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**Brian Tankersley** • Feb. 15, 2020



This column will go through some of the gear I carry with me when working out of the office. As someone who spends over 100 days a year traveling, I don't have the option of waiting until I get back to the office to deal with most things. While you probably won't need to pack as much gear nor will you likely travel as often as I do, I hope you will get some ideas of what to pack the next time you're going to be working out of the office for a few days.

## Luggage

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I use two different business cases I use depending on what I'm doing.

- When I have to travel with my full speaking circuit set of gear, I carry a Tumi Alpha 2 4 wheeled deluxe leather brief with laptop case[\[1\]](#). This bag is massive and largely indestructible; I am on my second Tumi rolling briefcase, and the two rolling bags have around a million air miles over the last 10 years. I use the included large laptop sleeve to shield my LCD projector, which rides in my suitcase.
- If I'm headed to a meeting, where I don't need my speaking equipment (backup laptop, projector) or if I'm headed to a really big city where I'm going to be riding public transit like subways and trains, I carry a large Tumi black nylon Knox Alpha 2 backpack

My suitcase is a Tumi Alpha 2 Continental four wheeled carry on bag (22"), and it is authorized for carry-on on all US domestic airlines. If I plan well, I can carry on all of the equipment, cabling, and clothes I need for a week (with backup devices) and not have to check a bag with the airlines.

I send my Tumi bags in about every two years for maintenance like wheel replacement and other repairs. Tumi has been known to just send me a new complimentary replacement bag under warranty in some cases instead of repairing my old one.

## Computer Hardware

- **Primary laptop** – Microsoft Surface Book with Performance Base laptop (16GB RAM, 6<sup>th</sup> gen Core i7, 512GB SSD, 2016 model)
- **Backup laptop**– Dell Latitude E7270 13" laptop, (16 GB RAM, 6<sup>th</sup> gen Core i5 processor, 512GB SSD, 2016 model)

- (Both laptops are stored in Tumi Alpha 13” (medium) laptop sleeves in black

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- At least one 4 TB USB 3 hard disk, loaded with my music/movie collection, backups of my data, and installation applications for most software on my PC. For security, the drive is encrypted with Windows Bitlocker Encryption.
- Three flash drives – two which are encrypted, and one which is unencrypted so I can exchange files with others if necessary
- SkullCandy Smokin Buds 2 wired ear buds, along with a rechargeable bluetooth adapter. These headphones are available anywhere, are good enough for most uses, have a workable microphone for hands free calling, and yet aren't so expensive that you become distraught if you break or lose them.

### **Cables:**

- 15' grounded (three prong) electrical extension cord
- 25' HDMI cable, along with an HDMI union (allows me to use my HDMI cable as a regular HDMI cable or as an extension to another HDMI cable, also allows me to use the hotel TV as a monitor)
- 10' flat CAT 6 ethernet cable, with a union device so I can use it as an extension cable
- A combination USB3 hub and ethernet port (one of my laptops doesn't have a built-in wired network jack)
- Belkin SurgePlus USB Swivel Surge Protector (the best travel surge protector out there – the electrical plug rotates so you can plug in at almost any angle)
- Power supplies for my primary and backup laptops, and a multi-outlet fast charging USB
- About eight USB cables of different types to charge and connect my devices
- Use the Velcro straps available at Lowes and Home Depot to keep your cables rolled up

### **Office supplies**

- About six pens and highlighters (because air travel messes up pens)

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Here are some items that I carry as travel necessities for people

- Ten letter envelopes and about 20 US postage stamps
- Three small manila envelopes for paper receipts and printed documents

## Other

- A small battery powered travel alarm clock with a thermometer
- A bag of Halls Sugar-Free Cough Drops (critical for professional speakers)
- A small bottle of naproxen or acetaminophen (because middle age hurts sometimes)
- A Tide stain removal pen (because accidents happen)
- A small emergency sewing kit
- A small folded poncho for unexpected rain
- A styptic pencil and some bandages, in case I cut myself shaving
- Brooks Brothers brass collar stay case (18 brass collar stays in a leather case)
- A 1/2" stack of Starbucks napkins (because life is messy, and Starbucks is everywhere)
- Current issues of The Economist, Time Magazine, CPA Practice Advisor, and The Wall Street Journal
- A scanned copy of my passport and drivers license, so I can get on airplanes even if I lose my wallet (this is accessible from my online accounts as well as in paper form in my backup/travel wallet)
- A printed spreadsheet with my frequent flyer/frequent guest cards, as well as my AAA card and AARP[\[2\]](#) cards (so I get the best deals on hotels and don't have to carry the cards)
- A selfie stick – because if your travels aren't documented, they didn't happen
- Always leave home with enough medicine for the planned trip, plus an extra week
- Kindle and/or PDF versions of the major reference books I use on an ongoing basis
- A digital scanned copy of my insurance cards and health information, my US Passport, US Passport Card, Global Entry Card, and \$100 USD/\$100 CAD

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the US and Canada through R2 Enterprises for professional accounting organizations across the US and Canada. Brian and his family make their home in Farragut, Tennessee.

[1] I love the leather version of this bag although I'd buy the black ballistic nylon version if I had to replace it today. Tumi's black nylon is more wear-resistant than the leather version, which shows scratches more easily.

[2] There is no lower age limit for an AARP membership (yes, seriously), and their discounts are usually the best available for most hotels.

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