

The Top 5 **FREE** Marketing Tools Every Small Business Should Be Using

Tamsin Fox-Davies

THE Small Business Marketing Mentor

Why use free tools?

As small businesses, we all want to keep costs down. However, you have to keep **marketing** your business in order to bring in money, but how do you do that without spending a fortune?

Well, I specialise in teaching **small business** owners just like you how to **promote** themselves with low cost (and often FREE) tools.

What I give my clients is the benefit of my **10+ years** of small business marketing experience. I put it all together into **nutshell-sized nuggets**, and make it **easy** to follow.

I'm giving you just a snippet of that here, and I know you're going to find it useful.

In this guide, I'm going to share with you 5 of **my top tools** that you can use for free (that's right, they're all F-R-E-E! No money. Not a penny!).

So keep reading to find out which tools will help you to **promote your business, without busting your budget**.



Tamsin Fox-Davies (That's Me!)

Tamsin

*P.S. Come and say hello over at my Facebook Page for even **more tips** and resources: www.facebook.com/smallbizmarketingmentor/.*

Free Marketing Tool No. 1: Wordpress

At number one it has to be **Wordpress**.

Wordpress is technically a blogging platform, however, it is so incredibly versatile that you can easily use it as a CMS (Content Management System – this is where you are able to alter the words and pictures on your site yourself) and use it to create your whole website.



WORDPRESS

My websites are all built on Wordpress, for example.

When I say that Wordpress is free, I mean that the platform (i.e. software) is free. You will still have to pay for your website domain name (the web address) and for website hosting (the server that holds the files that make up your site).

The great thing about Wordpress is that there are also lots of additional add-ons which are free.

First up there's **Wordpress Themes** – these are the templates that you can use to make your site and there are lots of them available for free on the Wordpress website (there are also Premium Themes on other sites which you pay for but they are very inexpensive).

Secondly there are **Plugins** – these are little gizmos that can do all sorts of stuff and you can just choose the ones you want and drop them into your Wordpress site. For example, would you like every one of your blog posts to be mentioned on your twitter account automatically? There's a plugin for that. Want people to be able to sign up for your newsletter? There's a plugin for that too. There are literally thousands and thousands of plugins that are all available for you to use on your Wordpress site. You just have to choose the right ones.

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See it in action:

Have a good look around www.tamsinfoxdavies.com this is a Wordpress site. I have taken a Premium Theme from StudioPress and had it edited by my web team.

Getting started:

Go to JustHost or another webhost that includes 'one click Wordpress installation' and sign up for an account. Follow the instructions and set up your first Wordpress site. I recommend starting a personal blog to allow you to get used to Wordpress and learn how to use the system for yourself.

Learning more:

Have a look at http://codex.wordpress.org/Getting_Started_with_WordPress#WordPress_for_Beginners

Free Marketing Tool No. 2: Facebook

Facebook is the worlds largest social network. Facebook now has over **500 MILLION users**, and some of them are going to want to buy your products or services – if only they knew that you were there.

You might think that Facebook is just a place to check out pictures of your cousins wedding and spy on... ..I

mean 'catch up with' your old school friends, but you can also use Facebook to **promote your business**.

Facebook now directs more web traffic than **Google**. Just think about that for a minute - through Facebook people are finding and sharing more weblinks than the world's biggest search engine! ...and you can use this amazing tool to help promote your business.

The best way to do this is to set up a **Facebook Page**. A Page is like a Facebook profile but for a business, brand, or public personality. Facebook users will 'like' your Page, and then you can send them updates and keep in touch with them.

The benefit of a Facebook Page is not just that you can reach new people more quickly, easily and cheaply, but that when somebody 'likes' your page or comments on your page content **all their Facebook friends see that they've done so**.



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And because people who are interested in your business are likely to have friends who would also be interested in what you do, this should help to market your business **'virally'** (this means spreading an idea on it's own, like a virus).

Another way to benefit from Facebook is to add **'like' buttons, a fan box,** and other Facebook tools into your website.

See it in action:

Have a look my Facebook Page:

<http://www.facebook.com/smallbizmarketingmentor>.

Getting started: Look at Facebook's own guidance on setting up a company page: <http://www.facebook.com/help/?page=904>.

Learning more: Go to Facebook and look at a random selection of business pages to see the huge variety of things that can be achieved (and the vast number of people that they are engaging with).

Free Marketing Tool No. 3:

Twitter

Twitter is not yet as popular as Facebook, but at the time of writing this guide Twitter has over **190 million users** – so that's still a LOT and some of them will be customers for you.



twitter

Twitter users (twitterers or tweeps) send messages of up to 140 characters (tweets), which other tweeps read when they **'follow'** them.

What you need to know about Twitter is that **1/3 of all tweets are about brands and products**. This means that Twitter is a good way of engaging with your current and potential customers.

Twitter is also a great **networking tool**. You can use it to find, meet, and get to know people in a targeted way. These could be potential customers or the people who can put you in touch with them.

There are some little idiosyncrasies to Twitter that new users need to become familiar with, but it is easy to grasp and it's worth making the effort.

See it in action:

Go to www.twitter.com/tamtam10000 and see how I use Twitter to make connections, build relationships and bring in clients on a daily basis. If you sign up for a Twitter account, you can also have a look at my Twitter lists. There's a list called 'Ones to Watch', and I recommend that you follow all of the people on that list in order to see first-hand how Twitter *should* be done.

Getting started:

Go to www.twitter.com and register for a free account. Then follow a few people to see how they're communicating on Twitter. Post just one message a day to get you started, and you'll be flying in no time.

Learning more: Check out my Instant Twitterati crash course for a speedy way to look like a Twitter pro (coming soon!).

Free Marketing Tool No. 4: Feedburner

You should be posting **news, articles, and other updates** on your website on a regular basis (if you're not doing this yet, get a Wordpress blog added onto your site pronto). However, all the updates in the world won't do you much good if no-one gets to see them.

What you need to do is give your **site visitors** a way to find out what's new on your site – preferably from the comfort of their own email inbox, and Feedburner will allow you to do this.

Feedburner is a Google tool, and once you set up your account, you can put a link on your website so that every time you upload a new article, news item or blog post, it will get sent straight to anyone who has clicked that link and they get to **read it right in their inbox**.



See it in action:

Go to www.enthusemarketing.com and have a look at the right hand side. Where it says 'Get Enthuse Updates Direct to Your Inbox' that's a Feedburner sign up form. Pop your email in there and you can experience it for yourself.

Getting started:

Go to www.feedburner.google.com and sign up. Use the online tutorials to talk you through the process.

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Learning more:

Check out Feed 101: <http://www.google.com/support/feedburner/bin/answer.py?answer=79408>.

Free Marketing Tool No. 5: **Tweetdeck**

If you've signed up for all the tools I've recommended here, you'll be juggling a **Twitter** account, your personal **Facebook** profile and your business **Facebook Page** as well. It's a lot to keep up to date with and you'll probably find yourself uploading some of the same info in all three places, which takes three times as long – unless you're using **Tweetdeck**.



You can download Tweetdeck to your **PC, Mac, iPad, and/or iPhone**, and use it to read messages on all of your social networking sites, reply to those messages, send updates to multiple sites at once, and even schedule updates to go out at a later date and time.

Tweetdeck is basically your best friend and time-saving tool when it comes to **managing** your social media marketing programme.

However, it also does a lot more.

One of the best uses for social media is **monitoring** what people are saying about you and your business, and **researching** the needs of your target market.

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With Tweetdeck's handy format of using **columns**, you can set up extra columns for searches of your business **name**, your key **products**, your top industry **issues**, your **competitors** names, to name a few. Any time somebody on Twitter, for example, mentions one of your search terms, their 'tweet' will instantly pop into your search column and you can respond to it.

Just think about how useful that could be if someone is talking about the **negative experience** they had with one of your competitors. You can jump straight in and offer them a special deal to come to you instead.

It's like having eyes and ears out there keeping an eye on your key words ALL the time.

At a recent social media course I was teaching, when I'd finished setting up the students with Tweetdeck, most peoples comments included words like '**awesome**', '**brilliant**' and '**lifechanging**'.

See it in action:

Download Tweetdeck for yourself at www.tweetdeck.com

Getting started:

Follow the set-up instructions to add your Twitter and Facebook accounts. I recommend experimenting with just two accounts before you add any others that you have.

Learning more:

Tweetdeck's support forum is good, so if you have any questions go there first.

The Last **Word** From Me:

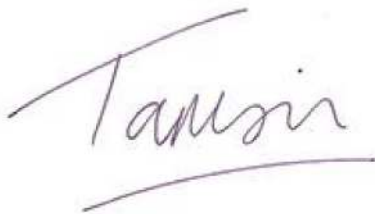
These are just a few of the **free tools** that you can use to drive your business forwards, promote your products and services, and bring in more customers.

Do you want even MORE free (and low-cost) tools and resources? See my **Tam Recommends** section in my weekly emails.

Want to get even more free tips, advice, and info from me? Check out my Facebook Page (<http://www.facebook.com/smallbizmarketingmentor>) and 'like' it – my Facebook friends get exclusive freebies.

I'm looking forward to hearing how you get on, so do post an update at www.tamsinfoxdavies.com or tweet @tamtam10000 to let me know how you're doing.

See you soon!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tamsin". The signature is written in a dark purple or blue ink and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

tamsin
fox-davies