17 Essential Tools for Entrepreneurs

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One of the biggest challenges we face as entrepreneurs is staying on top of everything. You have to respond to emails, make sure your website works perfectly, organize projects, keep in touch with your network, and avoid getting distracted by social media, cat videos, and tools that only make you less productive.

The Internet does not just enable procrastination. It also offers solutions to busy entrepreneurs: there is an abundance of tools and services that were created to help you organize your life and business, so you can focus on doing work that matters.

These resources were created by people who know what it's like to have a to-do list that never seems to end. Many of them can be used for free, so there's no reason not to give them a try.

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1. Trello

Trello is a free project management tool that helps you get organized. It shows a board on which you can create lists filled with cards. When you open a card, you can add comments, upload files, create checklists, and more. It is super versatile, so it can be used for many different types of things: to organize a specific project, write an ebook, create an email course, etc. It really helps you to keep a bird's-eye view on your projects.

2. Google Docs

Google Docs is an essential tool for working on a file with multiple people. Everyone can add or remove text, proofread content, and give comments for others to see. You can also see who else is working on the document and chat with them, so it's a great tool for teams. It's also a big help for people who get confused when they have several versions of a work-in-progress.

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3. Asana

Asana is the ultimate tool for managing your projects more effectively. It works with tasks, projects, conversations, and dashboards. Teamwork has never been easier. You can turn conversations into actionable tasks, provide comments on other people's actions, and immediately see what progress has been made – all without having to schedule meetings.

4. Dropbox

Dropbox is great for storage and backups. It has a huge amount of awesome plugin apps to improve your experience. Moreover, it provides apps for every device, which means you can access your files from anywhere.

5. Slack

Slack is a beautiful chat app is an amazing communication tool for teams and mastermind groups. Its smooth design is by far the nicest you'll come across. Even though it's relatively new, it is already very popular. You can create several channels to discuss different topics, or you can have a private conversation. Slack also allows you to share files and to easily find messages, notifications, and files in your archive. Everything is automatically synced on all your devices, and you can easily connect it to other apps, like WordPress or Skype. Start sharing your ideas with peers and get inspired by their questions, suggestions, and expertise. We're all in this together.

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6. Momentum

Momentum is a homepage replacement app designed to inspire you and keep you focused throughout your work day. When you open your browser, Momentum greets you by name with an inspiring picture and quote. I find Momentum immensely helpful when determining and completing my One Thing every day. Every morning, I tell it what my focus for the day will be. For the rest of the day, it reminds me of my commitment every time I open a new tab. This makes it much easier to stop wasting time on Facebook and the likes.

7. Spotify

Listening to music really helps me stay focused and productive. Obviously, this is different for everyone, but many people seem to function better with music in the background. Spotify is a great place to find the right music for every moment. You can choose what you want to listen to, or you can let Spotify surprise you. Find out what type of music keeps you focused and alert. It's great to help you through the early afternoon dip.

8. 7-Minute Workout

The 7-Minute Workout is an app that helps you stay fit and focused with short workouts. Each workout consists of 12 exercises of 30 seconds, with 10-second breaks. All you need is a chair and a wall, so this is the perfect workout app in your (home) office. If you're trying to find inspiration, doing a short workout can really help you get there. A short workout will get both the adrenaline and the ideas flowing!
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9. Boomerang

You can temporarily remove messages from your inbox to be reminded of them later. This really helps you focus on the task at hand, without getting distracted by other things on your to-do list. Boomerang archives the email(s) and brings them back to your inbox at your chosen time.
You can also use this app to write an email and send it later. You tell Boomerang when you want the email to be sent, and they take it from there. Moreover, it will remind you if you don't hear back from someone, so messages won't slip through the maze. Take control of your inbox, before it becomes an uncontrollable mess.

10. Voila Norbert

It can be very frustrating and time-consuming to look for someone's email address on their (company's) websites. This was a massive problem for me when looking for potential guests for my podcast. Voila Norbert finds the right email addresses, even when they're not explicitly mentioned on a website. You just have to know the name of your contact person and the domain name of their company.

11. Sidekick

Sidekick is a brilliant email add-on tells developed to tell you whether someone has opened an email you sent. It shows you when, how many times, and from where the recipient has opened your email.
This can be very useful when you're doing a round of cold emailing, trying out a new marketing campaign, or starting a newsletter. Observe people's behavior and learn from it!
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12. 99 Designs

99 Designs is perfect for finding a logo or landing page that you really love. I used them for the design of my book cover. The process is easy: you fill out a design brief, buy a package, and launch a contest. Designers from all over the world can sign up, create one or more designs, and send them to you. After receiving the results, you can choose the best one and pick the winner.

13. Canva

Canva is an online graphic design platform. I often use it to create artwork for my website. No, it's not a place where you find designers – you're the designer. It is a simple drag-and-drop design tool with a library of more than 1 million photographs, graphics, and fonts to choose from. It offers free access to a wide assortment of design tools and options. You can create anything from book covers to infographics.

14. Fiverr

Fiverr is a cheap yet effective marketplace (everything starts at $5) that offers fast graphic design, translations, SEO enhancement, business cards, and anything else you could need for your business. You can also pay someone to write your message on their belly and do a jungle dance – if that's what you're into. It's the go-to service if you need something done fast.

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15. Clarity.FM

Want to get advice from an expert? Stop wasting your time browsing blogs. Clarity.FM connects you with a community of experts. You can look for professionals by name or by expertise, depending on the type of advice you're looking for. Have a personal conversation with an experienced entrepreneur is the ultimate way to get the answers you need. Want to know what Brian Wong or Chris Brogan would do in your situation? Just ask them!

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16. Typeform

Typeform is free service you can use to create awesome looking surveys. We all use online forms to get feedback from our readers, listeners, and customers. Unfortunately, boring surveys are likely to be ignored, which makes it harder for you to know if you're going in the right direction.
Typeform's beautiful, clear, and mobile-friendly surveys can help you get the valuable feedback you need, without extra effort.

17. Hack the Entrepreneur: How to Stop Procrastinating, Build a Business, and Do Work That Matters

Are you stuck and don't know what to do next? Do you want to control your destiny, do work that matters, and have the freedom to travel?

Hack the Entrepreneur: The Book contains 50 hacks by brilliant entrepreneurs, who have turned their startups into successful businesses. Find out how to get started, deal with failure, and learn from your mistakes. Your business will thank you later.

Entrepreneurs typically want to do everything themselves and be in charge of their business. But sometimes that's easier said than done. In reality, we don't have enough time to take care of every single aspect of our business on our own. Let these tools and services help you organize your day, on a professional and personal level. Stop wasting time on futile tasks and take control with these simple tools. Allow yourself to see the forest for the trees and do work that really matters.