

Blog: Drop the Mic!

Crisis brings out the “Remote Warrior”

Many of us are familiar with the concept of the “road warrior” made popular in 1982 by Mel Gibson in his Mad Max 2 movie. Corporate America was quick to catch on and coined the same phrase to identify someone who traveled extensively, conducting business on the road. Indeed, frequent flyers, and Sky Club members have certainly logged significant miles in pursuit of closing the deal or introducing a new product. However, in today’s challenging times, we see a new version of the warrior emerging. Enter the age of the “Remote Warrior”.

In the past, managing life as a Road Warrior might have meant preparing travel and hotel arrangements, packing a bag, your laptop, chargers and compiling whatever documents or equipment you needed for your meeting. Adding in some travel size tissues, a box of Air-borne, and any other travel essentials you were ready to go...but, times have certainly changed.

remote warrior -
An individual who shelters in place with a laptop, microphone and webcam extensively for business, conducting meetings and day-to-day business on-line in a near endless stream of remote access, VPN’s, conference calls and videoconferencing, with occasional interruption by significant others, hungry kids, or random acts of affection from the household pet.

In the current Covid-19 climate and for the foreseeable future, that arsenal of supplies will simply not be enough to survive much less thrive in the business world. And while so many are still primarily “sheltering in place”, we all must begin to consider what will be the “new normal” going forward.



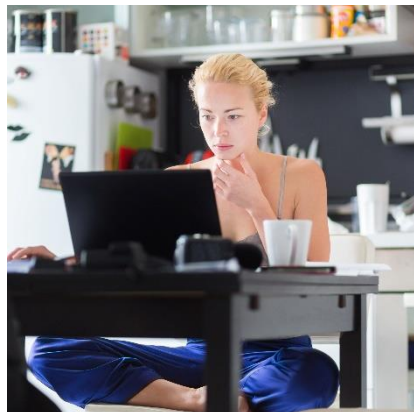
Perhaps the Road Warrior of the past will evolve to become the “Remote Warrior” where instead of packing a travel bag, professionals will become tech wizards of their remote workplaces.

Here, home offices, and converted dining rooms will be outfitted with communication tools like web-cams, microphones, and other presentation equipment that can foster a more professional “home set up” from which to conduct endless Zoom meetings, staff meetings and other video-conferences.

Going forward, the real “Remote Warriors” would be the professionals with the most tech gadgets and the best AV equipment. To meet this demand, we, as manufacturers, need to pivot and to see how the “new normal” will dictate new uses for existing products or help us channel our energies into developing new products that fit the changing needs.



If we have found anything in the last several weeks, it is that working remotely can not only be convenient, it can virtually keep your company in business. Embracing a digital workspace not only gives professionals and companies a workable alternative for face-to-face meetings, it reduces non-essential travel related costs, improves productivity, and reduces the carbon footprint as commuting and travel usage plummets.



Videoconferencing is not new. Perhaps previously underutilized by your average employee, but certainly not a new technology. The fact that Zoom (a company) has now become a verb “Can we zoom?” and “Sorry I was zooming” is indicating that our world has finally accepted that future success depends heavily on a productive remote work force. Looking at this further, this work force will need better, smarter tools, and those with the audio and visual quality to provide an experience that feels as good as “being there”.

As our companies continue to run, without the need to sit in offices, serious considerations for corporate real estate will also need to be made. Social distancing protocols and a general unwillingness to touch surfaces will create the need for more voice-activated and hands-free access to buildings, offices, elevators and the equipment we use in our offices every day. Working in shifts, reducing floor densities and incorporating more rigorous sanitizing efforts are just a few of the changes we may see. Expect surges in remote working software, video conferencing technologies, and auxiliary devices such as mics, lighting and cameras, as we all strive to build the best remote versions of our work selves.

What begs more consideration? What will be the tools these Remote Warriors need most? Will they be different from person to person and from industry to industry? Have we really considered what various sectors will need when it comes to the legal system, education, streaming, customer service, manufacturing, healthcare and more? These are great questions that need to be asked and technologists, visionaries, business owners and their remote teams need to answer to help guide the future as we all “get back to business”.

For the Remote Warrior and the companies they work for, expect that at least some of the working patterns that have been established due to the pandemic will create a new set of rules for future business models and enormous opportunities for those that are ready for the challenge.

At Clockaudio, we welcome your thoughts on what YOU think is most needed for remote office environments. What are the pain points? What technologies and standards should help drive the future of the remote workplace? Send your comments to info@clockaudio.com. We look forward to your feedback. Let's tag the conversation #remotewarrior.

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