

10 tools to help you maintain an edge over your competition



By [Peter Davidson](#)

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Small businesses and start-ups should seek out ways to improve productivity, time management, organisation, and, ultimately, make day-to-day tasks easier to manage.

This allows your business to run more smoothly. It can be difficult to manage an office or a brick-and-mortar company while also maintaining an online presence. In this day and age, every business needs an online presence in order to succeed and remain competitive.

Thankfully, there are a large number of tools and apps at your disposal that can be used to facilitate online functions and tasks. These tools are convenient and don't require you spending the better part of your day focusing on them, but rather leave you free to handle other important tasks. With literally thousands of useful apps to choose from, it can be a daunting task finding some that will best fit your needs.

The following 10 tools are useful for any small business owner and, best of all, they are free.

1. Google Drive

If you aren't using Google Drive yet, you should get started right away. This business-friendly, easy-to-use tool is ideal for storing all types of files and documents, and enables you to access them from any mobile device. You can also share documents with other colleagues, employees or team members, as well as edit them without having to be back in the office. Its integration with other Google apps makes it an extremely functional and useful tool.

2. Elance

If you're in need of services that your current staff can't handle, such as graphic design, website content, blog posts, marketing materials, etc., then you would do well to start using Elance. This site allows you to find and hire freelancers amongst thousands, for the rates you are comfortable with. You can also see their reviews and credentials, making it easier to pick and choose. The process is quite simple, post your project details and wait for your inbox to flood with messages from freelancers. Using Elance is a great time saver and the ideal way to find cost-effective services without having to hire and train a full or part-time employee.

3. UberConference

UberConference is an online conferencing tool that provides users with an easy way to set up conference calls instantly, with anything from just a few attendees to potentially thousands. This is an ideal app for all manner of online calls, from speaking with vendors, holding meetings with clients, or providing a training seminar for employees in offices all across the world. Additionally, the [remote screen sharing](#) feature makes it especially useful when attempting to share information with others. This feature allows you to show your screen to other attendees on the conference call, so that you can easily point out images or review documents with others.

4. TweetDeck

If your business takes advantage of social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, then having TweetDeck will give you greater control over your social media management and campaigns. TweetDeck can be used to view

multiple Twitter and Facebook accounts all at the same time in an intuitive interface, so that you can quickly post updates or respond to followers without having to flip between different platforms or accounts.

5. Wix

If you don't currently have a website, but want to get one up and running quickly, you don't necessarily need to shell out thousands for a professionally designed website. Wix offers a multitude of different [website templates](#) to choose from. All you need to do is create an account, select a template, and provide content for the various pages. Wix writes the website code for you and uploads it, so that the result is a clean, polished looking website that is ready to perform.

6. Google Analytics

In regards to website performance, there might not be a better tool than Google Analytics. This handy tool will let you know how your website is performing, so that you can better figure out how to improve it, gain new visitors, and increase website visibility. Free and easy to use, it's a great tool for maintaining a strong web presence.

7. Social Mention

Want to know more about how others view your business? Social Mention monitors several different social media platforms for the criteria you enter, such as your business name. When your business name is mentioned on any networks, Social Mention lets you know so that you can see if you are receiving good or bad reviews. It is also a great way to keep track of customer concerns or see which areas of your business need improvement.

8. Evernote

Do you want to organise your notes and images and save those using categories and tags without using any pieces of paper? If so, Evernote is an amazing tool that let you emerge as the winner of this tough competitive environment. This tool helps you in accessing all your important folders and files from your phone, computer, and tablet with ease. It means you are saved from the worries of carrying your documents, files or briefcase everywhere you go. Simply install the Evernote app on your computer, phone, or tablet, and share and save your documents with other Evernote users conveniently.

9. Dropbox

Dropbox lets you save your files and folders in the cloud. It means it is your storage in the cloud where you can repeatedly share and access your files and folders with other users. You can easily keep everyone in your loop of sharing information with the help of Dropbox folders where you can easily post your documents and share them with your valuable customers, who have the link or access to it. For using the amazing Dropbox, you simply have to create your free account and then you can upgrade it as per your requirement.

10. Appointlet

Every business might not require this tool, especially if they don't have clients to schedule their meetings, but if you have such business where you have to constantly interact with your clients by fixing your meetings with them, the Appointlet app is the ideal tool for you. It easily integrates with your Google calendar for allowing your customers to fix their appointments by themselves online.

ABOUT PETER DAVIDSON

Peter Davidson is a business analyst who loves to share entrepreneurship and marketing secrets with the world. Overcoming business challenges is his passion and he aspires to

reach at the highest rung of this field.

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