

Psst!

Steal my secrets

The 'top secret' tools and resources I use for my online biz.



Just for the record, I'm notoriously thrifty and I research things waaaaay to much. The result is a collection of tools that not only work great but are easy on the budget, also!

Website Builder:

Wordpress, of course! To me, it's the most flexible, affordable and easy to use option that currently exists.

Wordpress Theme:

Divi from Elegant Themes*. It's incredibly customizable and I love that you can use it for lead and sales pages, too!

Website Host:

A Small Orange. They have excellent customer support and a reliable service. (**Use this link for a 15% discount***)
WP Engine* is pricey but is the gold standard for Wordpress hosting - perfect for those times your site can't afford to fail!

Email Marketing:

I've tried Constant Contact, Aweber and MailChimp. My favorite so far is **GetResponse***...they have an awesome line-up of features, good design tools and free stock photos. It's also easy to use.

Online Storage:

I've used DropBox, Hightail and Google Drive. For the most free space, **Google Drive** wins - no contest! For this reason I use it most and have been very happy with its features, security and reliability.

Productivity Tools:

Evernote is an awesome (and free) way to keep track of ideas and projects though 'notebooks'. Use it by yourself or with members of your team - it's cool like that!
Speaking of teams, **Asana** is fantastic for keeping everyone in the loop and on schedule. The basic plan is free.

* denotes affiliate link

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Productivity Tools: For list-making lovers, [Wunderlist](#) is awesome. Use this app to help you get your to-dos in order and then check them off, one-by-one, with glee.

[Time Card](#) is another app that can help you keep track of how long it takes you to complete each task. This really helps if you are a perfectionist and spend waaaay too much time on tasks that you need to JUST. GET. DONE

[StayFocusd](#) - install this app...if you dare! It will limit your time on sites that you feel waste your time (you get to choose which sites). Used together with the Pomodoro Technique, you may become a productivity machine!

[Calm.com](#) - I absolutely love this site for a few minutes of meditation. Fellow workaholics, try it out!

Graphics:

If you're an advanced graphic designer, nothing beats Adobe Creative Suite. But for quick, easy, professional and FREE designs, I really like [Canva.com](#) (That's how I designed these giveaways.)

Canva has lots of pre-designed layouts and templates. You just pick what you need and choose your colors, fonts and images. There are lots of free fonts to select from and a good amount of free images.

Another great feature is that Canva includes a premium image library. Stock photos and graphics only cost \$1 apiece, making it really convenient to design the perfect graphics all in one place.

[PicMonkey](#) is another popular online tool, similar to Canva, and touted as a photo editor. I've never used it, but based on reviews, it seems that whichever tool you use first is the one you'll like most!

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- Graphics contd.:** There are lots of free sites for graphics and photographs. Make sure you use trusted sources if you go the free route...like [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)
- In terms of paid stock photo sites, BigStockPhoto.com has some good deals, especially if you try their intro offer. Make sure you search for coupons to get maximum savings. Oh, and CreativeMarket is awesome!
- Fonts:** My favorite site is [Fontquirrel.com](https://fontquirrel.com) because all of their fonts are free for COMMERCIAL work. This means you don't have to worry about the legality of using any of their fonts for your business. Many other font sites have free fonts BUT only for personal use.
This site is great for [free handwriting fonts](#).
- Quick help:** [Fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com) is great for quick jobs that don't have to deliver a masterpiece (you are only paying 5 bucks, after all!) Great for eBook covers, website graphics, proofreading - whatever you need that you don't feel like doing yourself or paying a lot of money for.
- Wordpress help:** For a very modest fee, [WPCurve](https://www.wpcurve.com) will give you unlimited help with small jobs on your Wordpress site. If you're just starting out, this service may be exactly what you need at a cost you can afford.
- Optin Forms:** My favorite plugin is [PopupAlly*](#) for 'polite' pop-ups and optin forms that also look great.
- Webinar Plugin:** I haven't found anything easier, simpler and as cost effective to use as [WebinarAlly*](#). Perfect if you're dipping your toe in webinars!