



## THE HOME OFFICE

### In Our Experience: what's possible & effective

The modern house is a more open-plan and fluid place than ever before: the family kitchen is at times a dining space, a place for relaxation and an office as one snatches a moment to answer emails over a cup of coffee. The 'Home Office' is less a defined area within the home (although it can certainly still be that) but a state of infrastructure that allow you to be productive and efficient.

Many people build out their working capability at home on an ad hoc basis: using the WiFi access point that came free from their broadband supplier and perhaps adding a budget printer. Back-up for vital photographs and media purchases, emails, financial records and other data are infrequent & reliant on remembering to carry them out. This structure is fine until the chips are down and important, time-critical tasks need to be carried out or recovery is attempted following a crisis such as burglary or house fire. In these instances, having taken an informal approach usually leads to disaster. We can set all your systems up right to avoid this happening and we can provide maintenance to keep it working effectively.

### Some Fundamentals:

- **Critical Systems:** because most people's IT set-up has grown incrementally over many years and often with minimal professional input (and when there has been some it is usually reactive problem-solving rather than design advice) it is often unreliable and lacks safeguards such as robust back-ups. Yet, in these same households the majority of the last decade's memories are stored in digital images and countless important emails, data files and other documents have accumulated. The sense of loss in the event of an IT failure is often significant and leaves people regretting that a more comprehensive approach was not taken to avoid disaster.
- **Efficiency:** although the home is not a professional base for the majority of us, employees can increasingly work from home for a day per week or more. When vital work needs to be done (either sporadically during evenings/weekends or when actually working from home during business hours) we can make sure that the connections are reliable, secure and ancillary services like printing really work.
- **Liaison:** we often team up with corporate IT departments to make sure that secure VPN connections or Bloomberg feeds, for instance, are put in place to allow financial services tasks to be undertaken without risk when communicating from the home to the office. Equally, we have many clients who start up businesses from home and whose needs then expand as the number of employees/collaborators grow and we set up and support small business IT in the same manner: with an emphasis on reliable, low cost, hardware-light systems.
- **By taking a complete view of household technology, we can co-ordinate the important functions of the home office seamlessly and broadly.** Whole house WiFi coverage, quick access to critical household systems like surveillance cameras, heating controls, office connections, back-ups and more are our stock in trade and when used in conjunction with our support service, any members of the household, including children at University, can be sure of efficient support and advice in case of need.

### Things to bear in mind when evaluating this technology

- Are you confident about your back-ups being up-to-date and complete?
- In the event of burglary or fire will your back-ups disappear along with your main system?
- Is there someone to call for support when you are at home or out & about?
- With the proliferation of WiFi devices like iPads is the coverage throughout the house robust enough?
- Certain technologies (like WiFi printers) are simply unreliable but it is easy to do it properly