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## Accessing The Officer Computer From Home

OK, what is the best way of accessing the office computer from home. We finally have DSL at home, and it would be nice to not have to sit in the office all night when I can work from home.

Michael P. Studebaker, Ogden, Utah

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If the office computer is Windows XP Professional, use Remote Desktop Protocol. If it is Windows XP Home, you can use GoToMyPC, pcAnywhere, or RealVNC.

Mike Phillips, Cary, North Carolina

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I use UltraVNC (Virtual Network Computer) myself:

<http://ultravnc.sourceforge.net/>

Another open source alternative is TightVNC:

<http://www.tightvnc.com/>

Mike Koenecke, Richardson, Texas

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We use gotomypc.com and are very happy with it.

Havona Madama, New York, New York

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GoToMyPC is the best I have ever used.

David Zachary Kaufman

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I am not a computer guy, but my guy did set up the remote desktop that comes with XP. It is great and never gives me a problem.

Robert W. "Robby" Hughes, Jr., Stone Mountain, Georgia

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I have been very happy with GoToMyPC.com.



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Greg Broiles, San Jose, California

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What do you need on the client side to make this work? Can you get into it from a Mac or older pc? Or do both machines need XP?

Jake London

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I am not so smart about these things, but I think all you need to do is activate the capability on the office machine and input the IP address on your remote machine. I could be way off on this assessment.

Robert W. "Robby" Hughes, Jr., Stone Mountain, Georgia

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"Where" are you going to work? I find it fastest to transfer files from one machine to the other and actually work on that machine. if you're going to do that, Pcitywhere is marvelous.

if you're going to work remotely, Gotomypc lets you log in and work at the machine. a side benefit is that you can use it from any machine -- i.e. if you travel without a notebook. it's simple to set up. I think they have monthly prices (cheaper by subscription)-- why don't you try it for a month

Jay S. Goldenberg, Chicago, Illinois

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The remote machine can be any Windows based machine. There is a free client that is downloaded from Microsoft and installed on the remote machine. I don't know if there is a Mac client, but I doubt it.

Mike Phillips, Cary, North Carolina

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<http://www.logmein.com><http://www.gotomypc.com>

Other options are software (Laplink/PC Anywhere) or VPN.

Darrell W. Stewart, San Antonio, Texas

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I use LogMeIn.com. Sufficient for my needs. Both LogMeIn and GoToMyPC offer free 30 day trials; sign up for both, and figure out which works better for you.

GTMPC is more expensive.

Barry L. Lippitt., Southfield, Michigan

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No problem to access a terminal through a server?

Craig McLaughlin, Irvine, California

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No idea. I just use it to connect my laptop to my desktop.

Barry L. Lippitt., Southfield, Michigan

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If the computer at work is XPP and it has a static IP address, then the computer at home can either be a Mac (with OSX) or a Winbox (with XP). If the computer at work is a Mac, then you'll need a different program such as Timbuktu from Netopia.

David L. Leon, Dallas, Texas

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I use PC Anywhere from Norton. My computer at home is Windows 98 and the office is XP. (Pent 4 and 1 GB Ram) Worked great, that is before I fried the motherboard on the office machine (whole nother story) When the office ran on Windows 98 (Pent III and 663 Ram) not so good - used too many resources.

Mark Olberding, Iowa

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I use GoToMyPC.com. Works great & comes in handy. Just this week I ran to Court to file a subpoena and walked out of my office without the NPD I had done. Court won't issue the subpoena without it, so I went to Kinko's (a block away from Court), logged into my computer and printed out a fresh copy of the NPD, made copies and ran back over to Court. A life saver in this instance since it's about a 20-30 minute trip each way between my office and Court.

I've also used it to access my computers when I went to DC last year and on a trip back to MI this year.

Jane E. Tate, Kailua, Hawaii

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Just FYI, the same exact thing can be done with UltraVNC for free (i.e., accessing your home computer from any Java-enabled Web browser).

Mike Koenecke, Richardson, Texas

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Do you have any comments on the relative ease and security of the do-it-

yourself setup? I have played around with one of the VNC derivatives on a LAN and it seemed to work nicely, but I have stuck with GoToMyPC for real work because the VNC setup struck me as somewhat fragile, especially if it needs to run in an environment where the host PC has a dynamic IP address and is sitting behind a consumer-grade NAT/firewall device. It would be neat to stop paying GTMP \$30 a month, but I would rather pay \$30 a month for something that always (in my experience) works, rather than \$0 per month for something that works sometimes and not at other times.

Greg Broiles, San Jose, California

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The dynamic IP address issue can be handled by using something like <http://www.dyndns.com> or <http://no-ip.com>. The firewall issue is handled by forwarding the appropriate ports, which any remote control software will need to do. And the whole thing can be encrypted via a plugin. The only time I have known UltraVNC to fail is when the server computer is offline.

But you don't have to take my word for it: you can always install the thing right alongside GoToMyPC and try it out yourself.

Mike Koenecke, Richardson, Texas

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I'm not trying to be argumentative and say that GTMP is better than UltraVNC - just wanted to know if you have the same needs that I have and feel that UVNC meets them, or if we have different needs, so the fact that UVNC meets yours doesn't mean it'll meet mine.

The problem with trying it out in parallel is that the sort of failures I'm concerned about are difficult to test for - my biggest concerns are (a) unavailability at a crucial time, and (b) that the software has weaknesses that, when exposed through an open firewall port, mean that bad people can take control of or disable my PC.

The first concern seems to argue against any free service - free services tends to be operated by volunteer/enthusiast people, who are prone to upgrade/change software to match their ideas about technical correctness/superiority, even where they don't match my ideas about stability at crucial moments; and who are also prone to stop providing service suddenly, and/or view unavailability/incompatibility as an unfortunate side effect, rather than a direct threat to their ability to feed their families. If UVNC's NAT-to-NAT repeater is suddenly unavailable to me, there's not much I can do to the UVNC guys. If the GTMP service goes down, I'm going to think about not subscribing any more, which (at a macro level) means the operators need to think about getting new jobs if they do that very much.

To address the second concern (software quality/security), I guess I could set up a sacrificial PC on its own little network and watch to see if it gets hijacked, but that's a lot of effort to save \$30/month, and the underlying

methodology is somewhat suspect, anyway.

Anyway, like I said, I am not trying to make a GTMP=good, UVNC=bad argument, just hoping to draw out some details about other people's needs and solutions to see if there's a better way to be doing things.

Greg Broiles, San Jose, California

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Apples and oranges. VNC is a direct connection between the remote and the host computers. As I understand it, GTMP works through a server.

Yes, VNC has to have a port forwarded to the host computer, but so does GTMP, which I believe works on Port 80, but I could be wrong.

GTMP has the potential to be unavailable more often than VNC because the in-between server could be down.

If you like the idea of GTMP, use it. Several people here are happy with it. I'm somewhat technically inclined, and I have no intentions of paying \$30 per month for a function that I can get for free. (My teenage daughter says I'm frugal --- I say I'm cheap.) Moreover, at \$30 per month, you could upgrade to a full version of XP Pro with a 5 or 6 month payback and have Remote Desktop Protocol, which is faster than all of the options mentioned in this thread.

Your mileage may vary.

Mike Phillips, Cary, North Carolina

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