

# **7 Essential Technology Tools You Need to Work From Home During a Snowstorm**

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by:**

**XPERTECHS**  
A Member of the MIT Group  
5090 Dorsey Hall Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21042  
(410) 884-0225  
[www.xpertechs.com](http://www.xpertechs.com)

# 7 Essential Technology Tools You Need to Work From Home During a Snowstorm

Still digging out your cars and homes from last week's blizzard? Getting organized for increased productivity in the New Year at work and at home? XPERTECHS wants to help prepare you for the next blizzard (please, not another!) and for ongoing remote access purposes. There are **7 Essential Technology Tools** you can apply to your business when working away from the office or remotely as we like to say. XPERTECHS recommends that you review the tools below with your IT support colleagues to see what will apply to your specific situation and act on those items.

## 1. Working Away From the Office

When you are away from the office, you want to have access to your data and company email at work. A server (aka secure centralized location for your company's documents and files) is the central repository for your company's data - much of it critical (financials, calendars, contact management database, contracts, HR documents, email and so forth). Having the benefits of a server, you can be productive away from the office in a very secure manner. A popular solution for many of our small and mid-sized business clients (SMB market) is Windows Small Business Server 2008 or Server 2008. It's a complete solution for the small to mid-sized business.

## 2. Remote Access

A Virtual Private Network (VPN) is a secure tool to access your Small Business Server and your company network. Alternatively, LogMeIn is a tool to access your work computer. This program allows you to operate your work computer from home as if you were actually sitting in front of your computer at work.

## 3. Pillars of Good Computing

You need to use these for all of your computers to ensure you have a dependable, stable and secure working computer. Some of these pillars are tools like anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewalls. This is what XPERTECHS' XperCARE service does for you. In addition, a commercial grade surge protector power strip or an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) are recommended. Here along the Baltimore/Washington corridor, the UPS is handy to have with lightning storms, heavy wet snows and just to be safe in case of an unexpected power outage.

## 4. Business Mobility

Everyone nowadays has some sort of cell phone. There's the cell phone that has phone, text and pictures. And, then there are the smart phones like the Windows Mobile 7 phone, iPhone, Droid or Blackberry which have with real computer capabilities. We recommend smart phones for our business clients so there is enhanced synchronization with the server and documents back at the office. Your phone becomes an extension of your work computer's email, calendar, contacts and more.

## 5. High Speed at Home and Away

High speed connectivity (cable modem or DSL) at home are key to being productive and efficient during a snowstorm such as we have experienced. Without one of these, you will be spending a lot more time doing the same task than you would by having a high speed connection.

## **6. Remote Backup Solution**

Backing up your files on your work computer is a really good thing to do. Check with your IT support team to make sure there is an off-site or remote backup happening in case the power should go out at work and you are at home during a snowstorm. You can retrieve files that were saved and backed up at work by having a remote backup program in place. The last version of your work as well as emails can be retrieved if necessary. Also, this gives your business an additional backup solution as part of a disaster recovery and business continuity plan.

## **7. Organize Your Files at Work and Home**

Your organization needs to take into consideration the following three (3) things:

- ✓ Insuring that important files are backed up as part of your company's backup plan
- ✓ Finding the important documents fast
- ✓ Protecting the files by making them secure. There is internal security which means that there may be files that you don't want everyone in your organization to see or have access to. There is also external security which means that you want to protect your organization's documents from outside hackers.

Please contact Michael Mellott, President of XPERTECHS at (410) 884-0225 for assistance implementing these essential technology tools and to take advantage of one of the special offers.