

Module 12: Top Ten Tools of the Trade



In our first video of First Steps Online, you learned that setting up your online enterprise is like setting up a physical business in your home town. You need equipment, tools, machines, personnel, proper space, and a host of other items to make your business work.

You'll need specific tools related to online business. You won't use any shovels, picks, and wheelbarrows. Leave your home dental equipment in the drawer unless you want to pick your teeth while searching the internet!

Here's my "Top Ten" list to get you started. Yes, some of cost money, but many are free, with only a little effort on your part to learn how to use them. I'm omitting the more obvious items which are found in most offices; pens, paper, scissors, tape, and paper clips. (Duh!) Music CDs are optional, although hearing a great Eagles or Beatles song at the end of a long design and coding session tends to rejuvenate the soul and spirit! (Preferably at high volume!)

Here they are! Walt's Top Ten Tools of the Trade



1. The Appropriate Computing Device

Desktop, laptop, phone or tablet? Frankly speaking (No, no, not Frank Lee speaking. Your buddy Walt is still talking.) it would be very hard for you to use a smart phone or tablet to do serious business online. Why?

Sometimes size matters, and that's what small devices don't have.

- They do not give you full-screen views of many online programs you'll use.
- Small device operating systems aren't adequate for accessing the free programs you may need.
- Smaller devices don't have the storage capacity for downloading without adding SD cards.
- Tablet devices also have major limitations unless iPads and Samsung Notebooks are in your budget.

If you don't have at least a workable laptop or a desktop computer, you should consider making an investment for your future. You don't have to go crazy and spend thousands of dollars for top speed, top computing and gynomous storage systems. Consider your budget, do your due diligence, and shop for the best bargain. Once you're making an income, you'll can upgrade to better systems and programs.



2. Gif Banner Maker

As you begin to create advertising programs and campaigns and use banners, you'll soon realize .gif banners are way cooler than static. I've written a tutorial showing you how to use animated banners to increase your conversions and click through. The price is only \$7 and is within everyone's budget. Just forego one Big Mac.

[Click here to download my tutorial and videos](#)



3. Autoresponder

In previous modules I shared my thoughts and recommendations about the necessity and availability of autoresponder. Finding the right one for you may take some time, but please do your research. Compare the costs versus the benefits of each one. Many start out inexpensive until you have above 500-1000 subscribers, and then the price increases rapidly.

A short list of the main providers are: Aweber, GetResponse, Active Campaign, MailChimp, Sendlane, Infusionsoft, Constant Contact, and [TrafficWave](#).



**Key to Success?
Using the Right Tool for the Right Job!**



4. Business Email Address

When working on the internet, separate your business correspondence from your personal. Create a new business email address. Check with your own Email Service Provider. Open it with the name of your new online business or with your own name. Google is very popular, and Gmail is easy to set up, free, and is accepted by online marketers around the world. Later, you may want to have your official email address based on a website you own.



5. Graphics and Photo Management Programs

Microsoft Paint, PhotoScape, Picosmos Tools, and PixResizr are super starter programs. These programs are **free** downloads, but others—better, or easier, or more advanced with additional capabilities—might require purchasing or a monthly fee. YouSign, Easy Sketch Pro, and Adobe Photoshop are all paid services. You'll have to decide which ones tickle your fancy.



6. Microsoft Excel and Word

Standard components of the Windows Office Suite, Microsoft Excel and Word are common programs for online work. They might be already loaded on your computer device. If so, it's of great value to you and your online future to become proficient with both of these programs. When you write a sales page or an email for a marketing campaigns, Word gives you many options for editing and output. Saving URLs, links, and passwords in an Excel file can keep them organized and at your fingertips. Additional assistance and training for these programs are readily available on YouTube and other sites.



The simplest of tools in the hands
of a Master Craftsman . . .

Create world-class wonders!



7. Backup Hard Drive System – External Storage

Without question, pause, or procrastination, a good backup system for your programs, data, and online ventures is a **MUST!** Not just one. A system.

You have many backup options. Choose MORE than one. Thumb drives or memory sticks for smaller files and programs, an additional hard-drive connected to your main computer device, other external storage units readily available at your local computer store. I highly recommend that you set up a regular backup time for your work **RIGHT AWAY** when you begin to work online. Computers crash, infected websites die, both are routinely hacked and compromised, and stuff just happens! Normally at the most inconvenient time possible – just before you plan to back it all up! :)

Purchase a storage device that allows you to schedule AUTOMATIC back-ups. No matter how good you think your memory is, or how set you are in your daily routine, you will forget to back-up your essential goodies. If you have a Mac, use the Timeline program which backs up every hour, day, and month.

AND get an off-site, “cloud” backup. The options above are all things in your home, which could flood, burn down, blow up, or be sucked into the sky by a tornado and dropped on a witch in the Land of Oz. Look into cloud-based solutions like Dropbox, or Amazon S3. For every Gmail address you have, Google gives you 15 GB of **free space** on their drives. Use it. Buy more space if you need it.



8. Address book or “Little Black Book”

As your business grows in the online space, you accumulate a ton of email addresses, names, and passwords. Unless you have a photographic memory, you’ll need something to keep all your online goodies and personal information in one place.

I keep mine in a little black book! Yes! It’s really black! My little book is worn with pages full of entries, and a bunch of pages look like chicken scratchin’s with entries crossed out, whited out, and over-written with new details.

This inexpensive black notebook helps keep me organized and provides a safe place to keep my confidential information like passwords and log-on identifications.

I practically live online and use this effective tool constantly. It's always close at hand! Buy one now! Don't make me have to say, "I told you so", after your computer crashes, you lose all your valuable info, and you are tearing out your hair by the roots.



9. Simple Filing System

Besides your little black book to keep your passwords, secret sauce ingredients, and chocolate cakes recipes handed down from Grandma in one place, you'll need a simple filing system for articles, notes from webinars and teleseminars, printouts of downloaded training materials, and copies of great Action Guides or Landing Page Tips. You don't need anything expensive, perhaps a cardboard box or a small metal filing cabinet with a few manila folders to store materials in an organized, easily retrievable location. There's nothing worse than wanting to quote something you read three months ago in a "Top 10" list (like this one) and you can't locate it, no matter how much searching you do – even by looking in the refrigerator!



10. PayPal Business account.

Open one. It's free, easy to do, and saves a lot of time and effort. Once you've set up your account and entered in your credit card information, you'll be able to purchase programs and online products you need through PayPal. (I use PayPal for more than 90% of my online purchases.) They send receipts for all purchases and keep accurate records for you to review 24/7/365. Be sure to connect it to your local bank account – which takes about 10 days – so when you receive commissions through PayPal, you can easily transferring the funds.



Evaluate your online business needs and compare with the list above.

Take action! Go shopping and make those purchases! Your online business like any other business when it comes to tools of the trade. If you are indeed serious about making this work, then you must invest, not only in yourself, but also in the necessary tools and equipment so you can work effectively.

I've learned that creating a business from my home is much easier if I set aside a private place for my "office." This is where I do my work, plan my videos, write emails, edit videos, build funnels, and check my PayPal account! I need my space! Gimme some room to move!

Set up your office in an arrangement that suits you – a comfortable chair that doesn't torture your back or your buns, a table or desk at the right height, printers and supplies within reach, and adequate lighting.

Finally, consider the following – which kinda sums up the last few modules!

What do you want to build?

Building an online business is like building a house.

First you need an **idea** of what type of house you want to build, then you need a **plan** (blueprint) and then you need **tools and materials**.

You wouldn't start building **BEFORE** having some idea as to how many rooms, how big, what floor arrangement or layout, and what style, single-level or two-story, and.

To do so would be foolish!

So you sit down and make a plan, a layout, a blueprint of how you want your house to look. Once the plan is done, you then need to consider what tools you will need, tools that are "**project specific.**"

You can't build a house with dentist tools that clean your teeth. Well, maybe a tiny enamel mouse house filled with cavities. You need to find the proper project-specific tools like saws, hammers, screw drivers, measuring devices, levels, nail guns, to name a few.

Now with the proper tools in hand, you need **project-specific materials**.

House walls are normally built with wood or cement – not fabric or glass. Roofing materials aren't made from paper. A foundation constructed with straw, plastic, or Styrofoam would not be a good idea, if you want the house to last more than 10 minutes!

So to recap, you need a plan, proper tools, and project-specific materials.

And one major element (beside energy, passion, and patience) . . . **TIME!**

Building an online business – like building a beautiful home – doesn't happen overnight! It takes time to build a house, in fact, a **process of time** to go from foundation to walls to roof to final completion.

The **process of time**, the **experiences you gain**, and **solid principles of business development** will result in a strong, lasting, internet business. You can't circumvent, override or shortcut these steps.

Someone said, "You can't shortcut the learning curve!" I believe it! It's true. And you can't shortcut the building curve, either.

Yes, you can make it go faster, because people may guide, assist, and direct you through the beginning pitfalls. However, time is still a crucial element.

Without a plan, the proper tools, and the right materials – put together in the correct order – you won't be successful in your online business!

I can help you . . .

- imagine and create the plan or the blueprint to succeed,
- select and find the proper tools, training, and guidance,
- locate the right materials you need to build your dream income!

But, what you will do with this help is the real question!

You can take the right plans, tools, and materials – and in time . . .

Build a doghouse!

Or you can take those same plans, tools, and materials – and in time . . .

Build a beautiful mansion!

Your choice. It's up to you!

So, my question today . . .

Are you going to build a doghouse or a mansion?

P.S. I think we should go for the mansion . . .

To view and read this module online, go to www.work-with-walt.com

Your purchase of this training tutorial includes free membership to the online version of **First Steps Online** which has more than 20 FREE downloadable resources.

If you have problems with login, please contact walter@firststeps.online