Tools I Use Every Day in My Business

I'm asked often about tools and software we use in our business, so I keep this resource list as a handy reference for you.

Browser: Chrome - Switch now. It's faster than whatever you're using.

Gmail - You can use it to send and receive your branded email and check it anywhere. And, your VA can check it remotely.

Google Drive - A free service that lets you store all your files, including Google Docs, photos and videos, online and access them anywhere. Allows multiple users to view and, if you choose, edit the same documents. This is how we collaborate across multiple time zones.

Audio Acrobat - Records and hosts your audio; free trial, then about $20/mo

LeadPlayer - Simplest way to put videos on your site while also building your list; save money and hassle by hosting videos for free at YouTube.

Aweber – Email marketing and "autoresponders" (email sent automatically). Not the easiest to use but a serious solution if you are going to use email marketing.

1ShoppingCart.com – You will still need a merchant account, but this is a shopping cart so you can process payments online. Has email but is not a replacement for Aweber. About $50/mo for taking payments, and $100/mo for managing affiliates (referral partners, which it tracks automatically with online code); yes, you can use PayPal until you're ready to commit and it doesn't require a merchant account

LastPass – Free app that remembers all your passwords and generates secure ones.

Basecamp – Officially project management software, this is a low-cost solution for creating a members-only area for your group coaching program or coordinating project with your team. ~ $20/mo

WordPress – Don't overthink it. All our sites are WordPress-based sites.

Wishlist Member. Software that allows you to turn any WordPress site into a membership. Great tutorial on that can be found here.

iPhone – Record video, audio messages for yourself or clients, access email and files – office on the go!

Tools I Use Every Week in My Business

Audacity – free software to record through your computer (not the phone) and edit MP3s

Jing Video – Free way to take screen shots or make short, 5-minute videos. Great for explaining visual things to remote team members or for teaching your clients how to do stuff. For slightly longer videos (up to 12 minutes), try the paid version, SnagIt.

Listen to YouTube – Free service that strips the audio out of any video, so you can post a separate audio download.

Dropbox - A good way to share files that are too big to email. For example, I put the raw video in the Dropbox, and my editor places the finished video for me there a day later. Free up to 2 GB. Price depends on how much storage you need. I know some people who put their whole hard drive on it!

oDesk - Where I found my transcriptionist, tech help, audio/video editor and more. See also Elance and Freelance.

Fiverr – Another place to recruit service providers for things like creating mind maps, video bumpers, jingles, etc., for $5.

JigsawBox – An easy to use and customize online coaching platform. Although we don't use it (yet), two of my coaches have offered it to me in addition to our 1:1 work.

MySpeed from Enounce – Speeds up streaming online audio and video! A great tool for cutting your viewing/listening time in half! Also slows things down but who needs that? (OK, good for learning languages, I hear.) Free trial, then about $30

Statcounter – Free, very rich statistics about website visits, who referred them, how they travel your site, which keywords they used and more. Simpler than Google Analytics. Almost creepy.

Dynadot – Where we register our domains. They have a 2-week "change your mind and return it" period! My Referral code is 8G8kN6k9MPA7S.

Hostgator.com – Highly recommend them for reliable uptime. About $100/yr for unlimited domains and space.

Blog / ezine images: Paid (http://www.istockphoto.com and http://www.dreamstime.com – my referral ID is res2762639). Some people like http://www.bigstockphoto.com.

Free (requires attribution): http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/by-2.0. Be sure when using Flickr that you search *only* in CreativeCommons image files.

World's biggest timesaver: http://photopin.com/ (be sure you check "commercial" in the left sidebar). Always attribute and link back to the photographer's Flickr page.

Affiliate Disclaimer: This contains some links to affiliate programs for which I am paid a commission. I never promote anything I don't use personally or believe in. If you have a less-than-perfect experience with any resource you found through me, I want to know about it!

A practice I really enjoy is, before I purchase something online, to ask one of my colleagues if they're an affiliate of the merchant or program. If they are, I use their link. If they're not, they sign up quickly, and *then* I use their link. You can share $10-300 commissions easily with each other!