

An Easy Way To Get In Touch

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[01 Communique](#) recently released Version 3.3 of its I'm InTouch remote access software. Since I'm a remote worker several days a week, and have been using the same software to access my office PC for many years, I decided to try this alternative. I was more than impressed by its speed and efficiency.

I'm InTouch is easy to set up and launch. I installed an evaluation copy that was sent to me, but those interested can also download a free trial version from the company's Web site. One of the significant things that occurs during startup is that the software detects your computer's connection to the Internet. The most common connection setting uses the I'm InTouch Communications Server, which acts as the communications broker between the remote device and the computer running I'm InTouch (it doesn't matter if you have a static or changing IP address). In this configuration, a secure communications tunnel is established between the desktop, the Communications Server and the remote device using 128-bit encryption.

An alternate connection setting involves a direct configuration, establishing remote sessions as a Direct Peer-to-Peer Internet connection. In this configuration, the remote device interacts directly with the desktop computer running I'm InTouch, with no central communications server involved. This configuration may require changes to the existing network environment to enable remote Internet requests to traverse any existing firewalls or network routers to the desktop computer running I'm InTouch.

Since I'm in no position to be making changes to firewalls and routers at my company, I went with the default first option and had no problem connecting. Aside from the auto connect feature, the only other actions I had to take were to assign a name to my computer (so it could be found via IP), as well as a user name and password for logging in. Once all this was done, the application was installed and launched and I was ready to connect remotely.

The latest version of I'm InTouch enables users to connect to the PC the software is installed on from another PC, as well as from a number of wireless devices. My first test was from another PC, and when I initially tried to find my office computer by searching for its name (through a simple Web browser interface), nothing came up. On the second try I was quickly connected, and simply typed in my user name and password for authentication.

The interface offers several options for using applications and performing tasks on a remote PC. The most comprehensive is the Remote Desktop Viewer, which essentially gives you access to all programs on your computer. You can even use this interface to change desktop or video settings, as well as to restart your machine. (Note: The host computer must be turned on and connected to the Internet in order for a remote client to make a connection.)



I'm InTouch

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An Easy Way To Get In Touch (continued)

I was able to compose, send and receive e-mail, access my address book and calendar and even open and use applications – all with amazing speed (please note that I was on a T-1 connection when accessing my remote machine, and that it too is connected via a T-1). I'm InTouch offers other interfaces as well, including File Management and Mail -- its own GUIs for accessing mail clients, etc. These are definitely faster than going through the desktop, but I found the familiarity of dealing with my usual applications convenient.

Overall, I think I'm InTouch is a great applications for occasionally mobile workers and others who need sporadic access to a remote machine. I think I work too consistently from home to rely on all my applications being hosted on a remote machine, but that's just my personal preference.

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