

Tools I Use To Run My Business, [Hware LLC](#).

As a **software entrepreneur** people often ask me for advice on the best online tools to use for their **small business**. So, here is an extensive list that we (**Hware**) have compiled to help you get your work done. Some of the tools we use daily, some a few times a week, some a few times a month, and some a few times a year. Most of all, we use all these tools for the following reasons:

1. It helps us become more efficient in our workflow.
2. It increases our productivity.
3. It saves us money or decreases costs.
4. Most are free or low cost.
5. We will get a Return On the Investment (ROI).

One more thing, most of these tools must pass, what we call the “**Brenda Test**.” What that means is the software tool must be very user friendly (yes, I decide if the User Interface sucks and so should you) otherwise, it doesn't make the cut. It's pretty much the same philosophy we have with our own software. We believe that software should be simple and easy to use.

Business Apps

- **Evernote**: For taking notes, especially on the go!
- **ScreenFlow**: For creating high-quality software demos, tutorials, app previews, training, and presentations.
- **Dropbox**: For sharing large files over the internet.
- **FreshBooks**: For consultants who bill for their time.
- **Keynote** or **Powerpoint**: For creating presentations.
- **MadMimi**: For sending out e-mails to client database.
- **Screenshot Plus**: For screenshots via a Mac Dashboard Widget
- **Mac Grab**: For Screenshots
- **MailPlane**: For Mac Gmail client application
- **MS Word 2011 for Mac** – compatibility with customers who use Word
- **MS Powerpoint 2011 for Mac** - compatibility with customers who use Powerpoint
- **MS Excel 2011 for Mac** – complex spreadsheets, spreadsheet creation then upload to Google Spreadsheet, compatibility with customers who use Excel
- **Google Reader**: RSS Reader for all my favorite blogs
- **Google Alerts**: email updates of the latest relevant Google results based on your queries.
- **Google Analytics**: Website Analytics

Remote access to someone's computer

These tools are great for trouble shooting a software problem remotely.

- **Join.me**
- **Logmein.com**

Google Apps for Business

...is great for creating business documents, email, spreadsheets, simple forms and presentations.

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Video Conferencing

- [Skype](#)
- [GoToMeeting](#): For webinars and online training
- [Google Talk](#)
- [Google + \(Huddles\)](#)

Website Browsers

Primary Web Browser: Google Chrome

Secondary Web Browser: Firefox

Secondary Web Browser for testing websites: Safari and Safari Mobile for iPhone and iPad

Video and Photo

iMovie: Video editing software

iPhoto: Photo management

[Audacity](#): Sound editing

[Airfoil](#): To send wireless sound to other computers, mobile devices, and stereo equipment

[Flickr](#): Photo sharing and management platform

[YouTube](#): Video sharing platform

[Vimeo](#): Video sharing platform

[VideoPress](#): Easily add videos to our WordPress sites

Website, Plug-ins, and Web hosting

- [WordPress.org](#) : Easy to use website
- [Studiopress](#): Website templates
- [GetPremise](#): Landing pages for website
- [Scribeseo.com](#): Keyword optimization for blogging
- [Dreamhost.com](#): Purchasing and managing domain names, DNS, shared hosting
- [Linode.com](#) – Virtual Private Servers
 - Hosting some of our WordPress websites
 - Ruby on Rails Application servers
 - MySQL Database Servers
 - Test Servers
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[Rackspace Hosting](#) (formerly Slicehost.com) – Virtual Private server for our GEMS system (Cloud Software).

Social Networking Platforms

- [Slideshare](#): Presentation Platform
- [LinkedIn](#): Business Networking platform
- [Twitter](#): Social Networking Platform
- [Facebook](#): Social Networking Platform
- [Google+](#): Business and Social Networking platform

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- **Friendfeed**: Aggregates all my social networking posts
- Meetup**: Organizing local meetings

Live Streaming Platforms

- **Livestream**: Live web streaming
- **Ustream**: Live web streaming

Hardware Tools

- **Macbook Pro** Chuck's computer for development and general business use
- **iMac 24**: Brenda's computer for general business use
- **MacBook Air**: Brenda's computer for presentations, conferences and travel
- **Lenovo** All in one PC for testing PC development, research, media server, testing our websites
- **Kindle Fire**: From Amazon, designed for content consumption, i.e., books, websites, blogs, pulse, note taking.
- **iPhones** – Mobile Phones
- **ASUS Transformer** – Full Size Tablet for development testing and support
- **Sprint MIFI 3G/4G** – Mobile Hotspot for testing of mobile apps
- **Optoma PX301** – Mini Projector for presentations
- **Epson Duet 80-Inch Dual Aspect Ratio Projection Screen, Portable 4:3 and 16:9 Aspect Ratio Screen (ELPSC80)**
- **Apple Time Capsule** for Shared Backup Drive
- **Epson Workforce 635** – B&W and Color Printing, Faxing, Scanning
- **Bose Headset and Speakers**: For development and presentations
- **Canon camera**: Photo and video for our blog
- **Flip Video**: video on the run

Development Tools

- **Ruby on Rails** – For Web App Development and Cloud Services
 - HTML & CSS for report and view layout
 - Ruby for business logic coding and data processing
 - SQL for complex queries
- **Flash Builder** – for App development
 - Actionscript** – complex code
 - Mxml – screen layout, views
 - Adobe Air** – Mac, PC, iPhone, iPad, Android Phones, Android Tables, Amazon Kindle Fire app deployment
- **Textmate** – Mac code editor
- **Git** - version control
- **Github.com** – for offsite hosting of version controlled code
- **Transmit** – Mac file transfer to and from our Servers
- **Pandora.com** – Music to keep us moving
- **Navicat for MySQL** – MySQL database management
- **Navicat for SQLite** - SQLite database management
- **iTerm** – Mac Terminal
- **Zipeg** – managing compressed files

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Small Business Blogs and Resources

- **Mixergy**: Interviews of CEO tech startups and Founders
- **Pulse**: A news reading application for mobile devices
- **Spotify**: Music
- **Small Biz Technology**: Tech insight and news for small business
- **Small Biz Trends**: News about small business
- **Zen Habits**: A blog about finding simplicity in the daily chaos of our lives.
- **Seth Godin**: A very smart marketer.
- **Mashable**: Technology and digital news
- **AllTop**: An online magazine aggregator
- **Chris Brogan**: Learn how Human Business Works – beyond social media
- **ProBlogger**: Blog tips that help you make money blogging
- **CopyBlogger**: Content marketing solutions for WordPress that work
- **Penelope Trunk Blog**: Advice at the intersection of work and life
- **Escape From Cubicle Nation**: From corporate prisoner to thriving entrepreneur
- Each year, the online tools keep getting better and more useful for small business owners. Let me know on the comments below if you found this list of tools useful or any other that you think should be on here.