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Barrie firm uses Internet to support office staff

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A local firm is providing back up office support to clients both locally, and from around the world.

Elayne Whitfield has been operating Executive Assistance since September 2000. Whitfield calls herself a "Virtual Assistant (VA)." She supplies administrative support to her clients online, rather than face-to-face. Projects are communicated using available technologies such as phone, fax, e-mail, or file transfer over the Internet.

"You might be surprised by the tasks a qualified and experienced VA can provide," Whitfield says. "Your trusted virtual assistant can enter your computer while you're away at a meeting and update your database, or they can receive copies of your e-mail and respond, to those requiring an immediate response. She can even answer your phone. The only thing a VA can't do is make your coffee - and even that could be accomplished with today's technology given some creative thinking!"

Services like hers are ideal for small, and home-based businesses needing constant, reliable administrative support, and are not yet able to hire a permanent employee, Whitfield says.

There's even an organization devoted to entrepreneurs such as Whitfield. CVASuccess was founded in March, 2002, and is planning a national conference in the Collingwood area. Special events, workshops, and seminars will be part of the conference, she says.

"It will be a place for VAs to hang out, chat, learn from others, and work together to make the industry the next best thing to cell phones."

Naturally, Whitfield has her own Web site. It can be found at www.executiveassistance.org.



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