

# Desktop Guerrillas

## GUERRILLA BRIEFS

## ON THE ROAD, AGAIN...

Travel need not be so maddening. We'll show you a handful of tips to bring bliss to your next flight.

If you do any traveling at all, whether it's a regular commute, an occasional business trip, or even a family vacation, you probably share my feelings about it. Between security lines, flight delays, and the agony of sitting in such close quarters with so many strangers, it's incredibly disruptive. But what if it weren't so unproductive? A little tech preparation can go a long way in making your trip a lot more bearable. With all the conveniences of your office right in your lap, it's possible to feel like you never left, despite that guy to your left hogging the armrest.

### STAY CONNECTED

With our reliance on instant messaging and email, it's become harder to get any work done without being online. WiFi is great, but only useful in selected areas. For getting connected on the go, equip your laptop with Verizon's EVDO broadband Internet service. At \$60 to \$80 a month it's not cheap, but its speed rivals DSL, and you can use it on the train or in the car, and in most US metropolitan markets.

While online, did you forget to send your boss the latest presentation that is still on your desktop at work? Don't worry, there are several remote control services out there that will let you control your office computer from just about anywhere.

The granddaddy of these services is gotomypc.com—but at \$20/month, you may have trouble justifying the cost. If so, try logmein.com. This company has a free service that will let you access any number of computers from a remote system. Upgrade to its pro version and easily transfer files and print to your local computer for \$100/year.

### THE POWER ISSUE

Despite extraordinary advances when it comes to screen quality, memory, and hard drive capabilities, laptop batteries still only last 2-3 hours—often less if you're watching movies. For long flights, when you'd rather watch your own DVDs instead of Everybody Loves Raymond reruns with your fellow passengers, it's essential to either keep a couple of extra batteries on hand or have an external power source. Luckily, many airplanes now come equipped with power jacks under the seats. But first, you'll need a 12-volt adaptor.

I recommend the triple-threat iJuice power adapter. It has a plug to power your laptop both in your car and a plane. It also has a standard 120-volt plug for home and hotels. With the purchase of an extra cable, you can even charge a cell phone or PDA at the same time, without the hassle of packing a second charger. Prices start at \$119. A lot, yes, but worth the investment. Not all airplanes have these power connections, and

those that do don't necessarily have them in all rows. If you know you can't live without your laptop even for a minute, I recommend picking up a high-capacity external battery. The ElectroVaya 160 is the leader of the pack, offering up to 8 hours of runtime on top of your current battery. Bang out a presentation, battle evil with your favorite video game, watch a DVD, or do all three with power to spare.

### DROWN OUT THE COMPETITION

We've all found that the constant drone of jet engines punctuated by the screaming kid in row 25 doesn't make for the best listening environment. The latest in headphone technology can help. Several manufacturers make headphones (technically "earphones") that fit into your ear canal and form an airtight seal, like earplugs. Besides blocking out much of the ambient noise, they deliver crystal clear sound. Sony makes a pair for about \$40—MDR-EX71SL. Or check out the Shure line of earphones (steeper, starting at around \$150), which are big among musicians.

We're all still waiting for the day that plane travel becomes faster and more comfortable, but until then (or until teleporting becomes a possibility), there are enough accoutrements on the market to make it a lot less painful. Bon voyage.

Desktop Guerrillas is an IT consulting firm serving small businesses in Fairfield County. From Blackberries to wireless data, we will make your time on the road more productive than ever. And whether you're in Stamford or San Juan, our revolutionary support service will allow us to remotely diagnose and repair most problems.