Recommended Remote Access Technologies

There are a number of remote access technologies including the Cloud. If your management system is not Cloud based, we recommend the use of Microsoft’s Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP) with or without the use of Virtual Private Network (VPN) software to securely and effectively connect a wahves’ home computer to your networks. You will want to choose the method that best supports your management system and workflows.

Keep in mind that each type of remote access, whether Cloud based, which requires MS Office 2013 or above, RDP, which requires MS Windows Server, or VPN, which requires Citrix, you are responsible for providing the software license just as you would for your staff.

Please call to discuss options if you have questions about these protocols. We do our very best to support our clients no matter what solutions they may employ. If we are unable to support the installation and testing of non-approved solutions, you may need to pay for third-party consulting support in order to make these solutions work.

Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP)

RDP is a remote access technology originally developed by Microsoft. In order for RDP to connect the home computer and office network, both the clients’ servers or workstations in the office and the wahves’ laptops or workstations at home require RDP software.

Our Gold Standard for RDP connectivity to our clients’ networks is Windows Server 2012, or 2008, because we feel these are the most secure and effective solutions available and because this technology simultaneously supports multiple users. We do also support Windows Server 2003 for those agents still using it. The current version of Microsoft’s RDP server software, for which there is a per user license fee, is called Remote Desktop Services (formerly Terminal Services).

Alternatively, clients can attach a workstation that is running Windows 7, 8, 8.1 or 10 to their networks, which can provide excellent RDP capabilities. However, this “host” workstation can only support one remote user and it cannot be used by anyone at the client’s office while it is serving as the “host” computer for a remote user.

Remote access also requires that the laptop or workstation at home use client software called Remote Desktop Connection (RDC). RDC provides a graphical user interface to connect the remote laptop or workstation to the network natively or through a VPN.

RDP provides client system administrators with control over whether users can access shared files, local and network printers, and other devices. RDP is very secure, having 128-bit encryption using an RC4 encryption algorithm and support for transport layer security (TLS) 1.0 on both client and server.
**Virtual Private Networks (VPNs)**

VPNs require remote users to be “authenticated” (i.e., verified using security protocols). Additionally, VPNs routinely secure corporate data behind firewalls and encrypt data. All the functionality available to local users of a corporate network can be made available (or withheld) from those accessing the central system remotely through VPN.

This means routine office capabilities such as file sharing; access to printers and scanners; password-protected access to databases; Intranets and other websites; and logons to management systems can be accomplished remotely just as readily as they are in the office, where servers and system administrators are housed.

Some of the manufacturers of VPN software are renowned in technology companies, such as Cisco Systems (Citrix). Others are relatively unknown, such as RealNetworks and SonicWall. License fees are required for most VPN client and server software products.

Most of our clients want to maximize security and functionality (i.e. dual monitors, shared printers, etc.). We guarantee success using RDP and/or VPN software for which we provide installation and testing services.

**Amazon Workspaces**

Amazon now offers a Windows desktop as a service, providing a cloud-based desktop experience to end-users. Select from a choice of WorkSpace bundles with a range of CPU, memory, storage, and a choice of applications.

**Cloud/Website Based**

A number of management systems are now cloud based. If you are using this technology, you are responsible for the cost of licensing any additional software that may be required, such as Microsoft Office.

**Alternatives**

We have client firms using other remote connectivity solutions with some degree of success. Some of these solutions, such as GoToMeeting and LogMeIn, were designed for online meetings or remote technical support. We do not recommend these types of setups.

**Multiple Monitors**

WAHVE recommends the use of a second monitor to the home setup. We find the dual monitor to be an invaluable tool to increase efficiency. We supply a second monitor and make sure the configuration is complete and running well prior to your wahve’s start date.

If a third monitor is requested, adding a third monitor may or may not be an option. Some home desktops and laptops might not support a third monitor and not all remote connection software is compatible with three monitors. As an alternative, we can replace the standard sized second monitor with a wider model to be used with a split screen view.
Phones

Wahves can be supplied with phones, if desired, for handling client calls or internal communications. Phones can be implemented in a number of ways:

- **VOIP Phone** – connected to the wahve’s router. This acts like an extension on your switchboard/phone system.*

- **Landline at the wahve location** – calls transferred or forwarded from the desk phone or switchboard

- **Cell Phone** – basic cell phone designated for business use – calls transferred or forwarded (see above)

*VOIP phones and phone systems vary considerably. Configuration is subject to vendor specific requirements which can include increasing bandwidth from the wahve’s ISP or the implementation of a static IP address. Check with your phone system’s vendor for their required specifications.

Costs for any type of phone option is strictly the responsibility of the client. Wahve cannot guarantee IP phone connectivity. Costs associated with upgrading equipment to support voice data will be covered by the client, at their option.