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# Technology / Tools

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Technology and tools you can use in your business to catapult your marketing efforts and be more efficient in the office

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# Chapter 1

The list of vendors in this document are provided for informational purposes only. We are not endorsing any of the particular vendors and suggest that you do additional research to find a vendor most appropriate for you.

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## Marketing Tools

The following is a list of tools that I use in my business to assist in my marketing efforts.

- Blogging
  - Blogging is an easy way to establish yourself as an expert in your field. You can do this by setting up your own blog or by contributing to other blogs that people have created.
  - Most of the blogging services are now free.
  - You don't need to be a technology guru to set up your own blog.
  - A number of the search engines are now including blogs in their Web searches which will increase your visibility on the Internet.
  - Vendors
    - Blogger – [www.Blogger.com](http://www.Blogger.com)
    - TypePad – [www.TypePad.com](http://www.TypePad.com)

- E-Mail Marketing
  - E-Mail Marketing is a great way to send out very professionally looking e-mails to a large number of people.
  - You can also track the success of your e-mails by tracking the number of people that open your e-mails, click on particular links you have in your e-mails or forward your e-mail on to other people.
  - Vendors
    - Constant Contact – [www.constantcontact.com](http://www.constantcontact.com)
    - Exact Target Marketing – [www.exacttarget.com](http://www.exacttarget.com)
    - Swift Mail - [www.swiftpage.com](http://www.swiftpage.com)

- Customer Database Management
  - As you start to get more customers, it's important to find some way to electronically store information about your clients.
  - If you own a retail store, you will likely store customer and transaction history on your point of sale system.
  - You may also want to store customer information in a database on your own computer. Having this information electronically will make it much easier to follow up with clients and can be an engine for your marketing activities.
  - Vendors
    - ACT! – [www.ACT.com](http://www.ACT.com)
    - Outlook – [www.Microsoft.com](http://www.Microsoft.com)
    - Salesforce.com – [www.salesforce.com](http://www.salesforce.com)

- Pay per Click Marketing
  - An easy way to get your name out on the Internet is to leverage pay per click (PPP) marketing. PPP are those ads that you see at the right when you enter in a search term at Google or another search engine.
  - With PPP you can be very precise in the search terms that your ad is associated with or even the geography of the person entering in the search term.
  - Vendors
    - Google – [Adwords.Google.com](http://Adwords.Google.com)
    - Yahoo - [publisher.yahoo.com](http://publisher.yahoo.com)
    - AOL - [www.aolmedianetworks.com](http://www.aolmedianetworks.com)

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## Office Automation

The following is a list of tools that I use to help me be more productive while I'm in the office.

- Smart Phone
  - The current generations of "smart" phones are very powerful. They combine the functionality of a cell phone with a PDA organizer.
  - Having a smart phone allows you to bring all of your contacts, calendar, to-do lists, notes and even office documents with you while you were on the road.
  - The leading Smart phones are based on operating systems developed by Apple, Microsoft or recently by Google. The cell phone manufacturers typically use one of these three operating systems for their phones.
  - Vendors
    - Apple – [www.iPhone.com](http://www.iPhone.com)
    - Microsoft – [www.Microsoft.com](http://www.Microsoft.com)
    - Google – [www.Google.com](http://www.Google.com)

- Business Card Scanners
  - A business card scanner allows you to scanning business cards that you collected networking events and directly import them into your customer database systems such as ACT! or Outlook.
  - Vendor
    - CardScan – [www.CardScan.com](http://www.CardScan.com)
- Label Printers
  - Label printers connector record to your computer and can be used to print out a variety of labels including mailing labels for envelopes or file folders.
  - Some of the label printers can even weigh and print out postage for a mailing envelope.
  - Vendor
    - Dymo – [www.Dymo.com](http://www.Dymo.com)
- Voice Recognition Software
  - Voice recognition software allows you to speak into a microphone and the computer will translate your speech into typed words.
  - If you are a poor typist, such as myself, it can increase your productivity exponentially.
  - Be prepared to "train" the software on your speech patterns and adjust your speech to speak clearly into the microphone.
  - Vendor
    - Nuance (Dragon NaturallySpeaking) - [www.nuance.com](http://www.nuance.com)

- Address Grabber
  - An address grabber allows you to import contact information from your e-mails or webpages directly into your customer database software.
  - Vendor
    - eGrabber – [www.eGrabber.com](http://www.eGrabber.com)
- Accounting Software
  - Instead of keeping your financial records just in the checkbook or a paper ledger book, be sure to get yourself set up with electronic accounting software. This will not only make it easier to balance your checkbook but will allow you to run reports to determine the financial health of your company.
  - Vendors
    - Intuit (QuickBooks) – [www.QuickBooks.intuit.com](http://www.QuickBooks.intuit.com)
    - Peachtree – [www.Peachtree.com](http://www.Peachtree.com)
    - Microsoft – [www.Microsoft.com/Dynamics](http://www.Microsoft.com/Dynamics)

- Podcasting
  - A great way to keep up with the information available on the Internet is to download podcasts from the Internet to your PC or portable MP3 player.
  - The first step is to get software on your computer to subscribe and download podcasts.
  - Vendors
    - iTunes – [www.iTunes.com](http://www.iTunes.com)
    - WinAmp – [www.WinAmp.com](http://www.WinAmp.com)
  - Optionally, you can also download your podcasts to a portable MP3 player. I use this to listen to podcasts while I am biking or in the car.
  - Vendors
    - Apple (iPod) – [www.iPod.com](http://www.iPod.com)
    - Microsoft (Zune) – [www.Zune.com](http://www.Zune.com)
- Scanning Software
  - With disk space getting so cheap, I have begun to convert paper documents to electronic scanned images of these documents. It saves on physical storage space and is tremendously more efficient in retrieving these documents.
  - Vendor
    - Nuance (PaperPort) – [www.PaperPort.com](http://www.PaperPort.com)

- Unified Messaging
  - A relatively new area is to leverage unified messaging which allows you to access your voicemail via the Internet and/or your e-mail.
  - I have my voicemail messages sent to me via e-mail to my smart phone. Therefore, while I'm on the road I can still keep up with my voicemail.
  - For one of our businesses, both my wife and I run the business. Therefore, for this business by wife and I simultaneously get copies of the voicemail so that we are both notified.
  - Vendor
    - ATT – [www.ATT.com](http://www.ATT.com)