

Small Business Resource Guide

**Free and Low Cost
Tools For Running
Your Business**

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Introduction

Congratulations! **You now have the rights to give this book away to anyone.** You may not sell it, but it's a good resource for you to use as a benefit for getting people to sign up for your mailing list or just as a free gift.

Remember that this guide is not a substitute for professional advice. It's a collection of resources I've found helpful. And I'm always looking for new resources. If you have suggestions for things you'd like to see added to the next update, let me know. Just send an email to info@whatspossible.com with the subject "Suggestion for Resource Guide."

This Small Business Resource Guide is updated periodically. This version is dated November 2005. **To make sure you have the most up to date version, visit:**

www.whatspossible.com/resource_guide.html

This isn't intended to be the biggest list of things you could use in your business. There's no need for that. For the most part, the products in this list are free. Any that aren't will be marked with the price or mentioned as a paid product or service.

You can start and grow your business online using nothing but the free products in this list. They're all solid and dependable. All you'll need besides them is hosting and a payment processor.

Look over the software in this list carefully. It can save you hundreds, even thousands, of dollars that would be better spent learning the business.

If you have suggestions for things you'd like to see added to the next update, let me know. Just send an email to denise@whatspossible.com with the subject "Suggestion for Resource Guide."

To reach any of the resources listed in this document, **simply click on the resource name** and you'll be instantly taken to that website. (You'll need to make sure your internet connection is active.)

Okay, let's get started...



[Denise O'Berry](#)

Small Business
Expert

Text and Word Processing

Open Office

Contains a word processor, database program, spreadsheet, presentation program and drawing software. (Sound familiar?)

This is hot stuff. It not only works brilliantly as an office suite, it handles the creation of PDFs better than anything I've seen except Acrobat. And yes, it handles MS Office file formats.

If you're planning on doing ebooks, these are all the tools you'll need. I still have a hard time believing this software is free. But it is.

Note Tab

(free, standard \$9.95 and pro \$19.95 versions)

This is a very nice family of text editors, with free and low-cost versions. I've been using NoteTab for years, and it's one of my favorite tools. The only problem with it is that some versions don't handle large sorting or find and replace operations well. The program bogs down and takes forever to finish. On the other hand, it does a great job dealing with large numbers of files open at the same time.

TextPad

(Low-cost text editor \$29)

Whether you simply need a powerful replacement for Notepad, a tool for editing your web pages, or a programming IDE, TextPad does what you want, the way you would expect. It's available from this web site on a try before you buy basis, so please download your trial copy now, and find out just how productive you can be.

UltraEdit

(Low-cost text editor \$39.95)

UltraEdit is very powerful and offers a trial version. I recommend checking them out to see which one will work best for you. Everyone has different tastes in text editors, and it's too important a tool to leave to chance. Among other things, it does Find and Replace operations on very large files very quickly. I have never been able to bog it down.

Creating PDFs

For the most part, you can use Open Office to create ebooks and other documents to share. It handles the job very nicely. There are times when that won't work. For those, here are some options.

[HTMLDoc](#) (\$49.95)

If you're used to writing web pages, and want to lay out your book in HTML rather than Word, you can convert that using HTMLDoc. The software comes with a 21-day demo license.

[PrimoPDF](#)

FREE PDF Converter - not a trial version. Print to PDF from virtually any application. Create PDF output optimized for print, screen, ebook, or prepress. No annoying pop-up ads, no registration requirement - no catch! High-quality, easy to use PDF creator for all users. Grab a copy of this and learn it. Very handy.

[Adobe PDF Creator](#)

Or, you can get it done online, for free, by Acrobat. They have an offer to convert up to three documents from any Microsoft Office application or standard web pages, up to 50 megabytes. They also have a subscription service that's \$9.99 a month for unlimited document conversion. (For US and Canadian residents only.) You have to do it through your web browser, but it's a great alternative for folks who don't have other ways to do the conversion. And if you want to make changes or multiple files, it's cheaper than Kinko's.

Graphic Tools

[The Gimp](#)

Available for all major and a bunch of minor operating systems. This is the granddaddy of free graphic software. It is a freely distributed piece of software for such tasks as photo retouching, image composition and image authoring. It works on many operating systems, in many languages.

[Free Serif Software](#)

I haven't used this one, but it's well recommended. My understanding is that it will let you use some Adobe filters. Free and yours to use for life. You'll need to register to get a registration key.

[Pixia](#)

Pixia is a painting tool made exclusively for full color graphics.

[IrfanView](#)

IrfanView is a very fast, small, compact and innovative freeware graphic viewer for Windows 9x/ME/NT/2000/XP/2003. It is simple to use for beginners and powerful for professionals.

Audio and Video Tools

[Audacity](#)

This is powerful open source software for recording, editing and converting digital audio. It's available for almost all operating systems. Likely all you'll need for audio for quite a while. And easy to use too.

[Wink](#)

From the user guide: "Wink is a software tool to make presentations and tutorials about using software programs. A Wink presentation will resemble a live walkthrough about how to use the software. Also the author of the presentation can add comments and explanations to parts of the presentation to better explain the concepts and usage to the end user." Note: This is a zip file that contains the software. Pretty cool tool. May have a steep learning curve. You'll have to play with this one. The tutorials are good.

[CamStudio](#)

Records video of your computer screen, including motion and the ability to do voice recording along with it. You can use this to create some very good Flash tutorials. Compare to commercial products that sell for \$300 and up. This is a great tool and it's free.

[Wise DVD Creator](#)

Converts a lot of different formats to VCD, SVCD or DVD - For free.

[Swiff Rec](#)

Lets you record audio via microphone, convert it to MP3 and create a simple, one button player that lets you add audio to your web pages. It's not the fanciest player, but it is the cheapest.

[Power Bullet Presenter](#)

Create slideshows, auto-running presentations and more. Very nice finished product. You can output the finished presentation as Flash or executable. The executable format is nice for tutorials and software documentation.

Email Tools

[Pegasus Mailer](#)

Far more people use Outlook or Outlook Express, but Pegasus users are fanatics. This is a great program for power emailers. It has all the features you'd want, it's dependable, and much more secure than the MS emailers.

[phpList - Mailing list manager](#)

This one has some very powerful features for marketers, and is easy enough for a new list owner to handle. phpList is a one-way mailer, which means you can send to the group, but the group can't send to each other. It's great for newsletters, announcement lists and the like. It doesn't have autoresponder capabilities, but it does allow your subscribers a lot of flexibility in managing their subscription preferences.

[Send Free Autoresponder Service](#)

Free follow-up autoresponder service. The downside is that they put ads in your messages. (Standard for free services. Gotta pay them bills, ya know?)

[Aweber - Follow-up autoresponders](#) (\$20/month)

Send follow-up autoresponders and run your newsletter or announcement list through them. In my opinion, the best of the breed. If you're not familiar with the uses of follow-up autoresponders, check out the site and read through their explanations. This is one of the best ways to automate your business.

[1ShoppingCart.com](#) (\$29 month)

A great option for autoresponders. And if you think you might want to grow into a full-fledged shopping cart system, this is your best choice. I've used the professional shopping cart since 2001 and it can't be beat. It is the best, most robust system around.

[World Merge Mailer](#)

If you want to send email from your desktop computer and merge information from a database into the mail, this is an excellent piece of software for the job. Comes highly recommended. Very easy to use. One word of warning: If you get this, go into the message settings and set the default encoding to "Western European" before sending any email. (That's just a few mouse clicks to do.) The default is no encoding, and that creates problems for some recipients.

Text Monkey

(Lite Free, Pro \$29.95)

Text Monkey Lite will clean up all the ugly quoting symbols that result from forwarding email messages back and forth. It even cleans up extra blank lines, deletes leading and trailing spaces, and converts line breaks to spaces for proper formatting. It's easy to use and, best of all, Text Monkey Lite is completely free. There's a "PRO" version you can pay for if you want extra options and more conversion functions.

Site Design Tools and Templates

[NVU - Web Authoring System](#)

Versions are available for Windows and Linux. Makes designing your web pages easy.

[Easy Website Page Builder](#)

Claims to make search engine optimized sites. I haven't used it, but I've heard some good things about it. Might be worth a try if you're experimenting with SEO.

[Basic Web Templates](#)

\$5 will buy you a very nice pre-designed site. For a similar sum, you can get the PSDs (Photoshop files) the sites were designed with. You can find an incredible amount of resources to help in the process by Googling for phrases like "free web graphics" and "free web templates" - or pretty much anything else you want to find.

[Button Generator](#)

Quickly create buttons and menu graphics for your website. Tons of free buttons and menus to choose from. No software to install.

Web Hosting & Site Management Tools

[Filezilla](#)

FTP and SFTP client for Windows. You'll need this for uploading and downloading from your site. (SFTP stands for Secure File Transfer Protocol.)

[Cam Unzip](#)

If you've been online long, you know what this is for. If you haven't, you're going to need to learn, and this is a great program to learn with. Many downloads are composed of a lot of files. Zip utilities put those files all in one package, and compress them so they take less disk space and less time to upload or download.

[Locked Area for Membership Sites](#)

(Lite Free and Pro \$95 Versions available)

This is the free version of the Locked Area membership system. It will handle a very large part of what you need for running your own paid (or free) membership site.

[Article Directory Script](#)

Article directories are a great way for visitors to contribute content to your web site. They take work to get off the ground, but they can be well worth it. This script takes a LOT of the work out. As with a lot of this software, I have no idea what these people are thinking giving it away free. Very nice stuff.

[pMachine Pro - Blogging software](#)

This was a commercial blogging program, selling at \$125. It's now free - and still worth the \$125. Very powerful.

[Blogger](#)

Free blog, and you don't even have to run the script. The downside - it's not on your server, so you don't get the benefit of links or search engine listings. But it's really easy.

[phpBB - Discussion board](#)

Easy to install discussion board/forum software. Many web hosts have this as an easy-to-install option. It's great software, but make sure you have the latest version.

[Web Email Cloak Utility](#)

Web Email Link Cloak Utility stores each of your email address into a database for easy retrieval later should you need to change the link. You can store an unlimited number of email addresses and within each entry you can also keep track of what page you have it hosted on. Retrieving the record is a snap. You can sort by the name of the link, the email address itself or the host page name. This is a great way to protect your email address from web scrapers.

[IESpell](#)

IESpell is a free Internet Explorer browser extension that spell checks text input boxes on a webpage. It will come in particularly handy if you do a lot of web-based text entry (e.g. web mails, forums, blogs, diaries). Even if your web application already includes spell-checking functionality, you might still want to install this utility because it is definitely much faster than a server-side solution. Plus you get to store and use your personal word list across all your applications, instead of maintaining separate ones on each application. A perfect spell checker if spend a lot of time posting in forums. Saves embarrassment from typos!

[Handy Recovery](#)

Handy Recovery is an easy to use program designed to restore files accidentally deleted from a hard disk or a diskette. The program can recover files damaged by virus attacks, power failures and software faults. If some program does not use Recycle Bin when deleting files, Handy Recovery can restore such files. It can also recover files moved to Recycle Bin after it has been emptied. 30 day free trial, then \$30.

[WebPageAnalyzer](#)

Test your web site speed with the free web-based analyzer. Simply enter a URL on the site to calculate page size, composition, and page download time. The script calculates the size of individual elements and finds the total for each type of web page component. Based on these page characteristics the script then offers advice on how to improve page display time and website speed.

[Search Engine Spiders](#)

Ever wondered what a search engine spider may see when visiting one of your pages? Show Spider is just a simple utility this site shares with the public. Just enter the web address for one of your pages in the form shown on the site.

[Handwriting Software](#)

Free demo. Creates handwritten text from your typed entry. Great for personalized notes on your web site.

[WhoIs Source Search](#)

Find out who the owner is behind a website, how long it's been in business and lots of other details.

[Google Page Rank Checker](#)

Find out your how well your web pages are optimized by using our PageRank tool! The SEO world uses this as a gauge of your website rankings and position. Try now for free.

[Google Analytics](#)

Google Analytics tells you everything you want to know about how your visitors found you and how they interact with your site. You'll be able to focus your marketing resources on campaigns and initiatives that deliver ROI, and improve your site to convert more visitors.

Keyword Search Tools

[Yahoo Keyword Selector Tool](#)

The Yahoo Keyword Selector tool allows you to search keyword phrases to see how many people have been searching for them within the last 60 days.

[Yahoo Search View Bids Tool](#)

The Yahoo View Bid tool shows what the current bids are for your keyword phrases.

[Google AdWords Keyword Tool](#)

The Google AdWords keyword tool shows you ideas for choosing relevant ads.

[SEOBook AdWords / Overture Tips](#)

From Aaron Wall, author of the SEOBook, tips on how to effectively use Google AdWords and Yahoo Search Marketing (Overture).

[AdWords Dominator](#) (\$124)

Google AdWords management tool. Simplifies and streamlines tasks.

[Keywords Masters Course](#) (PDF)

I don't know about you, but finding just the right keywords to use on my websites has been a real challenge. And "getting found" on the internet gets tougher every day. So I wanted to share with you the Keywords Masters PDF Course that I found recently while researching tools to use (no strings attached). This course by Chris Lee, who is the creator of the [KeyWords Analyzer Tool](#), is jam packed full of good info. And it's not full of pushy jargon either. It's just plain old fashioned helpful.

Website Linking Tools

[SEO Book Backlink Analyzer](#)

A free link popularity / link analysis tool. It shows what anchor text is linking into a page or site. Deeper explanation below.

Payment Processors

These are companies that will take credit card payments for you, for a fee. They all have different terms and ways of operating. Look them over and see which ones will work best for you.

[PayPal](#)

The eBayer's favorite, PayPal is one place you definitely want to have an account. The number of places that accept PayPal payments is big and getting bigger, as is the number of people paying through them. And getting set up to sell with them is simple and safe.

[ClickBank](#)

ClickBank is a combination payment processor and affiliate program manager. Using them, you can collect payment from your customers, send the customer to the download page so they get their product, and pay affiliates automatically. ClickBank tracks the sales and sends checks to your affiliates for you.

They only allow the sale of digital products. Their fees are \$49 to get set up, and \$1 + 7.5% per transaction. A little high, until you consider that they handle all the bookkeeping and mailing of checks to you and your affiliates.

If you are going to want to sell more than one product through ClickBank, you'll need special software to do it all from one account. Before you get started, you might want to grab a copy of Adrian Ling's "Easy Clickmate. (\$67)" It makes selling through ClickBank ... well... easier. The one big problem with ClickBank is that, while anyone can easily sign up as an affiliate, you don't actually know who your affiliates are. [EasyClickmate](#) solves that problem and a bunch more.

[PayDotCom](#)

Works very much like ClickBank, but with your PayPal account. That has a lot of benefits, not least of which are getting your money earlier, setting higher prices more easily, and being able to sell both digital and physical products.

[2Checkout](#)

Lower fees than ClickBank, handles recurring billing, and can make payments by direct deposit. They also allow for the sale of both digital and physical products. In case you're wondering, these sites are all compared to ClickBank because ClickBank has the highest number of active affiliates who could sell your products.

That's only important if you plan to recruit among those affiliates. If you plan to develop your own affiliate force, you can go with any of them. Note that, with PayPal, you will need to have your own affiliate software and handle the payments yourself.

1ShoppingCart Partners

If you want your very own merchant account, go here. This is how I got my account. At the time, the Shopping Cart partner was Practice Pay Solutions. What a breeze and great customer service.

Market Research

Looking for ideas for hot products? Browse these sites and watch what's selling.

[ClickBank Marketplace](#)

[eBay Auctions](#)

[eBay Hot Items Report \(PDF\)](#)

[eBay Research Tools](#)

[Amazon](#)

[Popular Magazines](#)

[Yahoo Buzz Log](#)

[Lycos 50 Daily Search Report](#)

[Trademark Hunter](#)

Trademark Hunter is designed to help attorneys, business owners, inventors and entrepreneurs search, download, manage and generate search reports for United States federal trademarks. A trial version of Trademark Hunter is available. After the trial session has expired, a variety of subscription options can be purchased ranging from \$19 To \$99. Trademark Hunter will allow subscribers to search, download and manage United States federal trademarks.

Recommended Reading

Note: Most of the books, manuals, and courses mentioned here are not free. They're all worth the money. Just don't go ordering one thing after another and letting them collect virtual dust on your computer.

The way to learn is:

**Learn the basics.
Do them until they're making you money.
Move up a notch.
Repeat.**

[Special Reports Bible](#) (\$39)

A moderately long book on writing short special reports. Some of the best 'How to' writing I've seen.

[Mini Site Profits](#) (\$67)

The best book I've seen on the subject of making money with very small, niche-targeted sites. It covers everything you need to know to get this sort of site going and make it bring in the cash.

[The Amazing List Building Machine](#) (\$67)

One of the first and most widely praised books on building a list of subscribers, getting more leads, and all around running a profitable email list.

[Simple Online Business](#) (\$27)

Start your own online business in just a week or two with almost no expense to get started.

[Traffic Secrets Revealed](#) (\$27)

Create as much traffic to your site as you can handle using seven simple strategies. And most of the work only needs to be done on the front end. After that, step out of the way and watch the system take off.

AdWords and AdSense

AdWords and AdSense are great ways to build a business, but they could get confusing (and expensive) if not explained in proper detail. These books are from people who are actually making serious money using the Google AdWords/AdSense system. They aren't free, but are worth the investment.

[Pay Per Click Money Machine](#) (\$147) or [The Definitive Guide to Google AdWords](#) (\$49)

Take your pick. If you're really serious about them, get and study both. There's a lot of overlap, but there's enough difference to be worth the effort. And this is one area that can be as costly as it can profitable if you don't know what to watch for. And, of course, there's Google's own guide to AdWords at [Google Guide to AdWords](#)

[AdSense Secrets](#) (\$97)

Publishing content, and looking for extra revenue streams from it? Joel's book is a good place to start. The guy's making major money from people clicking on ads on his sites. I've used this on many of my sites to create a good passive income stream.

[About Google AdSense](#)

Preview which Google AdWords will be shown on your web page with this free AdSense web tool.

Useful Services

[CopyScape](#)

This site will take a URL that you feed it and find sites around the web that are very similar or exact copies. A great way to tell if someone is stealing your copy.

[Free Conference Call](#)

Just like it says. Free conference lines, up to 96 people per call, as many calls as you like, up to 6 hours per call.

[GrabURL](#)

Makes long URLs into redirects. Check it out. It's not only convenient, it can be a great tracking system!

[iDictate](#)

Upload a digitally recorded file, pay about 1.5 cents a word, and they'll transcribe the recording, usually in 24 hours or less. There are cheaper services, but nothing faster that I've seen. Watch out for the rates, though. They go up - a lot - if there is more than one person in the recording.

[Work-A-Holics For Hire](#)

What do you need done? There's a good chance you can find someone here to do it. And very reasonably, as well.

[Free Business Letters](#)

Over 500 free letters on various topics you can use in your business.

[The ClickBank Guide](#)

Anything and everything you ever wanted to know about making money with ClickBank. Harvey Segal started this years ago, and it's not only very useful information - it's a great example of spotting a niche and taking it over.