



# At Home and at Work, Afloat

Thanks for your message. I'll be working remotely for the next decade. If you require immediate assistance, please contact my land-based headquarters.

BY NEVILLE HOCKLEY

OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS, I've worked from home. You could also say that I work remotely, since home now for my wife, Catherine, and me, is *Dream Time*, our 38-foot Cabo Rico.

For years, I dreamed about sailing around the world, living a life of freedom, discovery, and adventure far away from the rushed routine of our existence in New York. I wanted to live in the moment, to embrace the unexpected, and to seek new experiences in the warm, tropical, uncluttered corners of the world. But how do you make that a reality when you're supposed to be building a career and making a living?

For the 10 years we lived in New York, I felt shackled to work by a

chain of emerging technologies that all promised to make my life easier: beepers, cellphones, P.D.A.s, Sidekicks, BlackBerry smartphones. I became connected all the time. The sanctuary of *Dream Time's* cabin became an extension of my office, invaded by a persistent stream of urgent beeps, buzzes, and blinking red lights.

But in 2005, while working on a last-minute project on *Dream Time* during our summer vacation at Block Island, in the waters off Rhode Island, I had a thought that changed the direction of my life: What if I was able to use technology—the very technology that I couldn't escape on land—to set myself free?

I'm not suggesting that every career can be successfully navigated remotely from a small sailboat. But many can, and in my industry of advertising graphic design, as long as I have ideas and the resources to share those ideas, there are literally no limitations to how far away I can go.

So we began installing the latest in communication equipment on *Dream Time* (see "*Dream Time's* Office Equip-

ment," page 56), and after a year of researching, planning, troubleshooting, and testing, *Dream Time* became not only our full-time home and vessel to explore the world but also my new floating office. And in the summer of 2007, as we sailed out of Long Island Sound with the Caribbean Sea and South Pacific Ocean on our minds, it was business (almost) as usual.

Working from a sailboat is much like passagemaking. It requires planning, adjustments, and fine-tuning to reach your objective. Staying connected to the main office, especially after leaving the communications signal-saturated coastline of North America behind, became more challenging.

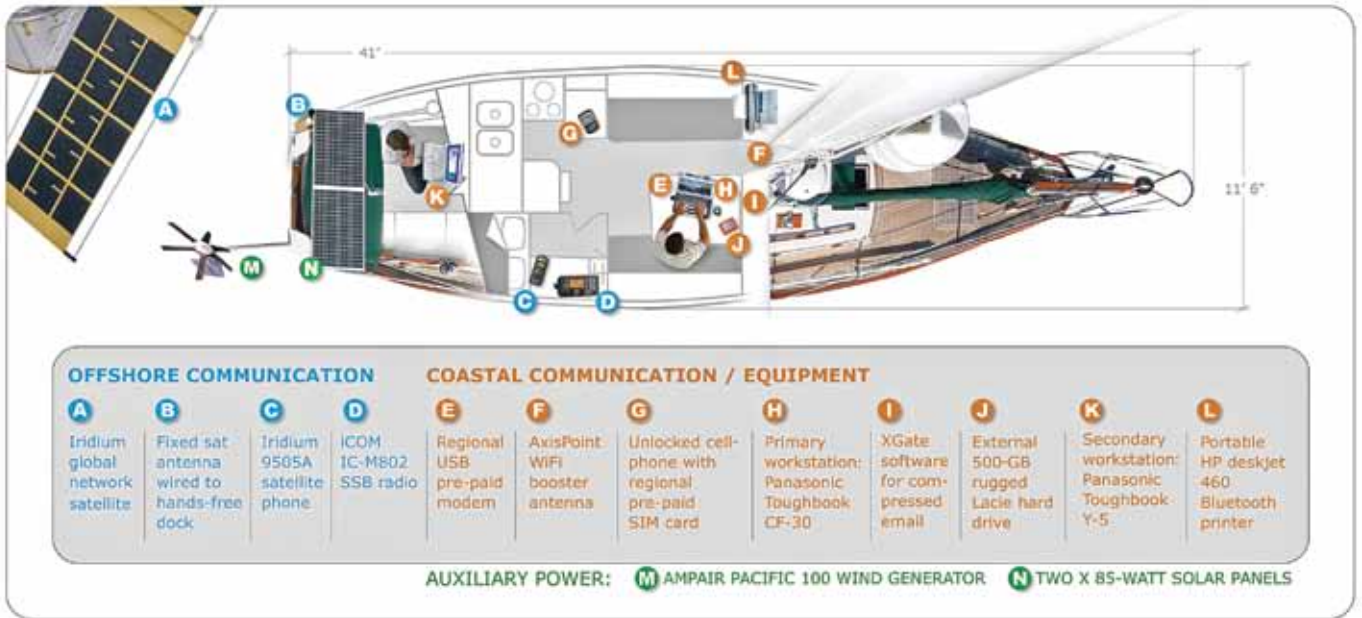
But satellite technology is more reliable, faster, and cheaper than ever before. We discovered WiFi hotspots in some of the most unlikely anchorages of the South Pacific. We also found Internet

cafés and learned about Skype, international roaming plans, local SIM cards, local USB modems, SailMail, all manner of resources to help us stay connected, no matter where we were.

Of course, working, living, and trav-

**With the best view money can buy, Neville Hockley reclines in the cockpit and searches for a stronger WiFi signal.**

DREAM TIME'S OFFICE EQUIPMENT



eling in a small sailboat aren't without challenges and may not appeal to everyone. Compromises have to be made: I'm not earning as much as I was back in New York, but then again, I've chosen to work only a fraction of my old schedule. Our overhead has never been lower. I connect now on my schedule, checking emails in the morning and squeezing in a few hours of work sometime between snorkeling and an afternoon nap in the hammock. I still enjoy being involved with my business, and staying connected while cruising gives me the best of both worlds. I finally found the bal-

ance that I was so desperately seeking. Some cruisers are fortunate enough to unplug and permanently leave their offices far behind. But if you need to work, would like to enjoy just a little more time on your boat, or perhaps even set up a complete floating satellite office wherever you sail, it's a venture worth exploring, and if it's set up correctly, it pays huge dividends. I challenge anyone to find a better view from an office window.

So while I may not be accumulating any frequent-flyer miles, and maybe I'll never help grow the studio into an international conglomerate working

from sea, the company can boast of a satellite office in Fiji, and next year we'll be expanding to Australia. And while, perhaps, I'll never make the cover of *Fortune* magazine, it's safe to say that while working from *Dream Time*, I'm definitely going places.

If you see us anchored somewhere in the South Pacific, and you just happen to need an ad layout or a new branding campaign, come on over—we're open for business. Let's do lunch.

Follow the adventures of Neville and Catherine Hockley on *Dream Time* at their website ([www.zeroXTE.com](http://www.zeroXTE.com)).

POWER TO THE ONBOARD OFFICE

One of the great things about powering up the onboard office is that for the most part, the equipment used isn't too power hungry. From what I see of Neville and Catherine Hockley's setup on *Dream Time*, the couple's 38-foot Cabo Rico, the SSB radio when in transmit mode has the biggest appetite for amps.

The power needed to keep this system running can be generated by relatively small DC-to-AC inverters. *Dream Time* carries a 2,500-watt Xantrex Freedom Heart Interface inverter. That translates into silent, fume-free power versus a diesel-fired AC generator. Also, since most of this gear draws very low amperage in use, the battery bank needed to supply the inverter won't need to be huge. *Dream Time* carries two 210-amp Exide Gel house batteries. This is a big deal on cruising boats because trying to find the real estate on board to supply high-powered inverters is always a challenge.

Depending, then, upon your exact onboard office-equipment requirements, you can easily power it all up with an



inverter in the 1,000- to 2,000-watt range.

Some great choices in this arena include the **Tru-Value Sinewave** models from Charles Industries ([www.charlesindustries.com](http://www.charlesindustries.com)). These are available in either 1,000-watt or 1,500-watt configurations. For larger systems, select the **Intelligent Tru-Sinewave** 2,000-watt unit.

The **MassCombi 12/2500-100** from Mastervolt Marine ([www.mastervolt.com](http://www.mastervolt.com)) is a super choice in highly efficient inverter/charger combination units, and it integrates quite nicely with the kind of solar and wind-generator power supplies found on *Dream Time*.

For smaller office systems, the **TruePower 1000** inverter from ProMariner ([www.pmariner.com](http://www.pmariner.com)) is a great choice for recharging your whole collection of wireless battery-powered devices when you're away from the dock. Finally, the **Freedom HF** from Xantrex ([www.xantrex.com](http://www.xantrex.com)), in either 1,000- or 1,800-watt configurations, is another winner when it comes to keeping the office gear going.

Ed Sherman

NEVILLE HOCKLEY (TOP), COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURERS