

### **3 Reasons NOT to Miss This Year's Virtual Assistant Convention**

By Carolyn Moncel

As a busy consultant or small-business owner, do you know where you will find your next assistant? A good place to start would be online using your keyboard and mouse. After 10 year of being defined as an "emerging cottage industry," virtual assistants worldwide will gather together virtually in recognition of the first annual Online International Virtual Assistants Convention (OIVAC), which makes its debut on Thursday, May 18, 2006.

Entitled "Pathways to Successful VA Practices," the Internet-based convention is designed to bring together all virtual assistants for best practices seminars, training workshops, presentations and exhibits. Seminar topics include such diverse topics as "How to retain clients through exceptional customer service" to "Utilizing 21<sup>st</sup> century technology in a virtual environment to working with international clients".

The convention also includes a gala celebration and recipients of the inaugural "Thomas Leonard International VA of Distinction," and the "Janet Jordan Achievement Award," two virtual business trailblazers who both past away in 2003 and early 2006 respectively. The awards are designed to recognize both seasoned and new virtual assistants for their professional achievements. Additionally, the convention coincides with the first annual International Virtual Assistants Day on May 19, 2006.

#### **What is a Virtual Assistant?**

Virtual assistants are independent entrepreneurs who work remotely and use technology to deliver services to clients globally. Most work from their home offices and receive their project instructions by phone, fax, e-mail or even instant message.

Although many virtual assistants offer secretarial services such as word processing, appointment setting, and phone services, many others offer specialized services based on their backgrounds. Examples would include graphic and web design, search engine optimization, Ezine and Article Distribution & Auto Responder Services, Transcription, Realtor Support, and Database creation. As technology continues to evolve, some VAs even assists clients with Blog and Podcasting updates and maintenance.

OIVAC is a client's dream because it allows them an opportunity to interact first-hand with virtual professionals. If you think there are not enough of them around to support small-business owners think again, as there are currently more than 5,000 virtual assistants worldwide and the numbers keep growing.

#### **Three Reason to Come OIVAC**

##### **1. Discover a viable way for small businesses to outsource.**

There are many reasons why a small-business owner may want to work with a virtual assistant but the most notably reason is to save money. They can do this by outsourcing many of their administrative services to a VA. If your company lacks space, equipment, or simply is not inclined to bring aboard another employee, then VAs are a workable solution. By working with a VA, the small-business owner gains a partner who works from his/her own home office and possesses his/her own equipment. The VA is capable of completing tasks that the average business owner doesn't have time to do or dislikes.

## **2. Learn about New Office Technology**

Because several of the speakers scheduled to give presentations represent the IT/Computer industry, small-business owners and VAs alike get an opportunity to learn and practice using emerging technologies. Having access to this information could not only help a small-owners work more efficiently and save money, but it could also give them that edge needed to beat competitors in the marketplace.

## **3. Find the Virtual Assistant of Your Dreams**

Recognize that the VA industry is growing exponentially and is now global. Therefore, changes are the perfect VA is there waiting to meet you. Some of the top VAs in the world will be at OIVAC manning their booths and discussing their businesses and how they can work with potential clients. Because they are business owners as well, they too will be looking for clients to compliment. So not only will you be interviewing them, they will be interviewing you, the business owner as well to ensure theirs a good, equal fit.

### **The Online International Virtual Assistance Convention**

Thursday, May 18 through Saturday May 19, 2006

Admittance to the Exhibition Hall is Free

For more details contact Sharon Williams at [info@oivac.com](mailto:info@oivac.com) or visit [www.oivac.com](http://www.oivac.com).

Carolyn Moncel is president of MotionTemps, LLC, a virtual assistance and communications practice with offices in Chicago and Paris. She is a member of the OIVAC's marketing and media relations committee.