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**PERSONAL COMPUTERS PUT THE ‘HOME’ IN HOME OFFICE**  
*American Home Furnishings Alliance Survey Illustrates New Work-at-Home Trends*

HIGH POINT, N.C. – For many of today’s technologically-savvy families, working in a traditional home office just doesn’t compute.

According to a recent American Home Furnishings Alliance study, nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of Americans report that when they are doing work at home, they consider their office to be wherever they can use a computer. In fact, 59 percent say that they can do work in just about any room. Other than a room designated as a “home office,” Americans report working most frequently in the family room (40 percent), bedroom (32 percent), dining room (25 percent), kitchen (24 percent) and basement (8 percent).



Work also is broadly defined, as families rely on home computing for household tasks other than traditional office work, including homework, household paperwork, financial management, shopping and more. In the same AHFA survey, more than two-thirds (67 percent) agree that the ability to be flexible is important to them, and 70 percent agree that it is important to have multiple rooms at home where everyone in the family can be comfortable and productive when they are on their laptops.

“Today’s home office category can be defined in one word – mobile,” said Jackie Hirschhaut, AHFA Vice President of Public Relations. “In keeping up with these trends, the home furnishings industry is helping families be more productive, comfortable and organized as they move from room to room.”

**Working in the Laptop of Luxury**

While office buildings are designed to accommodate basic productivity needs such as storage space, proper lighting and ergonomically-correct seating and desks, these amenities can present challenges for homeowners.

AHFA’s research reveals that consumers wish they had more home furnishings to help them work more comfortably, regardless of what room they’re working in. Additional storage, brighter lighting, adjustable chairs, larger and more mobile tables and portable workstations are among the top needs reported by the survey respondents.

“There are two ways for homeowners to address this challenge,” Hirschhaut suggests. “The first is to keep home computing needs in mind any time you are selecting new furnishings for a room. Whether you are decorating a master bedroom, a guest bedroom, the dining room or a family room, there are multi-function pieces you can include in the mix that will make it easier for you to work in those locations.”

For example, many of today’s new bedroom collections include nightstands with laptop storage areas, charging stations, and even pullout work surfaces. A newer multi-function piece for the bedroom is the media chest – a chest of drawers designed to hold a television or monitor, plus entertainment or home office components. Some also include pull-out desktops.

Also, the laptop’s rise to popularity for home computing has been accompanied by a resurgence in the design of “writing desks” – small and decorative desks that nearly disappeared from furniture collections during the reign of CPUs and the bulky home office furnishings built to accommodate them. Many offer a drop down front on the center drawer, providing a comfortable height for the keyboard. Additional amenities may include hidden electrical connections and storage drawers. Their small footprint and design options make them an ideal addition to a bedroom, family room or living room.

For homeowners who are not furnishing an entire room, the second way to address home office needs is to look for nooks of unused space throughout your home and focus on one function at a time.

“For example, you might find a simple, small scale desk for the kitchen, then a decorative and dressy little cabinet with file storage for around the corner in your dining room,” Hirschhaut explains. “A multi function nightstand in a guest bedroom could provide paper storage, while a decorative desk in the master bedroom provides the work surface.”

These solutions make it easier and more convenient to get the work done. “And that means more quality time together – *away* from the computer,” says Hirschhaut.

### **Creating Creature Comforts at Home**

AHFA’s study also revealed that 61 percent of consumers wish there were more tips available for creating comfortable work spaces in a variety of rooms in their home. The association has responded by providing advice based on furnishings available across the country.

#### **1. Convenience**

- **Light it up:** If lighting is a challenge, purchase a small desk lamp that can move from room to room. When possible, seek space by a window or door, for added natural light.
- **Charge it:** Choose nightstands, end tables and desks with hidden outlets and charging stations built in.
- **Roll it:** Visit a furniture store or do some exploring online to learn about the wide variety of desks, tables, storage cabinets, storage ottomans and desk chairs that can be rolled around the house.

#### **2. Organization**

- **Store it:** A variety of end tables, coffee tables, armories and desks can help create convenient and beautiful spaces for work, yet can easily hide a week’s worth of paperwork and accessories.

- Stack it: Have limited floor space? Go vertical. Use decorative baskets or boxes on tall, open book cases to hide clutter.

### 3. Style

- Match it: Whether your style is beach or Biedermeier, country French or contemporary, you can find home office pieces to complement your home decor.
- Contrast it: A small desk or storage cabinet is the perfect accent to spice up a dull room. Choose a spunky painted finish or a distinctive new material or texture – like metal, rattan or leather.

“Whether you have a dedicated home office or your home is your office, finding the right furnishings and accessories that maximize you and your family’s productivity and enjoyment can be just a click away,” Hirschhaut concludes.

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*The 2011 Home Office Trends Survey was sponsored by AHFA. A total of 1,000 Americans ages 18 and older participated in an independent consumer research study in May 2011. Results have a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percent.*

*The American Home Furnishings Alliance, is based in High Point, N.C., and represents more than 200 leading furniture manufacturers and distributors, plus about 150 suppliers to the furniture industry worldwide.*

**NOTE TO EDITORS: Click the link below to find a downloadable copy of this text, along with downloadable product photos (300 dpi) and captions.**

**[http://www.ahfanews.com/furniture\\_market/spring2011/homeoffice611.html](http://www.ahfanews.com/furniture_market/spring2011/homeoffice611.html)**

**Please do not publish the ahfanews.com website address, however, since it is intended for the media. Instead, please refer your readers to [www.findyourfurniture.com](http://www.findyourfurniture.com), AHFA’s website designed for consumers looking for shopping tips and information about furniture.**

## Home Office

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### ASPENHOME

The new Bayfield Liv360 entertainment chest has a drop down laptop work area and is HDMI ready for connectivity to a TV or monitor. Part of Aspenhome's Bayfield solid pine bedroom group, the entertainment chest brings needed storage and functionality to the room where nearly a third of Americans say they use their laptop: the bedroom. About \$899. [www.aspenhome.net](http://www.aspenhome.net)



### ASPENHOME

Designed to fit into small spaces in bedrooms, family rooms or kitchens, the new Essentials Lifestyle e-desks from Aspenhome can make a home office out of any extra space. Select from a 40-inch single-drawer desk, a 48-inch desk with attached bookshelves or a 58-inch desk with bookshelf and storage drawers. The 48-inch unit shown sells for just \$299 and is made in the United States. [www.aspenhome.net](http://www.aspenhome.net).

### HOOKER FURNITURE

Mélange home office pieces from Hooker Furniture make work spaces as stylish as they are functional. The glamorous silver gray, kidney-shape desk provides an ample work surface as well as generous storage – all within an elegant silhouette. It sells for about \$1,199. [www.hookerfurniture.com](http://www.hookerfurniture.com)



## LOFT 102

The beauty of Loft 102's new Landsdown collection is the versatility in the modular pieces.

Used by itself, the transitional writing desk is easily integrated into a family room, bedroom or evening dining room. The optional cubbyhole deck offers convenient storage. The optional return can be added for a more conventional office setting, and the castered file cabinet nudges under the return – or into any convenient corner.

About \$2,499 for the four pieces shown. [www.loft102forthehome.com](http://www.loft102forthehome.com)



## LPK INTERNATIONAL

Perfect for a bedroom or living room, this little jewel of a file cabinet is too dressy in its platinum silver finish to be detected as home office storage furniture. And at just \$199, it makes an easy addition to any room. [www.lpkinternational.com](http://www.lpkinternational.com).

## PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE

Striking a balance between classic elegance and modern creativity, Alfresco by Pennsylvania House borrows the best from European design and makes it relevant for today's home office. Writing desk, about \$999; drop-leaf cabinet for added storage and work space, about \$1,199. [www.pennsylvaniahouse.com](http://www.pennsylvaniahouse.com)



## SLIGH

A “contemporary” work style that includes telecommuting from home and carrying a laptop (and work responsibilities) from room to room doesn't automatically necessitate a contemporary *style* preference. Sligh Furniture reinvigorates traditional home office with the Northport collection. While flexible and packed with high tech function, the collection's handsome cherry and swirl mahogany veneers, classic hardware and timeless silhouettes help create a traditional hub for the home office. The credenza is \$2,569; the deck, \$2,698.

[www.sligh.com](http://www.sligh.com)



## STANLEY

Laptops keep getting smaller and lighter, freeing up “work” spaces for lighter, more decorative desks. The elegant Empire Writing Desk, about \$2,449 from Stanley Furniture, has geometric metal accents and a hand-rubbed finish on ropey cherry veneers. Part of the Avalon Heights collection, the desk can be accompanied by the Boulevard Credenza (\$2,449) to meet storage needs. It offers two file drawers that lock, an electrical outlet and two pullout work surfaces. The desk is also shown here with the Olympia Host Chair (\$899). [www.stanleyfurniture.com](http://www.stanleyfurniture.com)



## UNIVERSAL

Americans who work at home desire furniture solutions tailored to their needs – which include storage for the papers and supplies that go along with the vast range of home and office tasks. The new Down Home from Paula Deen collection produced by Universal Furniture includes charming pieces that pack maximum function and storage into the smallest possible footprint. Paula’s Kitchen Organizer Cabinet, shown in a rubbed-through, blue “Screen Door” finish, opens to reveal a small bulletin board, a magazine or mail rack, and removable, wire baskets. The piece, which is 66 inches high but only 21 inches deep and 32 inches wide, retails for about \$1,119.

[www.universalfurniture.com](http://www.universalfurniture.com)

## WYNWOOD

Wynwood’s line of home office furniture helps keep homes organized with small, transitional pieces like this Storehouse file cabinet. Pair it with a desk to house a printer or scanner, or tuck it into a nook or unused corner to bring added storage to any room that needs it. About \$349. [www.wynwoodfurniture.com](http://www.wynwoodfurniture.com)

