



HOME OFFICE *Highway* WITH JEFF ZBAR



Vocation MEETS *Vacation*
ON THE OPEN ROAD

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There's a saying in the automotive repair and carpentry trades: A man is no better than the tools he uses. The same is true in the information business – especially when the business is taken on the road. The productivity of today's road warrior, mobile officer or *workationer* is subject to the capabilities or limitations of the technology he chooses to use. And Home Office Highway would not have been possible without a handful of select products – and the companies who provided them.

Thanks to **Office Depot** who was gracious in supporting the tour with various products and technology that enabled the work to be organized and productive, and with marketing support along the way. Office Depot's Design, Print & Ship Depot printed various materials, including this booklet. Also, a thanks to **Verizon Wireless** for its support, and such technology as its wireless broadband "aircard," which enabled the Z-RV to connect to the Internet, even as we traveled down America's highways and byways. It cannot be overstated: Internet access is the foundation upon which any workation is built. **RV Sales of Broward** helped secure the right-sized recreational vehicle for our tour. Some said we should have traveled in a luxury motor coach. But for a family of five accustomed to traveling thousands of miles in a minivan, the Fleetwood Jamboree was luxurious indeed.

And thanks to every home officer who strives to serve that road warrior within. We know you want to hit the road, but have a hard time believing you can juggle work and play. You can. We'll show you how. Learn. Explore. Enjoy.

About The Author: Jeff Zbar is the ChiefHomeOfficer.com. Since the 1980s, he has been a writer, speaker and market consultant on microenterprise, telework and all facets of working from home. The Small Business Administration's 2001 Journalist of the Year, Jeff chronicles the trends, practices and products vital to successful home-based businesses. His columns and articles have appeared in Entrepreneur, Home Office Computing and FreeAgent.com, and he serves as a small business expert, corporate spokesman and product reviewer on stage and on national television. The author of four books and a long-running home office blog, Jeff debunks conventional "wisdom" about home officing (like home officers shouldn't nap or run errands during the day, and entrepreneurs should never work while on vacation), while showcasing best practices in small business marketing, technology, design and lifestyle. Jeff works from home in Coral Springs, Fla. Learn more at www.chiefhomeofficer.com

INTRODUCTION

Can You Take an Enjoyable and Productive Workation?

It was a dark and stormy night. Really.

The family minivan was rolling down Interstate 26 in South Carolina. The hour was late, the weather was mean and we were in desperate need of a hotel room. Stopping in this downpour to chance finding lodging was just not going to happen. Instead, in the passenger seat, wife and mom Robbie had commandeered the laptop from the kids, paused *Shrek* playing on the laptop's DVD drive, and began surfing the Internet in search of hotels along the highway.

The HP Pavilion was plugged into the 110 converter and powered by the car's power port (formerly known as a cigarette lighter). And our Verizon Wireless broadband "aircard" was plugged into the computer's USB port. Combined, we had non-stop broadband access to the information superhighway.

Between the cell phone and the laptop with Internet access, the lines between getaway and workday are blurring. Some 43 percent of office workers said they do some work during vacations, one 2006 study noted. A quarter said they spent at least three hours doing so. Mobile office technology that enables white collar workers and information jockeys to peddle data from the road is making the workation a reality.

If you work from home (or a corporate office), you can work from the road. No secret there. But the reality is it takes the right tools and mindset to make it happen. **That's what Home Office Highway is all about.** This booklet – and the three-week road trip it's written for – discusses in keen detail just what it takes to work from the road. In this case, we'll be working from a RV. By selecting the right technology, setting family ground rules and client expectations, and your own workday limitations, you can be productive from the road.



The Anywhere Office: With his laptop and wireless broadband, the Chief Home Officer works from a virtual office on the Jersey Shore.

Whether touring in an RV, a minivan or the family sedan, it's a big country out there. Don't let a thing like work get in the way of your seeing it up close and personal.

During our daring drive that dark and stormy night, with the broadband access card tucked into the laptop, Robbie was able to log on, find a hotel a few miles down the road, and secure a reservation. By the time we arrived, the weather had cleared.

Chapter 1:

The Once-And-Future Road Warrior

Millions of Americans work the Information Superhighway. But can they take their work with them on America's superhighways? Absolutely. With the right connections, tools and preparation, any information worker can work from the road.

Envisioning Your Mobile Office

What do you use to work from home? What would you need to recreate that workspace on the road? Whether you're planning to work from a hotel room, a vacation home or an RV, many of the tools are the same. You have your laptop, your Internet connection (Wi-fi, wireless broadband, or Ethernet in the destination), access to your files and email, and some other key accessories.

But you have to ask yourself: Do I have the mindset to work from the road? Have I ever worked solely on a laptop or someone else's desktop PC? Am I able to adjust my rhythm and handle the distractions? Until you're used to doing this, that can feel awkward. Practice. Rehearse. Perfect. Use your laptop from a local coffee shop or Wi-fi hotspot. Practice accessing your email, downloading files, editing or creating documents, then uploading them again. Remote work is a learned experience. Strive to get it right before your next working vacation.

The Right-Sized RV

From a convertible to an RV, any vehicle can be a mobile office. The family minivan can be converted into an ideal "office," with ample workspace throughout for kids to watch their DVDs, or a parent to surf the 'net in search of accommodations or attractions.

Concerned about the cost of RVing over other forms of family vacation? Wondering whether a "stay-cation" would be more appropriate in times of rising fuel costs or living expenses? Of course, from finances to travel needs, every family is different. A family of three can travel in a sedan; a family of five growing kids might feel cramped in an SUV.

An RV is a great home – and home office – on the road. Just how big an RV you need depends on your family's size and needs. It also depends on your driving capabilities. RVs are affected by wind, terrain and the elements. If you've never driven one, it's a learning experience that's not for meek or timid drivers – at first. But it can be learned. I've driven RVs in the past. And our family is a well-honed, road trippin' crew. Since the Zbars are accustomed to traveling to Canada or the Jersey Shore twice a year by minivan, the 23-foot

Fleetwood Jamboree from RV Sales of Broward was an expansive – and relatively inexpensive – escape from the increasingly constricting confines of a rented Caravan. The Jamboree consumes less fuel than the 34-foot RV we'd originally hoped to take. In short, our Z-RV was right-sized for our needs – financially and spatially.

How do the financials compare between taking an air / rental car trip versus an RV trip? Here's our take. Our summer vacation itinerary included getting one child to sleep-away camp in North Carolina, and fetching another three days later from camp in Boston. Assuming we would take the same 20-day vacation either way, making that trip would include the three other family members (me, Robbie and our third child). We could fly a convoluted, circuitous route along the Eastern Seaboard – and pay a fortune in airline tickets, fuel surcharges and luggage fees (along with hotels, rental cars and restaurant tabs) ...

Or we could rent an RV, travel at our leisure, eat better meals we prepare ourselves, and enjoy a generally less hectic, more lifestyle-oriented vacation. Doing the math, the RV vacation is slightly more expensive. But the opportunity to bond cannot be over-emphasized. Said the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association's "Spirit of America" Award Winner and actor Matthew McConaughey: "A new back yard every day ... I feel like I can be at home wherever I go. That freedom really envelopes the Spirit of America. That's freedom to me. That's freedom to a lot of people who are RVers."

Making it All Work

Taking a long road trip is about outfitting the RV or car for the excursion. But it's also about setting expectations. It's about having the right tools, and the right mindset. It's about letting clients know you'll be on the road – traveling, but accessible (if occasionally), with black-out times detailed in advance in emails or voicemail messages.

Want tour updates? I use Wordpress.org to blog daily on ChiefHomeOfficer.com and HomeOfficeHighway.com. So check both frequently. Also, get regular updates by "following" me on [Twitter.com/jeffzbar](https://twitter.com/jeffzbar).

It takes letting the family know you'll be working a bit – and listening to the family when they say you're working too much. I rise before dawn, often hours before the family awakens. So if I'm able to squeeze in a few hours' work with them none-the-wiser, we're all the better for it. If I can take a day in a theme park and answer emails on my BlackBerry – if at all, then balance has been struck. Yet if we raft a river and leave all technology behind, then I've allowed the vacation to take its rightful place in the front seat.

The mantra of virtual officing – work is a thing, not a place – befits the workation. It's about output, not hours-put. Our family's spent almost 20 years pulling off extended workations. And we have happy memories to show for it.

Chapter 2:

Outfitting for Success

Selecting Your Gear

If the mobile worker is no better than his or her gear, choosing wisely is essential to ensuring productivity, efficiency and organization.

In my Foray Mobile Workmate (\$99.99), I have a complete portable and wheeled office. My 15-inch HP Pavilion laptop, peripherals and folders have a home. Pens and supplies are stashed and easily accessed. The retractable handle makes portability simple. If I want to remove the laptop from the vehicle or take it into a mall, an attraction or some other location, I use my Targus Flare backpack (\$69.99).



The Foray Mobile Workmate is a handy, portable organizer whose versatility is ideal for the RV office. Open it up to access the laptop, files and accessories. Close it up, stash it away, and hang a sign, "Sorry, We're Closed."

Verizon Wireless' VZ Navigator provides spoken, turn-by-turn directions direct to the wireless phone. For those without, a traditional GPS can suffice. Kids keep DVDs in a Foray CD case, and multi-pocket collapsible compact case file keeps receipts organized in the driver's compartment. Organization of receipts and records is critical if tax-deductibility is anticipated (the key question to ask is whether you intended to make money from the trip by holding business meetings or conducting research for a project, for example).

Select the gear to suit your needs – and your work expectations. If all else fails, you can buy what you need along the way.

The Sony Cyber-shot DSC-H10 is a powerful 8.1 megapixel digital still camera for any workstation.



A Home for Your Gadgets

iPod. Check. Monster Cable to play the iPod over the RV stereo? Check. Phone and camera chargers? Check and check. Forget one, and you'll find yourself buying another – or going without. List the devices, cables and adapters you use – and put the list in a Technology Kit that'll store the lot. They'll have a home on the road, and you'll know where to find them when it's time to play some music or charge the camera for a day of photo fun.

Wireless Internet Access

When we traveled to the Jersey Shore, I knew before we left that the beach house we would be staying at didn't have Internet access. Dial-up via my local broadband ISP in South Florida would have been costly and slow. Alternatives included finding a local cyber café (usually not open before dawn – when I'm most productive on the road), or hacking the half-dozen unsecured home wireless networks I sniffed out once in the house (in the interest of full disclosure: I didn't hack).

Non-Tech Tip: Note Pads

Gadgets are good. But keep note pads in the driver's area to jot addresses, phone numbers, directions or other quick-hit scribbblings.

The solution was my Verizon Wireless aircard. Almost comparable in speed to the DSL service at my home office, it was light-speed compared to dial-up. Most important, though, I was able to log on, retrieve e-mail, download documents and send files. Among the power tools of today's mobile worker:

Wireless Broadband Internet Service. Install the software, launch and click "Connect." Cost: Plans start around \$40 a month for unlimited access. With certain contracts, the wireless "card" that plugs into the USB port is free.

Wireless Router. Got kids or other passengers with laptops? They're going to want to access the Web. The Ativa 54 gigabit Wireless Router (\$39.99) and Wireless G Notebook card (\$39.99) or Wireless G USB Adapter (\$34.00) deliver in-home throughput speeds from up to 700 feet from the base station – very cool when you seek a Henry David Thoreau-like deep-in-the-woods experience. Just remember: Set the parental controls, and turn on network security so others don't hack your connection.



The Ativa Wireless Router allows several computers to safely and securely share one broadband Internet connection.

Wi-fi Access from the Road. Choose RV parks or hotels with free Wi-fi access. Even with your aircard, Wi-fi can be simpler. Just beware logging on in public settings. Hackers nearby can break into your computer when logged on. When surfing using your aircard, turn off your laptop's built-in network card.

Telephony Solutions

My BlackBerry is my power tool on the road. Whether you want just a phone, or an email and data device that puts your office essentials in your pocket or purse, choose the model that suits your need.

All calls from my home office landline are forwarded to my wireless phone when on the road.

VoIP. Voice over Internet Protocol can be a powerful mobility facilitator. Providers include Vonage, Pingo, Skype, Google/Talk, and others. The Killer App: When traveling, bring your handset, or just your laptop, and have full functionality and services as if you're at the office. For this reason, VoIP has been a disaster recovery / business continuity solution.

States With Wireless Restrictions

State rules differ on wireless phone use while driving. According to the Governor's Highway Safety Association (www.ghsa.org), Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio and Pennsylvania (by jurisdiction), Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia have some or no restrictions. California, Connecticut, DC, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York and Washington ban such use. No state bans all cell use; hands-free and use of earpieces typically is permissible.

Bluetooth headset. For wireless and VoIP, a Plantronics or Jawbone headset can provide hands free connectivity to your phone. For those who prefer wired headsets, the Ativa AH-2000 or AH-6000 headsets (\$8.99) from Office Depot enable hands-free multitasking with clarity and ease of use.

The Laptop & Work Tools

The kissin' cousin to wireless broadband is the laptop and peripherals. My Remote Work Travel Kit includes:

The Laptop. Loaded with all the software I use at home. Vital. Period.

Ativa Wireless Optical Mouse (\$19.99). A wireless mouse makes selecting text or navigating the screen simple and precise.

A power strip. At home, an Ativa Slim Case Surge Protector (\$37.99) protects hardware from lightning strikes and power spikes. On the road, the protector, or the Targus Travel Power Outlets with Surge Protection or Monster Outlets to Go transform one outlet into multiple. The Ativa Battery Back-up (\$79.99) provides an hour of power and consistent power through black- and brown-outs.

A USB light. This gooseneck light plugs into the USB port and softly illuminates the keyboard or any documents I may be working on. It's soft and finely focused, so I can choose what I want lighted.

Security Devices. Laptop cable locks (one for each laptop) and products like Computrace Lojack for Laptops (an installed software that helps track the laptop next time it logs on) thwart theft or help with retrieval. Use a proximity alarm that will sound off if the laptop ventures more than 30 feet or so from the handheld sensor.

Protect Portable Documents

Secure sensitive files. Either load them to a flash drive – like an Ativa Flash Drive with U3. Or upload to email before you leave home, download and edit, upload once again to the email server, and delete from the laptop.

Mimic the Home Office

Almost 20 years spent taking workations have left me with a growing list of must-have accessories that ensure productivity. For use in the RV, I bring along:

The power port multi-jack. Most vehicles have one or two power ports (formerly known as cigarette lighters). With the power needs of today's traveling family, two won't suffice.

The AC adapter. Laptop or camera chargers don't plug into the power port. So an AC adapter is critical to converting the car's energy supply into a usable source for powering or charging your accessories. RVs have AC outlets. But it's safe to have another power option.

A Memory Card USB Drive. The Ativa card reader enables me to transfer images from my Sony Cybershot DSC-H10 to my laptop without powering up (and draining the power in kind) the camera. Just slip the memory card into the drive and plug it into the USB port.

A USB hub. My home office has a six-port USB hub for my phone, camera, speakers and the like. The Ativa Detachable Travel USB Hub turns one USB port into several – ideal for connecting my Sony camera, my Logitech web cam for Website videologues, and other accessories.



The Ativa USB hub turns one USB port into several.

For printing in the RV, hotel room or vacation home, I use:

A portable printer. Small, portable and versatile, I can print docs as needed – without hogging space. I stash extra printer paper in my Mobile Workmate. Alternatively, I visit the ...

The Office Depot Design, Print & Ship Depot. Load documents onto a USB flash drive and have the experts there print it out. I can even upload documents at www.officedepot.com, and they will be ready and waiting at one of the more than 1,200 Office Depot retail locations nationwide.

Online, Hardware & Software Applications

You can take your laptop on the road. You can log on to the Internet. But how will you actually *work*? How will you access the documents and files so you can do your job?

The Personal Digital Assistant. Whether from BlackBerry, Motorola, LG, Samsung or another manufacturer, make your “convergent” wireless device your mini-office on the road. By synching my BlackBerry Pearl with my desktop before I left the home office, I have all my contacts, calendar appointments and Notes right in my pocket.

Synch the desktop to the laptop. Software can synchronize two PCs (Laplink.com, GoodSync.com, and HandyBackup.net). Work from the road, then sync back again once you’re home.

Google. Between its Calendar, Docs, Photos and Gmail service, Google is my office on the road. Though I access it from home frequently, on the road is where it really shines. I can use stars and labels to categorize people, documents and folders. I can create filters to steer inbound and outbound email into different places. All my “aliases” – or email accounts like jeff@chiefhomeofficer.com and jeff@jeffzbar.com – are

Wrap untidy, loose cables in an Ativa Cable Burrito (\$7.99) to help organize your workspace.

forwarded to Gmail, so I can capitalize on its aggressive spam filters. Best of all, every email I *send* is forwarded to Outlook when I get home.

Gmail as a document storage workaround. As a “work-around” in situations where I’m traveling for a weekend or a few days, I’ll email myself document attachments to my secondary Gmail account, so I can access them from the road. With almost seven gigabytes of data storage, I don’t fear running out of space. Other free email providers include Hotmail, YahooMail and AOL.

Ativa USB flash drive with U3. When plugged into and synchronized with your primary PC at the office or home office, U3 enables downloading of essential or time sensitive documents and email. Plug it into any computer, and it loads your preferences, bookmarks, and even will mimic the look of your desktop. Similar applications include Migo Mobile Desktop (www.migosoftware.com).

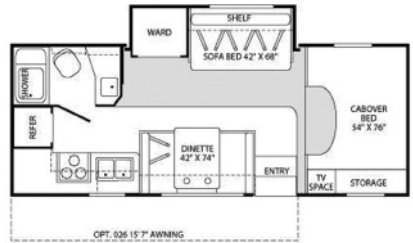


The Ativa USB Flash Drive with U3 copies your preferences and files - and makes your home office desktop portable.

Online PC access. Services like GoToMyPC.com provide password-protected Internet access to your desktop PC back in the home office. Downside: The PC must be on in order to access it remotely.

Faxing. The Sharp Broadband B800-SE fax machine (around \$100 online) is a serious innovation. When a fax comes to my home office, the machine receives it, converts it into a TIF or PDF (I prefer PDF), and emails it to my email inbox. I avoid paper waste, and receive a fax anywhere I can get an Internet connection. Alternatively, efax.com, MyFax.com and jfax.com digitize inbound faxes.

The RV Home Office. To some, the “home office” is a kitchen table and chairs. While the kitchen – or dining room or other public space in the home – is no home for an office, in an RV, choices are limited. Unless you’re traveling in a 30-foot luxury motor coach, where the bedroom resides behind a door that closes, your likely office – the dinette table – will have been converted into a bed. Where can you work? Look at the RV Floor Plan on this page to review spatial elements common to RVs and create a suitable work environment. Remember: RV sizes and styles differ. Choose the vehicle that best suits your work and family’s needs, and envision how to create your best possible office.



Executives with Fort Lauderdale, Fla.-based RV Sales of Broward use this 42-foot Fleetwood Revolution to travel to sales events and showcase the digital workstyle afforded by recreational vehicles.

Make Space for Ergonomics

Ergonomics has a place in the home office – and the mobile office. Here's how ...

- ✓ Change your seated position frequently. Stand up. Take brief walks throughout the work day.
- ✓ Stretch the fingers, wrists and arms. Achieve full range of motion.
- ✓ Visually focus on objects other than the monitor or desk top to reduce fatigue and headaches.
- ✓ Use the USB or Bluetooth headset to reduce neck strain.
- ✓ Clean the work surface, monitor screen, keyboard and mouse. Wipes, like Office Depot Green Lemon Scent Wipes, can clean dirt and dust that can cause accessories to malfunction. They're environmentally friendly as well.

The Green Mobile Office

A recent survey of 2,500 business professionals found that half are interested in making their offices greener. Transfer green practices from the office to the road. “Start by making simple changes to your everyday actions and the products that you use,” says Yalmaz Siddiqui, Office Depot Director of Environmental Strategy (www.officedepot.com/greenyouoffice). “These small decisions, like switching to energy-efficient light bulbs and recycling old technology, will ultimately become habits that help you save money and have a positive impact on the environment.”

How can you conserve on the road? Try these ideas ...

Energy Star. Look for the logo (<http://www.energystar.gov>) for greater energy efficiency.

Sleep. Set the laptop to automatically drop into sleep mode after idle for 5 or 10 minutes.

Power down. Turn off the portable printer overnight or when not in use. Standby mode both wastes electricity and reduces the device's lifespan. Put the device on a surge suppressor or power strip. This will allow shut off at the strip – and save additional electricity.

Slow down. Drive the speed limit and avoid “jack rabbit” starts and stops. Turn off the AC and power off the generator when the weather's cool.

Pack and dress for extremes. Pack light-fabric clothes (shorts and t-shirts) for summer travel, but bring heavier clothes (sweaters, pants, socks or slippers) for temperature changes. Every degree the RV is cooled or heated consumes fuel and electricity.

Hunt for cheap gas. Visit GasBuddy.com and GasPriceWatch.com to find low-cost fuel on your way. Some states – like Alaska, Georgia and Wyoming, for example – have low or no state gas tax. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/2uoyy> to find more.

Chapter 3:

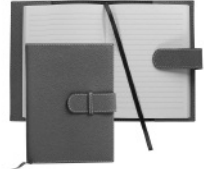
Preparations, Zen and the Mobile Home Office

Just as the beauty of the home office is that it *isn't* the corporate office downtown, the mobile office also can have a charm all its own. It should have a unique vibe, borne of inspiration, self-expression and productivity.

Where will your office on the road reside? Just because you *can* work from the dinette table in an RV, doesn't mean you have to. A picnic table or comfortable bench with the laptop

Computers are practical.

Journals are personal. Your Foray Journal from Office Depot and a good pen make you like Henry David Thoreau writing from Walden Pond.



perched on your lap is an inviting space, especially when the family's still asleep – atop the dinette. Become part of the world outside. Brew some iced tea, grab the wireless phone or log on to your VoIP account, and enjoy the fresh air.

Travel healthy. When food shopping, buy fruits, vegetables and healthier meals. Road trips often mean restaurant food, which tends to be higher in fat and calories. Stop by road-side produce stands. Support the locals. Make it a point to eat well, hike, explore and exercise.

Bring your “comfort foods.” What do you like to eat or drink while working? Coffee, tea, grapes or Mallomars? Stock up before you go.

Keep the important numbers handy. Auto, homeowners and health insurance numbers, Websites and coverage limits should be close by (in an expanding file to be kept in the driver's area). Does your health

insurance cover emergency visits to walk-in clinics? Is computer theft covered by home or auto insurance? Does either cover an RV?



Program important phone numbers and contact information into your wireless phone (like this BlackBerry Pearl) so they're accessible wherever – and whenever – you need them.

Subscribe to personal health records services. Online services like **PassportMD.com** can hold all your medical information – from blood-type and primary physician contact information, to chronic illnesses for which you're currently under a doctor's care – with password-protected Internet access.

PassportMD

Pre-Departure Preparations

Think you're ready to spend a week or two – or six – on the road? It's not that easy. Mail has to be handled, checks need depositing, and finances need tending to. If the trip is short, hold the mail until you return. If it's longer than a billing cycle, either hire a local

Bring an extension cord to run power to the laptop for extended work sessions outside the RV.

Virtual Assistant to handle the details, or arrange to receive bills online – and set up online bill pay with your bank or financial institution (it's usually free, and a tremendous time saver for any entrepreneur). Other preparations:

Make a list. It may seem obvious. But lists – especially for travel preparation – can help you remember what you otherwise might forget in a rush. In fact, type a Business Travel List and keep it permanently with your travel or technology accessories.

Get your money. If you'll be gone more than several weeks, inquire if your clients offer direct deposit. If they don't, ask if they'll deposit your payment at a branch of the bank that handles your business account.

Pay your taxes. If the 15th of the month comes while you're away, Uncle Sam will still want his tax payment. Enroll in the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS).

Distribute your itinerary. From stops and way points, to your contact phone numbers, email your particulars to several family members or business partners.

Contact your credit card company.

You'll be making some funky charges from distant locations. Raise your limit – but be cautious about overspending. Give them your wireless phone number in case they need to contact you.

Remember the Fun Stuff

A football, Frisbee, badminton and basketball. Your iPod. Puzzles. Board games. A harmonica and lesson book. Reading materials for all ages. Road trips mean down time. Bring fun stuff.

Check your insurance. If your laptop and business accessories were stolen from your RV, are you covered? Call your homeowner's or auto insurance carrier to find out.

Join AAA. Between roadside assistance and the TripTik®, it's worth the investment. When asking for maps, get maps for each state – and the entire region.

Visit GoRVing.com. Discover RV travel insights.

Resources:

A Short List

Several books, downloadable reports and good Samaritans were essential in preparing for our workation.

RV Vacations for Dummies (2008, \$16.00) and **Over-the-Road Wireless for Dummies** (2006, \$21.99), both from Wiley.

Taking Your Business on the Road (\$49.95), Marcia Yudkin. www.yudkin.com/ontheroad.htm.

Google Alerts www.google.com/alerts

Set alerts for RV, road warrior or similar words to get news, tips and trends emailed to you. iGoogle, Google's own Web-based, personalized Web page, lets you track sites and topics of interest.

Ask. RVers and "good Samaritans" abound. An Office Depot manager I worked with on this event was an ardent RVer and freely dispensed advice on good RV practices.

Online maps. Need to know distances between destinations? Just plug cities/states into Mapquest.com or similar sites.

Your co-pilot. Part navigator, part driver, part administrative assistant, when you have a partner, spouse, offspring or other passenger(s) aboard, they can program the GPS, take notes, search online, or handle other rote chores not possible by the driver.

Ready to hit the road?

With everything packed, the details in place, work on the ready, and client and family expectations set, the open road can be yours to explore – without leaving your career behind. Once you discover how to work well from the road – whether in an RV, the family sedan or a beach house – you might feel the bite of the travel bug and discover work isn't a thing done from a desk, but part of life that can be managed, massaged and molded to fit your lifestyle and workstyle.

So start 'er up and head out on the Home Office Highway. And remember to check in to Home Office Highway.com often. We'll be blogging about discoveries, tools and tips to make the open road your perfect workplace.

About Office Depot

Every day, Office Depot is Taking Care of Business for millions of customers around the globe. For the local corner store as well as Fortune 500 companies, Office Depot provides products and services to its customers through 1,670 worldwide retail stores, a dedicated sales force, top-rated catalogs and a \$4.9 billion e-commerce operation. Office Depot has annual sales of approximately \$15.5 billion, and employs about 49,000 associates around the world. The Company provides more office products and services to more customers in more countries than any other company, and currently sells to customers directly or through affiliates in 43 countries.

About Verizon Wireless

Verizon Wireless operates the nation's most reliable wireless voice and data network, serving 67.2 million customers. Headquartered in Basking Ridge, N.J., with 69,000 employees nationwide, Verizon Wireless is a joint venture of Verizon Communications (NYSE: VZ) and Vodafone (NYSE and LSE: VOD). For more information, go to: www.verizonwireless.com.

About RV Sales of Broward

RV Sales of Broward is a full-service sales and rental facility for RVs ranging from pop-ups to luxury diesel motor homes. Founded in 1986, the Fort Lauderdale, Fla.-based company is led by owner Gigi Stetler, who also has created a full line of custom-designed luxury linens to fit non-standard RV mattresses. For more, visit www.rvsalesofbroward.com and www.ridinggigistyle.com.



HOME OFFICE *Highway* WITH JEFF ZBAR

Vocation MEETS *Vacation* ON THE OPEN ROAD

Put wheels on the perfect hi-tech mobile office – and empower your family vacations. Functional, informative, liberating and fun, this road trip turns a teched-out, Internet-connected RV into a home office – and lets anyone discover how to work from the road without missing a business beat.

HOME OFFICE HIGHWAY WILL REVEAL HOW:

- ✓ Broadband Wireless Internet or wi-fi keeps you connected to the world
- ✓ Laptops, accessories and peripherals mimic the home office and propel productivity
- ✓ Preparation & planning make for perfect road-tripping
- ✓ Entrepreneurs, teleworkers, even heads of household handling family finances, can do it all – from the road



Led by veteran home officer and technology columnist Jeff Zbar, the Tour shows how technology makes working and playing from the road productive – and fun.

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