

## **VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS ARE A GROWING CONCERN**

Written by Darrell A. Williams Monday, 11 June 2007 **Right-Hand-Man Virtual Assistant Services**

You may have never heard of a Virtual Assistant before, but you soon will be hearing a lot about them.

Once unheard of, Virtual Assistants are one of the fastest growing service industries today. The VA Industry continues to grow by leaps and bounds. Since VA's are independent contractors, fully accurate numbers are not always easy to come by. On the lowest side of the estimates, worldwide numbers only reach 5,000. At the other end it is estimated that there are more than 20,000. A report out of George Washington University estimates that by 2008 the Virtual Assistant industry will be generating \$130 Billion dollars in revenue.

With Virtual Assistants providing such varied services as transcription and web design through voicemail and e-mail management, it can even be hard to nail down a definition. The definition that seems to be the most inclusive is the one from, reportedly, the best forum online for experienced and emerging VA's – The Virtual Assistant Networking Association.

"A **Virtual Assistant** (VA) works independently at an arm's length, via the Internet, utilizing the latest technologies. They provide immediate professional support, services and skills to busy entrepreneurs and business managers. Partnering with a **VA** reduces stress, protects cash flow, eliminates administrative hassles, and enables business people to find the success they originally set out to achieve." <http://www.vanetworking.com/what-is-a-va.htm>

There are as many different types of Virtual Assistants as there are businesses in the world. VA services are enlisted by businesses from real estate agents, lawyers, and doctors to hairdressers, authors and artists. Even if you don't have a business, but have a busy life, a VA can help you with scheduling, bill paying, correspondence, and even online shopping.

This industry is growing due, in part, to corporate downsizing. More and more businesses are outsourcing various aspects of their operations. This brings up the other side of Virtual Assistant growth – the growth of the clients' businesses. If you talk to any client of a VA, you will find out that utilizing the services of a VA has given them more time, greater productivity, and in turn has helped them to grow their business.

As the Virtual Assistant industry continues to grow, more and more people will be leaving the 9 to 5 workplace to become VAs. There are many VA training programs available online and even some colleges are starting to offer Virtual Assistant diploma programs. Most Virtual Assistants that operate today have come from Administrative Assistant backgrounds. Eventually, there will be VAs that have never worked in a traditional office before.

Keep your eye on this growing industry and if you have some experience and training and are thinking of a career change, why not give becoming a Virtual Assistant some serious thought. If you need help with your business, hire a VA and get in on this growing concern.

For more information on Virtual Assistants, check out [www.right-hand-man.blogspot.com](http://www.right-hand-man.blogspot.com)