



HOW I WORK

ANCHORS AWEIGH:

Hockley's boat
Dream Time at sea

THIS IS MY OFFICE

The owner of a graphic-design company prepares to run his New York City-based firm from a sailboat while circumnavigating the globe.

BY CYNTHIA BARNETT

FOR MOST OF HIS CAREER, NEVILLE HOCKLEY has faced the tech headaches that confront the owner of any small design firm: finding time to read the hundreds of e-mails he receives each day and waiting for high-res graphics to upload. But in a few months he'll face a new set of challenges, such as preparing his workstation for an oncoming nor'wester or searching for a satellite signal off the Caymans.

For the past decade Hockley has worked ten-hour days building his i&D Media Group (iandd.com), a New York City-based graphic-design company with eight employees, more than \$3 million in annual revenue, and clients that include Discovery Networks and Hyperion Software. In June he plans a considerable change of tack. He and his wife, Catherine, will cast off

aboard their 41-foot cutter-rig sloop *Dream Time* for a trip around the world. The oceans are full of baby-boomer couples doing the same. What's different about Hockley, 37, is that he will remain i&D's full-time creative director—running the firm with the help of designers back home and a satellite-based communication system that will let him do, in the middle of the South Pacific, everything he does in New York. “Having freedom on a boat without the clutter of the day-to-day work of running a business will enable me to focus on the best part,” he says, “doing good design work and coming up with ideas.”

Half the plan's success depends on Hockley's senior designers, Ben Delfin and Tracy Klein, both 27, who will hold down the home office in his absence. The other half hinges on technology. Hockley began to outfit his floating office in 2005, starting

"He sees this as a way to see the world and bring it back to the company," says one employee. "He's not going to be passed out on deck with a drink in his hand."

with an Ampair Pacific (ampair.com) wind-powered generator (\$1,500) and solar panels (\$500 to \$1,000 each) to ensure that he has enough power to boot up each day. His primary workstation will be a \$3,000 ToughBook—a rugged, weatherproof laptop from Panasonic. He'll also have a wireless ToughBook tablet that lets him sketch digitally with a stylus pen anywhere on the boat—including the hammock.

In coastal areas where he can get a cellphone signal, Hockley will communicate with his staff and clients via BlackBerry and a broadband modem card. He'll use Skype software for videoconferencing over the Internet. Offshore communications will be trickier—and much more expensive. Hockley will spend more than \$10,000 for hardware plus installation on a networked satellite system called Inmarsat (inmarsat.com) that offers telephone and Internet service for between \$1.59 and \$3.49 a minute. Inmarsat's file-transfer rate is considerably slower than broadband, so Hockley plans to compress graphic files before sending them. And because he won't be out of cellphone range for the first year, he hopes the satellite technology will improve before he has to rely on it.

One of Hockley's longtime vendors, Andy Perni of Vermont-based Design Art Ltd., will serve as technical troubleshooter



WHO NEEDS A LANDLINE? Hockley mans his high-tech sloop's below-deck workstation.

for the journey. Perni, who shares Hockley's passion for sailing, will maintain a list of all of *Dream Time's* equipment, from bilge pumps to backup batteries. He'll be at the ready to rush service, parts, or replacements to any port.

But Perni suspects that the plan's weak link won't be equipment. Rather, he predicts it will be clients' reactions. "I think it's going to bother some clients initially, until they figure out that Neville is going to be there for them wherever he is in the world," Perni



HOW'S IT GOING TO WORK? TO SHOW US, i&D PROVIDED FSB WITH THIS SCHEMATIC.

- A** Inmarsat global beam satellite coverage
- B** Fleet F33 satellite antenna
- C** Satellite transceiver—links phone, fax, computer, etc.
- D** Wireless broadband network card
- E** PDA device (BlackBerry)
- F** Primary workstation—Panasonic Toughbook Y5 with external 160-gigabyte rugged Lacie hard drive
- G** Secondary, remote workstation—Panasonic wireless handheld tablet
- H** Bluetooth-capable printer
- BLUE** Offshore satellite communication system
- ORANGE** Coastal communication system

says. "The only problem will be getting him on the phone immediately, but people are used to that on land. They're used to voicemail."

Hockley says that the clients are his biggest concern too. But he's convinced that they don't care where he works. "When I started in the business, you had to be on Madison Avenue, but people no longer care about your physical address," says Hockley.

And Delfin says that he has faith that his boss will keep the company's best interest in mind, even as he hits the high seas. "He sees this as a way to see the world and bring it back to the company," Delfin says. "He's not going to be passed out on deck with a drink in his hand."

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