

# Free Software Suggestions

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# Overview

- Free vs Open Source
- What Comes with Windows
- Main Windows Add-ons
- Portable Apps – Life on a Key
- Office Use
- Graphics
- Analyzing Data

# Free vs Open-Source

- Free and its variants means that you don't pay *directly* for a software product or service
  - Source code remains confidential to the provider
  - Property rights to the provider
  - Limited or no distribution rights
- Open-Source – non-commercial and **REALLY FREE**
  - a license to use and distribute the software
  - Tradition of community support and development
  - Associated with the GNU General Public License and variants thereof

# Open Source - Really Free

- Free software” is a matter of liberty, not price. To understand the concept, you should think of “free” as in “free speech”, not as in “free beer”. [www.gnu.org](http://www.gnu.org)
- Free software is a matter of the users' freedom to run, copy, distribute, study, change and improve the software.
- [www.gnu.org](http://www.gnu.org) - a free unix operating system
- [www.fsf.org](http://www.fsf.org) - Free Software Foundation
- Copyright is retained by the authors
- Others are looking at the code

# Where to Find Things

- Microsoft has useful tools, clipart and stuff but it is NOT open source but is FREE
- sourceforge.net and similar sites are a source for community open-source projects
  - Pick projects with a track record that are used by others
- Google on the web but be careful

# NOT Open – Not Really Free

- Free commercial software may seek to entice you to more expensive versions (NAGWARE)
- Free commercial products may extract their rents by providing your information to others
- Free commercial products may be spyware or other trojans or WORSE
- **USE ONLY PRODUCTS THAT ARE WELL RECOMMENDED ON THE WEB**

# Included in Windows

- A decent browser – Internet Explorer – latest versions are quite decent
- Some editing and graphics capabilities – Notepad, Wordpad, Paint
- Possibly other utilities for doing movies and other things in more expensive flavours of Windows
- Messenger products targeted at Microsoft services

# Filling the GAPS

- Use Open-Source if possible – what you see is what you get
- [www.portableapps.com](http://www.portableapps.com)
  - a selection of heavily reviewed open source tools that work on USB keys
  - NO impact on your operating system)
  - most have desktop equivalents
- If it is on portable apps, it should work reasonably well on XP and VISTA.

# Alternative Browsers

- Firefox – roughly Open Source
  - Mozilla Public License
  - Some wonderful add-ons that work well
  - Some rather buggy ones
  - Look for the popular ones – don't be a guinea pig unless you have to be
  - [www.mozilla.com](http://www.mozilla.com)
  - Best password management
- Other browsers include Opera, Chrome and Safari – free but not open source – have their own virtues and faults

# Antivirus

- AVG Free version - [www.grisoft.com](http://www.grisoft.com)
  - Hard to find but there is a free version on the web site
  - quite good
  - Free for home NON COMMERCIAL use
- Avast
  - [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)
  - Home version is free for non-commercial home use
- CLAMWIN – [www.clamwin.com](http://www.clamwin.com)
  - No real time scanner – open source

# Online Antivirus Scanners

- Most of the commercial antivirus providers offer free online scanners
- These are NOT an alternative to real anti virus software but are nice as a **SECOND OPINION**
  - Trend Micro <http://housecall.trendmicro.com/>
  - Panda Security <http://www.pandasecurity.com/usa/homeusers/solutions/activescan/default.htm>
  - Microsoft <http://onecare.live.com/site/en-us/default.htm>
  - Bit Defender <http://www.bitdefender.com/scan8/ie.html>

# EMAIL Clients

- Thunderbird – part of the Mozilla suite
  - Excellent but does not have the power of Outlook for integration with calendars and notes
  - Limited synchronization options with hand-held devices
  - [www.mozilla.com](http://www.mozilla.com)
- Eudora – not current recommended
  - moving from a commercial to open source model
  - support is limited
- Either are better than Outlook Express
- VISTA contains an improved email facility

# Messaging Clients

- The various services (Yahoo, AIM, MSN) offer their own proprietary but “free” software
- Accounts must be setup with the services
- Google offers some web code that can be used from a Google home page for road warriors
- Open Source messenger clients (multi service) with good portable options include
  - Pidgin - [www.pidgin.im](http://www.pidgin.im) – quite good
  - Miranda – also good but more complex  
[www.miranda-im.org](http://www.miranda-im.org)

# Compression

- Compressing files to save space and for email
- XP and Vista can process zip files but not that well and do NOT process other formats popular on the web.
- Useful alternatives include 7-zip  
[www.7-zip.org](http://www.7-zip.org) (broadly open source)
- Peazip <http://peazip.sourceforge.net>

# Google Gmail

- Large storage space
- Easy and FREE POP and SMTP
- means that you can use Outlook or Thunderbird or any other standard software easily
- Requires gmail account – used to access other google services
- Superlative Spam filter
- Business options exist
- **Strongly recommended – best for IPHONE**

# Other Free Email Services

- Many web providers offer free email facilities to their members
- All require account registrations
- Canada.com is the least difficult to set up but requires using their web site.
- Some plugins are available for Thunderbird to access some of these sites but there are challenges getting them to work
- Options include Yahoo (.ca, .com), Microsoft (hotmail.com, live.ca etc) and MANY others
- *Look at the privacy policies carefully*

# Office Alternatives

- Open Office - [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org)
  - Highly recommended but database option is not up to MS Access
  - Strong competitor to Word, Excel, Powerpoint
  - Nice Graphics capability, can create PDFs
- AbiWord – [www.abisource.com](http://www.abisource.com)
  - lite weight word processor
- For XP and beyond –
  - Sun Office is also an alternative
  - IBM offers Symphony built on Open Office
    - <http://symphony.lotus.com>

# Editors

- Text Editors
  - Notepad Plus – strongly recommended
    - <http://notepad-plus.sourceforge.net/uk/site.htm>
  - Scite
    - <http://www.scintilla.org/SciTE.html> - somewhat harder to install but has its own virtues
- HTML
  - NVU and Kompozer – use Kompozer
  - <http://kompozer.net>

# Pictures and Graphics

- Most office suites including open office have reasonable tools.
- For digital pictures, Picasa from Google (free not open source) is highly recommended
- Bitmap Graphics – pictures, web graphics, and transformations thereof - **THE GIMP**
- Other packages
  - irfanview (free for noncommercial use)  
[www.irfanview.com](http://www.irfanview.com) - good viewer, limited editing
  - Most others are lite *come-on* versions of commercial software and not recommended

# GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Program)

- GIMP [www.gimp.org](http://www.gimp.org)
- photo retouching
- image composition
- image authoring
- many capabilities
- Can be just a simple paint program
- Photoshop on steroids but needs practice
- an expert quality photo retouching program
- an online batch processing system
- a mass production image renderer
- an image format converter

# PDFs

- ADOBE created the PDF as an open standard
- A PDF viewer is a MUST – Adobe's recent versions are getting fat but work well on all OS's except VISTA. Adobe 8 has a problem in VISTA SP1
- A number of good and cost effective commercial programs to ADOBE ACROBAT for manipulating PDFs
- PDFs are the RECOMMENDED file type to send

# Alternative PDF Viewers

- Foxit – free come-on for commercial editing software
  - [http://www.foxitsoftware.com/pdf/reader\\_2/down\\_read](http://www.foxitsoftware.com/pdf/reader_2/down_read)
  - Reader has limited annotation features
- Sumatra – use the version on Portable apps
  - Nice lite-weight open source software
- Docu-Track - [www.docu-track.com](http://www.docu-track.com) has a nice FREE reader that has some EDITING capabilities (annotations particularly)

# Creating PDFS

- ADOBE Acrobat is EXPENSIVE
- Several free web-based alternatives such as
  - Primo Online <http://www.primopdf.com/online.aspx>  
(great from public computers)
  - PDF online <http://www.pdfonline.com/>
- Free PDF printers (software installs as a logical printer) – result is a pdf
  - [www.primopdf.com](http://www.primopdf.com) - use free version
  - Dopdf - <http://www.dopdf.com/>
  - Bullzip– free PDF printer [www.bullzip.com](http://www.bullzip.com)
- OPEN OFFICE creates PDFS natively

# Editing PDFS

- PDFTK builder
  - <http://www.angusj.com/pdftkb/#pdftkbuilder>
  - Splits pdfs into single pages
  - Combines them
  - Adds passwords
- PDFX Viewer -freeware not OPEN SOURCE
  - Limited editing in free version
  - Decent viewer
  - Teaser for a commercial version
  - [http://www.docu-track.com/home/prod\\_user/pdfx\\_viewer/](http://www.docu-track.com/home/prod_user/pdfx_viewer/)

# The Wonders of Google

- Google offers free but not open source options for extending your windows experience
- Recommended packages include:
  - Picassa – best way to organize and edit your digital photos
  - Pack – combination software pack
  - Desktop search – Some prefer Copernic on XP
- Other Google Features
  - Specialized searches (can be wonderful)
  - Specialized databases (books, journal articles etc.) - wonderful

# Google DOCs

- Google DOCs – lots of interesting features for specialized uses
- Doc - Not completely compatible with Word but can create a file the Word can edit
- Spreadsheet – much more primitive but improving – useful to send some data if you are on the road or don't have something better
- Requires a gmail/google account
- Requires online access

# Other Free Web Things

- Google calender – text message yourself about birthdays etc.
- Google Sites – hard to find new product – build a simple web site
- Google Apps – packaging of the various Google services including Google Sites
- Freewebs.com – free web site – limited band width
- wetpaint.com – WIKI (text oriented) website creation

# Number Crunching

- R – for statistics and statistical charting
- [www.r-project.org](http://www.r-project.org)
- Seriously open source
- All the latest and greatest statistical techniques
- Not for the faint of math
- VERY VERY powerful
- Good for datasets with a modest numbers of observations (10K is not unreasonable if properly done).

# Privacy and Security on the Web

- Do private business only on your own computer or under supervised conditions
- Don't surf anywhere you would be ashamed of
- Always clear caches before leaving online banking
- NEVER provide information to requests received via EMAIL
- Be careful about responding to unsolicited emails.

# Security

- Unsolicited Emails are usually bad news
  - NEVER install patches or programs received from unsolicited emails
  - If you really want to visit a link in an email, PASTE THE LINK in your browser. DO NOT CLICK ON STRANGE LINKS.
  - Look at the underlying code of emails (View source) if you are NOT VERY VERY SURE.
- If you don't have up to date anti-virus you will be very sorry.
- Free software to speed up your computers is ALWAYS BAD