- ✓ Warm calling

What is a Virtual Staffing Agency?

A virtual staffing agency (VSA) operates similarly to a bricks-and-mortar temp, or staffing, agency. A VSA recruits prospective virtual assistants, then screens and tests them. Once it is determined they are fully qualified, the VSA matches them to clients based on specific client needs and demands. A VSA often trains virtual assistants as well, showing them how to take their bricks-and-mortar skills and use them in a virtual world.

A client will call a VSA, discuss the skills and abilities that they need, and the VSA will locate a virtual assistant for the client based on those needs.

48 Days

The average number of days that it took for an American company to fill a job vacancy in 2004. The average cost per hire was \$3,270.00. (Source: *Business Week*)

Go virtual with Team Double-ClickSM and cut the hiring cost to \$0.00 and have a new staff member in less than two weeks!

The VSA standardizes the pricing for a virtual assistant so clients don't need to sort through the resumes of numerous individual virtual assistants, decipher their pricing, deposits, length-of-time commitments, and individual skills. In short, a VSA acts as the client's human resources department and manages the virtual assistant for the client, performs all of the billing to the client, performs all of the payables to the virtual assistant, replaces virtual assistants if they should leave, releases a virtual assistant on the client's behalf (if necessary), and takes the pressure of hiring and firing out of the client's hands. All of these HR responsibilities allow clients to focus their attention on impacting the bottom line.

What are the Benefits of Hiring a Virtual Assistant?

Probably the biggest benefit 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.

Here are a few of things you can expect to gain by hiring a virtual assistant:

- Avoid buying an additional computer for your assistant.
- Avoid buying a desk for an assistant.
- Keep workers OUT of your office/home office.
- Avoid paying FICA (Social Security Tax) – legally!
- Avoid paying unemployment tax – legally!
- Avoid paying for holiday, vacation, and sick time.
- Help reduce vehicle emissions.
- Have happier workers who are more efficient at their jobs.
- Pay ONLY for the time used/work produced – not several hours a week more due to a “9 to 5” workweek.
- Finance your payroll with your credit card or PayPal account.
- Have all of your administrative and telemarketing services customized at no additional charge.
- Find top-notch workers by the hundreds – browse their skills and find them in mere moments.
- Get highly-skilled workers from around the country for a fraction of the cost of hiring locally.
- Stay on budget with your staffing needs—you can set a cap with us.

- Keep your workforce and company flexible to meet peaks and valleys in your company's workflow cycles.
- Keep your business flexible so, as a small business, you have efficiency advantages over the big guys.
- Gain more time to use either for your personal life or to focus on other areas of your business.
- Hire workers who don't require long-term obligations.
- Easily locate experienced professionals for difficult projects and tasks requiring rare or niche skills.
- Get daily reports from the virtual assistant so you can see where your money is going every day.

"We appreciate the free time that your extremely well-run company has given me - and for giving me my life back! Best wishes in 2005. "

Alan Brymer

- Increase your business exponentially by using a telemarketer to help locate more leads who can help convert leads to sales.
- Have as many or as few individual assistants assigned as you need - whether one or a dozen.
- Have a worker or workers from a wide variety of backgrounds, leveraging their skills and talents in ways you might not have thought possible.

What are the Benefits of Using a Virtual Staffing Agency?

Business Week reported that in 2004 the average number of days it took to fill job vacancies for American companies was 48. Forty-eight days with no administrative help can be devastating to any small business. Adding further to the devastation, it cost each company an average \$3,270.00 per hire!

Those lengths of time and amounts of money, if not devastating, can certainly be somewhat crippling to a small business who needs to remain nimble and often work on a shoestring budget.

Why go virtual?

Virtual staffing always fits your business needs!

Have you ever wanted the ability to DELEGATE work to people who have better skills, and can do work you don't know how to do, or just don't want to do?

If so, then a virtual assistant is for you. And the best thing is...virtual assistants work only when you need them and use their own resources.

Working with a virtual staffing agency eliminates the need for the business owner to locate the perfect worker and reduces the hire time to almost zilch. VSA's rely on their large talent pools, standardized tests, and expertise to locate just the right person for the client in the shortest amount of time possible.

A VSA doesn't just tell you where you can find a virtual assistant. They assess your needs and match you with one of their highly-skilled and trained virtual assistants. The company then monitors and nurtures that relationship so you get the most out of hiring virtually. A VSA can truly be your virtual human resources department.

Why not hire an in-office assistant or hire my own virtual office assistant?

Of course a client can go out on the Internet and hire a local virtual office assistant or in-office assistant to perform the same tasks as a virtual assistant obtained through a virtual staffing agency.

However, the client will lose out on the following value-added benefits that ONLY VSA's provide:

- **Free training time.** Many VSA's negotiate free training time on your behalf with the virtual assistant. This is free time that you can use to train the virtual assistant to perform *your* tasks *your* way.
- **Client Services Representatives.** Many VSA's staff client service representatives to assist you if you have problems with the virtual assistant or with working virtually. Most VSA's do not charge for the time the CSR spends working with or coaching you on the intricacies of working and hiring virtually.
- **Training.** A good VSA will offer initial training as well as continual coaching to its virtual assistants in order to help them better help the client

*“They don't have to live in the same zip code, or be able to come into your office. I built my team on the premise that I just want the **best people** at what they do, regardless of where they are.”*

~Kendra Todd, Apprentice 3 Winner and Team Double-ClickSM client.

- **Replacement virtual assistants.** Should the virtual assistant become ill, take a vacation or fail to perform to expectation, the VSA will quickly replace that virtual assistant or offer a fill-in.
- **Prescreening.** Virtual staffing agencies employ rigorous prescreening and interview processes before they place virtual assistants with their clients.

- **Access to greater talent.** Because VSA's have access to more virtual assistants, they can pick and choose the best assistant based on client needs. A VSA can also quickly locate additional talent as the client's needs and business grows. A client may start with a general virtual assistant and eventually need a graphic designer or web designer. A VSA can quickly locate and place this talent with the client.
- **Standardized pricing.** When searching for virtual assistants on the Internet, clients meet with a wide range of prices, services, availability, client service levels, length-of-time commitments, deposit requirements

Team Double-ClickSM staffs thousands of virtual assistants...

- ✓ Tested
- ✓ Interviewed
- ✓ Trained
- ✓ Certified
- ✓ Matched to *your* business needs

...one that's just right for you!

and so on. With a VSA, the price is the same each time and is based on the task – not the individual wishes of the virtual assistant. The VSA negotiates the pricing with the virtual assistants so that it fits within the VSA's price structure. Therefore, the client always has a standard, dependable price. Most often a virtual staffing agency's pricing is much lower than that charged by individual virtual assistants.

Obtaining a virtual assistant through a virtual staffing agency saves the client a significant amount of money and aggravation in trying to hire a virtual assistant yourself. VSA's know how valuable your time is and understand that the client would rather focus on the things that will help *make* money, so they do most of the legwork involved in hiring and retaining virtual assistants.

We know how **valuable your time is** and that you'd rather focus on the things that'll help your business **make money**, so we do the legwork involved in hiring and retaining virtual assistants. Once you put us to work, all you need to worry about is telling us what you need!

101 Ways To Work With A Virtual Assistant

(Okay, so it's more like 150+ ...we wanted to give you a little extra bang!)

Remember, all documents created by or used by a virtual assistant can be

"Excellent call on referring Team Double-ClickSM! I'm getting into the habit of using them and I am getting projects done much quicker than my procrastinating butt would do :-)."

Will Smith

*quickly and easily transmitted via email attachment, FTP, fax, delivery of CD or hard copy using overnight delivery, priority mail or regular postal services. Today's technology, such as text messaging and remote computer software, makes almost **any administrative task easy to manage "virtually"** at a distance.*

Specific Tasks

- 1) Process mailings to potential clients
- 2) Perform outbound telemarketing calls seeking clients/sellers/buyers
- 3) Enter contacts into MS Outlook or other database management program
- 4) Set/cancel appointments

"When you do something outside of your core competency, you're paying top dollar for amateur results."

~Michael Russer, "Mr. Internet", Team Double-ClickSM client

- 5) Work with Excel spreadsheets to organize leads and other data
- 6) Work with MS Word to create mail merges and process mailings
- 7) Answer incoming calls
- 8) Return phone calls
- 9) Type and send letters or contracts
- 10) Make travel arrangements

- 11) Call for quotes for other services
- 12) Order services on your behalf
- 13) Screen and answer your emails
- 14) Prepare newsletters for your clients
- 15) Plan events or meetings
- 16) Arrange and put together seminars or teleseminars
- 17) Proof read your written materials
- 18) Transcribe your meetings
- 19) Correspond with clients/tenants regarding payments and late fees, via mail and phone
- 20) Mail outs such as postcards or letters for marketing purposes
- 21) Check voice mail; return calls
- 22) Photos (edit and list on websites)
- 23) Research

Let us show you how Team Double-ClickSM can:

- ✓ Reduce your costs
- ✓ Increase your bottom line
- ✓ Offer higher quality
- ✓ Deliver quick turn-around
- ✓ Keep things moving forward
- ✓ Support your existing team
- ✓ Eliminate the hassles

- 24) Flyers
- 25) Create PowerPoint presentations
- 26) Thank you notes
- 27) Newsletters
- 28) Customer call backs
- 29) Promotional mailing
- 30) Thank you gifts
- 31) Order promotional items

Secretarial Services

- 32) You want the **phone to be answered personally during your business hours**. Your virtual assistant receives calls routed to her/his home office phone and your prospective customers do not receive a voice mail. You **pay only for the minutes** that the virtual assistant is on the phone, not for her/his standby time.
- 33) Using new programs which allow remote access to computers, the virtual assistant can work on your computer at a distance. Running scans, repairing registries, **updating the system to run better and faster** all can be done remotely. Interactive software is commonly used to allow the

Why hire Team Double-ClickSM?

Don't miss these benefits that ONLY Team Double-ClickSM provides:

- ✓ 2 **FREE** hours of training time with your virtual assistant
- ✓ A client services representative to **assist** you if you have problems with the virtual assistant or working virtually
- ✓ **Real estate trained** virtual assistants
- ✓ A mentor who shadows the virtual assistant to be sure they're **performing well** and taking good care of you
- ✓ A replacement should the virtual assistant become ill, take a vacation, or fail to perform to expectations
- ✓ A **rigorous prescreening** process before the virtual assistant is matched specifically to you and your business
- ✓ **Virtual assistants** who have their own computer with the latest and most powerful administrative software
- ✓ The backing of the **leader in virtual staffing**
- ✓ Over **13,000 virtual assistants worldwide**, specializing in virtual assisting

virtual assistant and your calendar to be **on the same page**. **Note:**

generally the virtual assistant will use her/his own computer for your work-related items unless there is a specific need for you to have her/his connect to your computer, such as accessing an industry-specific software program, etc...

- 34) You need to **confirm appointments** for the week. Simply fax or email a list to your virtual assistant. S/he calls the appointments and notes who is confirmed and who must be rescheduled. S/he faxes or emails the list back to you or even updates your calendar online, if you're using a mutually accessible calendar program. S/he can even **reschedule appointments** as needed.
- 35) You **need directions** to a meeting or seminar. Your virtual assistant makes the call, obtains the directions and either calls or emails those directions to you
- 36) You **need a schedule** for the meeting times and dates, your virtual assistant **can verify** the information for you without taking up your precious time on the phone.
- 37) You have **routine paperwork** that must be filled out on a daily basis. Simply call your virtual assistant with the information or fax your hand-written information to your virtual assistant. S/he enters the info into your standard form and faxes to the proper location.
- 38) To keep your computer files safe, simply make a **back-up tape** of the computer and send it to your virtual assistant for safe-keeping. A small task, but well worth it. In the event of a disaster, all your files are located off the premises. Better yet, have your virtual assistant set you up with an off-site internet-based storage service, free or at little cost.

“The best way around [designing and implementing tools on your own] is to hire someone who is proficient at details and systems. That’s why we recommend hiring administrative support talent first.”

~Gary Keller, in *The Millionaire Real Estate Agent*

- 39) You travel frequently and need a virtual assistant to **coordinate air travel**, car rental and hotel reservations. Your virtual assistant can do all of these items and simply email your itinerary back to you.
- 40) By purchasing a software program that installs a desktop electronic billing system on the virtual assistant's computer, **billing can be done off-site**.

The software vendor technical support trains the virtual assistant to use the program, then you email or fax information to the virtual assistant, who then does **daily electronic billing** or **accounting services** to get your billing done.

- 41) A virtual assistant can **audit banking records**, and review telephone bills, including cell phone records, report any anomalies back to you so you are aware of unusual activity and can correct the problem.
- 42) Your desk is piled with papers, mail and miscellaneous undone tasks. Simply place everything in a box and mail it to your virtual assistant. S/he sorts through it, makes **files and indicates important items** that need to be done, **organizes** by deadline or urgency - and mails the box back to you.
- 43) Write business and task procedures for your business
- 44) Write business manuals for you

"Phenomenal!

You have outdone yourself yet again.

I had faith I could cancel my newspaper ad and still get leads to work with, and you're making it happen. Thanks,"

Alan Brymer

Research

- 45) You need a hotel conference room for a seminar. Call or email your virtual assistant and ask her/his to do the **research**. The virtual assistant contacts several hotels in the area to find availability of the date, size, and specifics of the seminar. Your virtual assistant obtains **written quotes** from the hotels that can accommodate the request. S/he **reviews each quote** for completeness and reports the findings to you for final decision.

- 46) You want to purchase office equipment. Simply call or email your virtual assistant with the request. S/he calls several vendors, **obtains pricing information**, and emails the information back to you for the final decision.

" Hey, thanks! I'm impressed by your diligence and willingness to be flexible with your schedule. And thanks for the heads up about the updates."

Freddie Bacong

- 47) You **need software** for a particular project. Your virtual assistant can research the Internet and make inquires among business networking groups about such software. When the appropriate software is identified, the virtual assistant reports her/his findings to you for final decision and selection.
- 48) You are interested in **researching a topic online** for an important proposal. Your virtual assistant can do a keyword search and list the appropriate websites/findings back to you. Or, s/he can dig deeper and pull out necessary information from the websites s/he finds.

“I have nothing but positive things to say about the advantages of virtual outsourcing, in general, and about Team Double ClickSM, a “virtual staffing agency”, in particular.

Our whole approach is about customer service. We have three thousand agents and sixty-five offices; our hours of operation are 8am to 11pm, daily, so we need phones covered at all times. Since we’ve begun using virtual assistants our volume of phone communication has probably tripled or even quadrupled since its virtual inception.

The benefits of using virtual assistants for phone support, database management and a host of other tasks, are multi-fold, beginning with reduced and/or eliminated costs in salaries, taxes, insurance and on-site employee benefits.

**~Bob Borger
VP, Director Home Owner Services
Prudential Douglas Elliman
As told in Michael Russer’s *Virtual Outsourcing***

- 49) You are **preparing a marketing plan** and need further information. Your virtual assistant 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.

Word Processing/Presentations

- 50) You take notes at meetings and need them typed. You simply email, fax, or mail the notes to your virtual assistant; s/he **types the notes** and mails or emails them back to you. The notes can be formatted into **a newsletter** and sent to members if you wish.
- 51) You are preparing a report and need the draft copy to be formatted. You send the document via email attachment to your virtual assistant. Your virtual assistant **edits and formats** the document and returns the finished report to you via email attachment.

- 52) You write a letter and fax or email it to your virtual assistant. S/he types and edits the letter, prints the letter on your stationery and mails it out. If you want **the same letter personalized to many recipients**, the virtual assistant does this as well. No need to go out and buy stamps or make a trip to the post office. The virtual assistant does this and charges you back for the costs.
- 53) You need **brochures** and a preliminary letter sent to prospective customers. Your virtual assistant **prepares mailings** on a daily basis in response to inquiries.
- 54) You are preparing a **seminar** and need a PowerPoint presentation prepared. Simply fax or email sketches of diagrams and charts to your virtual assistant. Your virtual assistant **prepares the PowerPoint** slides and sends the document back to you via email attachment. You can now use your PowerPoint presentation for your seminar.

"I am very happy with your company and the service it provides and I'm always looking to tell folks about you. I will continue to spread the good word, because there are many people in my circle that need your help."

Marcus Lackey

- 55) You are **preparing a seminar and need a questionnaire fact sheet** from each participant prior to the seminar. Simply fax your questions along with a list of participants to your virtual assistant. S/he types the questionnaire, calls each participant, obtains their fax number and faxes the questionnaire, tracks each completed questionnaire and calls the participants who did not respond, **summarizes the questionnaire responses** on a report, and delivers the report to you via email attachment. Project completed!
- 56) Better still – have your virtual assistant design the questionnaire as well.

Data Processing/Database Management

- 57) You need a form. Your virtual assistant **takes the preliminary ideas and creates a form** or template for you.
- 58) You are preparing a **direct mailing** and need to verify your database. The database is sent to your virtual assistant via email attachment. Your virtual assistant 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.
- 59) You need email formatted and **email blasts** sent out. The virtual assistant can do this for you from your server or with a service such as ConstantContact.
- 60) You are changing database software and **need to convert your**

“I COULD NOT BE HAPPIER with the website you designed!!!! If you don't mind me saying so, it f%#\$%\$g rocks!!!

Hiring you to complete my website was the best money I spent in a long time!! If I tried to do this myself, it would have taken hundreds of additional dollars, dozens upon dozens of additional hours, several bottles of aspirin and a few nervous breakdowns, and I still wouldn't have created a site half as sexy, professional, and useful as the one you seamlessly created in such short order and with little to no direction!!

You're awesome!! I'm glad you are on "my team" and I will definitely tell all my friends what great work you do. Thanks!! :-) :-)”

Brian Cass

- databases.** Your virtual assistant can handle the conversion for you.
- 61) You want a virtual assistant available by Instant Message whenever you need her/his. This can be arranged so that the virtual assistant can handle **last minute projects** effectively.
- 62) You need to **send out monthly reports** for customers. The virtual assistant keeps a calendar and sends reports in a timely manner and ensures that none are missed.

Desktop Publishing

- 63) You need a **brochure** for your business. Your virtual assistant can design, type and print the brochure using your own artwork or stock art.
- 64) Your virtual assistant can also make the brochure ready to print by a professional print shop and simply email the file to the shop for printing.
- 65) You have a blog, but do not have time to update entries regularly. Brief ideas and thoughts or links can be emailed to your virtual assistant, who then **updates your blog**.

“I started searching for virtual assistance agencies, per se, but came up rather dry. Then I found out about Team Double ClickSM with its great services and competitive prices. It is a seamless solution for small entrepreneurs, like me.”

~Valerie Hayes
Professional Pageant Coach
As told in Michael Russer's *Virtual Outsourcing*

- 66) You have items for sale and want to **do an eBay auction**. You simply take digital photos of the items, and email them with details to your virtual assistant, who then sets up the auction, monitors and completes the sale for you.
- 67) You need new **business cards**. Your virtual assistant can design and email Kinko's or some other printing service in your own town, which will print business cards and may deliver them to the office. S/he may even locate an online service such as VistaPrint who can print them more cost effectively and ship them to you direct from their factory.
- 68) You need a **schedule prepared**. Your virtual assistant can design, type and prepare flyers such as schedules or calendars.
- 69) You need a website set up, either on a directory site or using a web-hosting service. Your virtual assistant can **design a custom site or adapt**

a template, and can maintain it on a regular basis, adding current articles or information as needed.

- 70) You want to add autoresponders to your website. Your virtual assistant can write and **set-up the autoresponder**. S/he can also monitor the number of requests and **establish a database** of who is requesting the

I got two really good leads from the great work that Jennifer is doing! I'm about to go under contract with one of leads :)"

Brian Shelton

information.

- 71) You want to fully utilize your email software program (i.e. filters, autoreply, signatures, etc.) Your virtual assistant can **"walk you through" the set-up and teach you** while on the telephone and computer at the same time.
- 72) You want to send out a monthly or quarterly newsletter to customers or members. Your virtual assistant can **design and prepare the newsletter**, and arrange printing and mailing, or emailing, on schedule.

"My experience with Team Double-ClickSM has sold me on this concentrated, expertly administered, time and cost effective way of running a business. Today, no matter where I am, I have the complete peace of mind knowing that my virtual assistants are taking care of every aspect of my newly named business, "Heart and Soul Candies", which are now being sold in retail establishments across the country. You can't put a price on this kind of satisfaction."

Bill McGee, CEO
Heart and Soul Candies

As told in Michael Russer's *Virtual Outsourcing*

- 73) You want to send out postcards to customers advising them of new deals or services, or just as reminders to old customers who have not been in contact for awhile. Your virtual assistant can **create the postcards and order** from the fulfillment house for delivery in bulk to your office, her/his office, or to be labeled and sent out directly.

- 74) You want to find out why old customers are not coming back or why they stopped using your services. The virtual assistant can **send a blind survey to a focus group** or list of former customers and get this information back to you.
- 75) Your virtual assistant can also **re-activate old customers** by calling with a **prepared script** or sending a **targeted mailing**.

Transcription Services

- 76) You need a telephone conversation (i.e., conference call, teleclass, etc.) recorded. The virtual assistant **records the call and transcribes the tape** for the participants.
- 77) You dictate letters and memos on a cassette tape and mail it to your virtual assistant via overnight delivery. **Your virtual assistant transcribes the tape**, prints the letters on your stationery and mails them the following day.
- 78) You send recorded cassettes to your virtual assistant to transcribe. The virtual assistant **types the report** and returns via overnight delivery or via email.
- 79) Send your virtual assistant an MP3 file of your recording. S/he transcribes the audio and emails the completed transcript back to you.

"Oh. Thank Heaven for you! I am very, very happy with my team so far [Note: Dee has a Team Double-Click tag-team of two admins - Jene O. and Jennifer A.]. They are quick learners, proactive, and I love that I get updates now. My life is so much easier. I look forward to this upcoming year already. :-)"
Dee Copeland

Email Services

- 80) 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 virtual assistant **retrieves all email, sorts, responds** to routine requests, and forwards items of importance to you at your personal email account (myname@mycompany.com).

81) You are going on vacation and don't want to miss important email

Found on Internet message board:

"Yep, I'm using teamdoubleclick.com. I've tried several through ivaa.org and they were all unprofessional. They weren't rude; they just weren't real business owners. They were people who seemed to have decided to become a virtual assistant and didn't know how to run their business, let alone help me with mine.

If I found what seemed like a good virtual assistant from the IVAA site, the lead virtual assistant would refer me out because they'd gotten a large client base and weren't able to keep up the volume. Basically, if a virtual assistant was successful, they were too busy to take me on as a client. If they actually had the room in their schedule to add me, they were newbies and this was often their first professional job EVER or the first company they've run.

I found Team Double-ClickSM through a Yahoo real estate investor group. I like them because they have one lead person who is responsible for procuring professional assistants and making sure they are doing their jobs. They send weekly invoices, take credit cards, and call you every couple months to make sure your assistants are performing well. [Their manager] is very responsive, but then again, the rest of the team is too. Charge is per hour, but they only charge you their actual work time, unlike a regular assistant."

Team Double-ClickSM about

messages. Your virtual assistant downloads all email and notifies individuals that you are out of the office. Your virtual assistant **contacts you** with urgent messages either while you are out or upon your return – whichever you choose.

- 82) You operate an **eZine/newsletter**. Although many features can be automated, you still receive incorrect subscription requests or undeliverable email messages. Simply forward all related email messages to your virtual assistant to correctly process the requests to **subscribe, unsubscribe or delete** bounced email messages.

Telephone/Fax Services

- 83) You are going on vacation but **need to stay in touch** with important business calls. You or your virtual assistant can record on your voice mail that urgent callers may contact your assistant and include your virtual assistant's telephone number. Your virtual assistant can then contact you if there are important messages.
- 84) You are leaving on a business trip but don't want the phone to be left unattended. You can activate call forwarding to your virtual assistant's telephone and give the virtual assistant your business itinerary. Your virtual assistant **answers all calls**, responds to routine requests, and

"I realized I couldn't do it all, and any successful business person will incorporate fantastic team members – people that are the best in their field, the best at what they do, to help take some of the load off of us so that we can continue to do what we do best, continue to get creative with our businesses and continue to grow our company."

Kendra Todd, winner of season three of NBC's "***The Apprentice***"
Real Estate Investor, Owner of My House Real Estate, Team Double-ClickSM Client

contacts you with urgent messages.

- 85) You are frequently out of the office or travel and cannot check voice mail on a regular basis. Your virtual assistant can call and **retrieve messages from voice mail**, respond to routine requests and contact you if necessary.

- 86) You plan a seminar or conference and need to invite attendees. Your virtual assistant can **make the phone calls to key contacts** in your targeted businesses, give a brief overview of the seminar, and schedule a phone appointment for you to connect with the contact personally.
- 87) You want **a human voice to answer** the phone. Simply purchase a system such as FreedomVoice, which can be set to ring to your virtual assistant's office so s/he can answer in your company name. Whenever the phone rings at the virtual assistant's location, calls will be handled, messages will be taken, and appointments scheduled. You **pay for time on the phone, and any follow up tasks - not standby time.**

The administrative part is beautifully intact, too, because it is being handled by my trusty, knowledgeable, hard-working VA in Minnesota. I know that I could not function without Sherry.

Alejandra Cisneros
Designer

As told in Michael Russer's *Virtual Outsourcing*

Internet Services

- 88) You want **to put photographs online** through a service or by creating a personal page. Your virtual assistant can scan and resize the photos, then send out an invitation to your designated email list to access the photographs.
- 89) You are trying to **locate a hard to find item**. Using the Internet, your virtual assistant can perform a search to try to locate the item.
- 90) You need **changes made to your website**. Your virtual assistant can edit or upload new information to your website.

"How soon can I get started, what will you need to get started? I am putting together some tasks for you. I am excited about this."

Demetrius Mathius

- 91) You need to **promote your website**. Your virtual assistant can submit the URL, key words and description to various search engines on a routine basis.
- 92) You want **to increase the number** of subscribers to your electronic newsletter. Your virtual assistant can **list the newsletter with a variety of online directories** and follow up to make sure the listings are accurate.
- 93) You want to increase the number of subscribers to your eZine or newsletter. Your virtual assistant can contact other list owners of similar subjects to inquire about mutual cross promotion.
- 94) You want to promote your business online. Your virtual assistant can **submit articles** written by you to eZines to **increase exposure** of your company.
- 95) You don't have time to monitor website traffic. Your virtual assistant can monitor banner ad placements/click thrus and make recommendations for adjustments. S/he can also **monitor search engine rankings and submit** to search engines.
- 96) You want to sell your business or find an associate. Your virtual assistant can submit information to business brokers, place ads, review inquiries. This can be privately managed off-site by someone not involved with the business management in order to maintain confidentiality.
- 97) You want **to sell products** on your website. Your virtual assistant can set up a shopping cart and monitor sales reports. Your virtual assistant can monitor tests and make recommendations.
- 98) You want to improve website traffic with related links. Your virtual assistant can **contact similar websites** and request mutual link exchange.

- 99) You don't have time to monitor your website for errors or broken links. Your virtual assistant can **periodically review the website** and verify links.

Bookkeeping

- 100)** You need **bill paying services**. You simply have all bills mailed to a post office box near your virtual assistant. Your virtual assistant sets up a checking account with payment authorization for both you and the virtual assistant. As the bills are prepared for payment, your virtual assistant 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.
- 101)** You need **bill paying services plus data entry into accounting software**. Your bills can be mailed to a post office box near your virtual assistant, or you can collect all the bills and mail them to your virtual assistant periodically. Your virtual assistant can:
- a. Set up a checking account with payment authorization for both you and the virtual assistant. As the bills are prepared for payment, the virtual assistant notifies you how much money to deposit into the account.
 - b. Prepare the checks for payment and mail back to you for signature and mailing.
 - c. If available from your bank, use on-line bill payment services. As bills are paid, the virtual assistant then enters the transactions into accounting software. In addition, the virtual assistant can reconcile bank statements, enter credit card transactions, prepare invoices, make and/or enter deposits, and prepare end of month reports.
- 102)** If you require annually or monthly subscription-type invoices due from your membership or clients, the virtual assistant can **prepare the invoices and**

- mail** according to schedule. Your virtual assistant can also receive payments and deposit into the company account. All transactions are recorded in accounting software and sent to you via FTP transfer or mailed on CD.
- 103) You have several account receivables that are past due. Your virtual assistant can **mail past due notices** or follow up via telephone to **collect on past due invoices**, make payment arrangements; accept credit cards over the phone, etc.
- 104) You continue to pay your own bills, but need monthly bank reconciliation. You can simply mail or scan and email a copy of your check register along with the bank statement to your virtual assistant. S/he then **enters all data into accounting software** and reconciles the account. The accounting file is sent back to you via email attachment.
- 105) You continue to pay your own bills, but need reminders to pay in a timely manner. Your virtual assistant can **remind you via email** or telephone when due dates arrive.
- 106) You need monthly **auditing of accounts payable** and receivable, especially if these services are performed by an on-site employee. Your virtual assistant can perform these audits.
- 107) Your virtual assistant can **make calendar updates** to keep you informed of upcoming obligations and activities.

Purchasing Services

- 108) On a pre-specified basis, the virtual assistant can fax you a list of office supplies that are used on a regular basis. You check off what you need and fax the list back to your virtual assistant. Your virtual assistant **re-orders the supplies** and has them delivered directly to your home or

"I see Jennifer got the results we were after. She's great! She did a fabulous job of staying on it too, until she got through. AND she's very friendly and professional."

*Lois McDaniel
Lead Virtual Assistant*

office.

- 109) You need new equipment. After your virtual assistant researches the various makes, models, etc., written quotes are sent to you. Upon your authorization, your virtual assistant purchases the equipment and arranges for delivery to your home or office. If the item to be purchased requires **on-site setup, the virtual assistant can also make those arrangements** as well confirm dates/times and travel information.
- 110) When available, a virtual assistant can set-up an online account on your behalf with stores that supply your needed items. When supplies are needed, your virtual assistant **places the order with delivery** to your home or office.
- 111) A virtual assistant working with your accountant can set up lines of credit with vendors and monitor to **keep the credit information current** and accurate.
- 112) You need to **order marketing materials** (stationery, brochures, envelopes, etc.). Your virtual assistant can obtain pricing quotes; coordinate ordering, design, quantity, delivery and payment.
- 113) You do not have time to keep up with gifts for birthdays and holidays. Your virtual assistant can keep track of birthdays and other milestones, research appropriate gifts, suggest those items to you for approval, and coordinate the purchase and delivery of same.
- 114) Your virtual assistant can **keep track of birthdays and send out cards** to your customers.

Writing/Editing Services

- 115) You are **preparing a brochure** and need assistance with the copy. Your virtual assistant can **write** marketing literature.
- 116) You are **preparing a marketing flyer** and need assistance with the copy. Your virtual assistant can **edit** marketing literature.

- 117) You are **preparing a website** and need assistance with the copy. Your virtual assistant **can proofread** marketing literature.
- 118) You have prepared a manual that **needs to be edited**. Your virtual assistant can type, format, proofread, edit, spell check, and grammar check the documents for you.

Marketing Services

- 119) You implement **an advertising plan or promo**. Your virtual assistant can monitor the plan, submit 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.
- 120) You want to **monitor customer satisfaction**. Your virtual assistant can type a customer feedback questionnaire, mail to customers, receive the completed questionnaire, summarize the responses and issue a report to you for review and action.
- 121) You want to send information to a new client. Your virtual assistant can prepare a **welcome package** and send it to the new client.
- 122) You would like to **get more referrals**. Your virtual assistant can set up lunch appointments with potential referral partners to discuss the arrangements. Your virtual assistant can send letters or brochures to potential referral partners to introduce them to your services.
- 123) You set up exhibits at conventions or expos on a regular basis. The virtual assistant can **call prospective customers** who have left their name and number, and set appointments for you to follow-up.

Personal Services

- 124) Schedule personal tasks such as car maintenance, order groceries or make flight arrangements

- 125) You have a hard time **remembering birthdays**, anniversaries, etc. The virtual assistant can email or telephone you to remind you of these important dates.
- 126) You make appointments and then forget to keep them. Your virtual assistant can **keep your calendar** and remind you of the dentist/client/significant other appointments, family appointments, classes to take, or project deadlines.
- 127) You're busy and need information on summer camp for your children. Your virtual assistant can help research personal items such as these as well.
- 128) Your virtual assistant can provide **clipping service**. S/he can regularly monitor particular newspapers/magazines and clip articles of interest or take a trip to the library and copy specific articles.
- 129) You are **planning a wedding/reunion/backyard barbeque**. Your virtual assistant can assist with the invitation list, mailing the invitations, tracking RSVPs, tracking gifts received and even send thank you cards.
- 130) You want to change insurance plans, for auto, home, life or health insurance, or business. Your virtual assistant can **research and recommend** which one is the best choice.
- 131) You want to **plan a vacation** but do not have time to research. Your virtual assistant can conduct the research, provide you with options, and then make the travel arrangements, such as air, hotel and car rental, or all-inclusive resorts or cruise comparisons. You might even ask her/him to plan a romantic get-away for you and your significant other!
- 132) You would like to **promote your speaking career**. Your virtual assistant can make appointments with organizations to arrange speaking engagements, send out materials, follow up with inquiries, and **coordinate public relations** such as press releases.
- 133) You want **daily updating** on personal investments, stocks, etc. Your virtual assistant can provide this service.

- 134) You would like a **personalized music program downloaded** to a computer or a handheld device. Your virtual assistant can perform this task for you.
- 135) You would like to **write a book**, but can't get organized. Your virtual assistant 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.
- 136) You would like **audio files uploaded** to a website or set up to be downloaded as a **free report**. Send the files to your virtual assistant to upload!

Case Studies of Business Professionals Utilizing the Services of Virtual Assistants

Case Study: Janet Switzer



What is the nature of your business?

I am a New York Times best-selling co-author of *The Success Principles: How to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be* with Jack Canfield. I am also the author of *Instant Income®*, a new series of small-business resources. In addition to authoring books, I also provide products and services to small business owners – everything from consulting to selling coaching programs, home study courses and mentoring. I have a huge publicity component to my business.

What prompted you to seek virtual assistance?

I always was a virtual company. Once I started to seek out some extra help, I knew I wanted to work virtually. It is actually quite difficult trying to write and manage a team onsite in an office environment. Also, I knew that I wanted to pull from the best talent rather than the talent pool that was here locally. So I made the

decision to run a virtual company from the get go and a friend of mine recommended Team Double-Click as a great resource for virtual assistants, but virtual assistants with a little bit extra work experience, a little expertise in categories I needed like marketing, publicity, project management and things like that – not just administrative people. They have administrative people with that extra edge.

How do you plan to utilize your Team Double-Click® Virtual Assistant?

They are more project managers. Even though they have administrative duties, those administrative duties relate to management of different promotions that I do; different campaigns that I run and joint ventures that I endorse with different joint venture partners. What is unique about the virtual assistants that I have gotten from Team Double-Click is that they are very proactive in seeking out new opportunities for business, which is neat. I don't just give them tasks to do. They actually proactively help me build my business.

What would you recommend to businesses that are considering using a Team Double-Click® Virtual Assistant?

I would go through the very painful exercise of writing down and making a list of everything you do and determine which of those things on the list that only you can do and delegate everything else. Then provide the list to your Team Double-Click Rep so that they can find the perfect match for you.

Case Study: Jean Canton



Problem

As my virtual business grows I need periodic support for administrative work. I decided it would be more profitable to delegate the time spent on administrative work to market my business.

Why did you Choose Team Double-Click

I met A Team Double Click staff member at a Conference. I was impressed with the business model and the individual I met. Previous experience with a Virtual Assistant I hired on my own was successful. However, she discontinued working as a Virtual Assistant so I had to either hire Team Double Click or search for, interview and hire a new virtual assistant. I decided to give Team Double Click a try. Their commitment to service and customer satisfaction sounded compelling.

How My Virtual Assistant Helps Me

My Virtual Assistant handles the technical aspects of sending my electronic newsletter to my mailing list, upload articles I write to my website, and as my practice grows will handle more of my scheduling with clients and speaking engagements.

Result

Although I am just getting started, the best thing so far is I can pay attention to other things and let my virtual assistant deal with it. I am less skilled at the technical work so it takes me too much time. As my virtual assistant works on her projects I can create new products and services which equal money and clients.

About

Jean R. Caton MS, MBA, RD, is a Public Speaker, Life Coach, and Marketing Strategist for Small businesses nationwide. Jean is able to be contacted at: 314.807.6328 Web Address: www.JeanCaton.com

Comparison Virtual Staffing v. Bricks-and-Mortar Staffing

| Category | Virtual Staffing | Bricks-and-Mortar | Advantage |
|-----------------|--|--|--------------------|
| Flexibility | Anytime, anywhere, 24/7/365 matching of business need to contractor skill. | Open 9-5, Monday through Friday | ✓ Virtual Staffing |
| Time | Can locate local and remote staff in a matter of hours in all time zones. Typically takes at least a day or two to locate local contractors. | Typically, no access to remote contractors | ✓ Virtual Staffing |
| Cost | The cost of locating qualified staff is negligible. Other costs are already being paid: Internet access, computer, phone line, fax, etc. | An office must be rented, upgraded. Insurance must be bought for the premises, an alarm system; business property tax must be paid, property management fees, and so on. Overhead costs such as heat, electricity, and so on, must also be paid prior to making your first dollar. | ✓ Virtual Staffing |
| Service | Virtual staffing embraces the small and home-based business owner and their growing needs. These “small businesses” are the ones that | Many bricks-and-mortar staffing agencies will not work will not even return calls to small business owners, or will treat them like “second class citizens” because | ✓ Virtual Staffing |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| | DRIVE the economy. | they don't have big bank accounts. | |
| Service Area | Virtual staffing agencies break geographical barriers with access to qualified help across the U.S. and are not limited to a particular city, state, or region of the country. | Bricks-and-mortar staffing agencies are limited to recruiting within a local radius. | ✓ Virtual Staffing |
| Environmental Impact | Virtual staffing helps encourage both workers and employers to work from home and maximize the time they work at home, thus keeping their vehicles (and consequently emissions!) off the highways. | No positive impact/difference. | ✓ Virtual Staffing |
| Employee/ Employer Relationship | Virtual staffers are contractors. That means that they are NOT employees. There are no payroll and benefits expenses and no legal obligations. | Staffers who work bricks-and-mortar are typically employees. They legally work for the company, and as such, the company must pay for payroll, benefits, sick days, holiday pay, costs associated with withholding tax, social security tax, unemployment tax, etc. | ✓ Virtual Staffing |

Conclusion

Virtual assistants are here to stay. The preceding case studies show that virtual assistants can and do work well for most small and home-based businesses.

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.

What will happen to the individual business professionals' businesses when virtual assisting is implemented on a wide scale?

Will your business be on the forefront of this cost-saving phenomenon of efficiency?

About Team Double-Click®

Team Double-Click® provides professional virtual office assistants in many industries for small and home-based businesses. We are a virtual staffing agency, working with thousands of the best professional virtual office assistants the world has to offer. Team Double-Click® offers its clients cost-effective solutions to inflexible bricks-and-mortar staffing by staffing virtually.

We don't just tell you where you can find a virtual assistant. We assess your needs and match you with one of our highly-skilled and Team Double-Click® trained virtual assistants. And then we monitor and nurture that relationship so you get the most out of hiring virtually. Think of us as your virtual human resources department!

Team Double-Click® uses one of the most stringent interviewing and screening processes in the industry when looking for virtual assistants to serve our clients. Why? Because virtual assistants come in so many shapes, sizes, prices, and skill levels that it can be difficult to find exactly what you need. We remove all the guesswork by handling the screening and weeding out the undesirables so you don't have to deal with them.

After we know we have a good foundation - a good person to work with - we require all of our virtual assistants take and pass one of our virtual assistant certification courses.

What do they learn? They learn how to better assist you, to help you grow your business and to help shoulder your day-to-day administrative burdens. They learn about the latest technologies that help facilitate virtual working and they learn what most clients expect. In other words, we take that person with a good foundation and we hone her/him into a top-notch virtual assistant.

Our service doesn't stop after a virtual assistant is assigned to our clients. We take things a couple of steps further and coach each virtual assistant one-on-one to help her/him serve you even better as time goes on.

It's important to remember that we may not always be able to offer you a virtual assistant with years and years of experience working virtually. Virtual working simply hasn't been around that long. And besides, if you've ever called the individual virtual assistant shops that pop up on an internet search, you know that if they're any good at what they do they already have all the work they need and can't possibly take on another client such as yourself.

That's why Team Double-Click® implemented such an extensive screening and training process, so that even the newest, most inexperienced virtual assistant can be as good as or better than a virtual assistant with years of experience. In short, Team Double-Click® has taken the virtual assistant industry and standardized it so that each client receives the same level of quality and service regardless of how "new" his or her virtual assistant is to the concept.

Team Double-Click®'s screening and training process sets the standards by which other virtual assistants are measured. You don't have to research and sort through different rate structures, retainer fees, and abilities when you come to Team Double-Click® for your virtual needs. Each service we offer carries its own price tag, with no retainer fee, regardless of which one of our virtual assistants is matched with your business.

So why settle for anything less than a Team Double-Click®, TCE-certified virtual assistant?