

Key Websites Every Business Owner Should Know

By Gene Marks

Updated April 2010

Pay close attention to that update date above...these things change. But as of this writing, here are a bunch of sites that, as a business owner, I bookmark, go to and talk about a lot. I found these places help me do things quicker and better. I hope you'll agree.

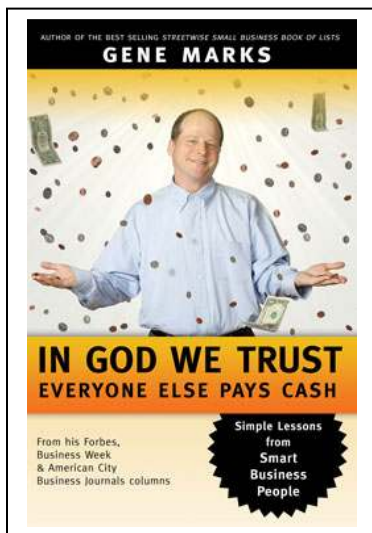
Accounting, Payroll, Management

FreshBooks.com - online time and billing software

Billingboss.com – online time and billing software

Surepayroll.com - payroll services online service

Findmyshift.com – online scheduling software



Associations and Communities

Asbdc-us.org - America's Small Business Development Centers – a great place for advice and free assistance

Marketing.org - Home of the Business Marketing Association

Score.org – government sponsored small business advisors and consultants

Social Networking and Communities

Smallbusinessonlinecommunity.com – another good small business community website sponsored by Bank of America

Intuit.com - Intuit Small Business Community, from the makers of Quickbooks. Tons of small business owners exchanging ideas and advice.

Gene's new book is available at
www.quickerbetterwiser.com

Linkedin.com – a professional networking site where everyone can see who's connected to who.

Jigsaw.com – another community like linkedin.com

Plaxo.com – yet another community like linkedin.com and plaxo.com

Twitter.com – popular way to blast out messages about your company's activities and to learn about others.

EONetwork.org - executive networking group

Vistage.com – executive networking group

ExecuLeaders.com – executive networking group

Tabli.com - The Alternative Board Of Directors

Buying

Adbrite.com – good place to buy web advertising

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Become.com – buy, compare and get reviews of thousands of products
Froogle.com – the place to search for anything sold on the internet – you can sort from lowest price to highest too.
Jellyfish.com – competes with become.com
Cafepress.com – inexpensive promotional items with no minimum orders
Craigslist.org – massively popular website to buy and sell goods and services
Dealdump.com – aggregates many online shopping sites and lists the best deals
Del.icio.us – very popular bookmarking site where everyone saves their favorite places to go online, including places to get great deals on good and services
Digg.com – competes directly with Del.icio.us. Same concept, different community
Itex.com – trading and bartering site for small businesses
Retailmenot.com – don't buy anything online until you first check if there's a coupon available

Communications

YouMail.com – free site that will redirect our cell phone voicemail store messages online and also send to you via email
Flaphone.com - Free online phone service where you can make calls from any computer
Freeconferencecall.com – free conference calling service
Grasshopper.com – inexpensive hosting of phone systems/outsourced provider of phone systems
HearMe.com – provides video and voice conferencing services
Letstalk.com – great place to compare cell phones and service plans
Rondee.com – free conference calling service
Skype.com – free online phone service
Talkster.com – free online phone service
Trillian.com – service to share all of your instant messaging accounts
Virtualpbx.com – intensive service to host your phone system
YouSendIt.com – great service to email large files
Trumpia.com – sends mass phone calls with only one call
Voiceshot.com - sends mass phone calls with only one call
Callingpost.com - sends mass phone calls with only one call
Inumbr.com – free, time-expiring phone number that's anonymous. People call it and calls get bounced to your real phone. Protects your identity.

CRM

Act.com – contact management software for small companies
CRM2day.com - CRM industry site for research
GoldMine.com – excellent customer relationship management for small companies
Insidecrm.com - CRM advice and news

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Marksgroup.net – Marks Group site for CRM help
Microsoft.com – search for Microsoft CRM and Outlook BCM
Zoho.com – hosted online service for CRM and other office apps
Salesforce.com – well known hosted CRM application

Direct Mail and Promotions

Efax.com – leading site for sending and receiving faxes
Faxzero.com – another site for sending and receiving faxes
Printplace.com – online printing company for brochures and mailers
VistaPrint.com – business cards
Mybrochuremaker.com – where you can create online brochures
Snailmailr.com – prints and mails a letter for you (with letterhead) for a buck



Want to know how your business can increase its profits this year? Schedule a visit with Gene. More info is at www.quickerbetterwiser.com/consulting.html

E-Mail Marketing

Constantcontact.com – leading site for sending mass emails
Feelbreeze.com – mass email sending site
JangoMail.com – mass email sending site

Google Tools (all free)

Desktop Search – will find any file or email on your desktop or service
Docs – online word processing and spreadsheets
GMail – online email service
Latitude – free service that turns your cell phone into a GPS device

Graphics and Design

Befunky.com - turns any photo into a cartoon

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Cartoonstock.com – big database of cartoons you can use in your mailings
Magmypic.com – insert a picture on a popular magazine cover
Simpsonizeme.com – turn your photo into a Simpsons character
Everystockphoto.com - free database of photos
Glasbergen.com - Thousands of cartoons and photos, free
Morguefile.com – Another popular database for free photos

Having Some Fun

Lastfm.com – zillions of free songs and stations
Liveleak.com – where to get the latest news feeds that don't make it to TV
Lala.com – zillions of albums that you can listen to for free
Theonion.com – hysterical news site
Ted.com – incredible lectures from really smart people on all subject matters

Legal

Docstoc.com – free legal forms and templates
Contracts.onecle.com - sample contracts and business forms
AllBusiness.com - forms, agreements, guides and advice
Freebusinessformsandtemplates.com – free legal forms and templates
Nolo.com – great site for legal advice and forms

Lists

Discount-lists.com – source for purchasing leads
Leadintelligence.com - source for purchasing leads
Rsateleservices.com - source for purchasing leads

On The Road

Airfarewatchdog.com - airfare comparison site
Kayak.com - airfare comparison site
Sidestep.com - airfare comparison site
Flytecomm.com - flight tracking site
Flightstats.com - flight tracking site
FBOweb.com - flight tracking site
Flightview.com - flight tracking site
Flyertalk.com - travel advice and reviews
Igougo.com – travel advice and reviews
VirtualTourist.com – travel advice and reviews

Gene's company, The Marks Group PC also sells **GoldMine, ACT, Microsoft CRM and QuickBooks**. Visit our website for free whitepapers, webinars and other information.

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TripAdvisor.com - travel advice and reviews
Snoozester.com – wakeup and reminder calls
Wakerupper.com - wakeup and reminder calls
Timeshareparadise.com – time share rental and sales
Vacationresellers.com - time share rental and sales
WiFinder.com – world’s largest hot spot finder

Outsourcing

Elance.com - Outsourcing site to find freelancers
Guru.com - Outsourcing site to find freelancers

Publications and Research

Alexa.com – find out where any site is ranked by popularity
Census.gov - Census Bureau Home Page
Ducttapemarketing.com - Small Business Marketing Ideas and Strategies
Firstresearch.com – industry intelligence site
SalesDog.com – good free newsletter for sales people
TinyURL.com – takes a long URL and shortens it

Remote Computing

Gotomypc.com – great service for connecting to our office while out of the office. Also has similar services for presentations and webinars
Logmein.com – similar to gotomypc.com
Glance.com – desktop sharing software for presentations and conferences
Crossloop.com – desktop sharing software for presentations and conferences

Technology

Avast.com – free and powerful antivirus tool
Orbitfiles.com – online storage site for large files
Pogoplug.com – shares a hard drive with everyone in your office
Printfriendly.com – print from anywhere

Video

AditAll.com – low cost service to help you create professional videos
Podcast.com – enables you to create and publish your own podcast, plus a vast library of podcasts for listening

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SBTV.com – Small business television site online features hundreds of small businesses (maybe even yours)

Utipu.com – Screen sharing software that will save as a video for others to watch

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About the author:



Gene Marks is a business owner, columnist, author and speaker.

Gene is the owner of The Marks Group, a ten person consulting firm that specializes in customer relationship, service and financial management tools such as **Quickbooks**, **GoldMine**, **Microsoft CRM** and **ACT!** for small and medium sized businesses.

Gene's business management columns appear monthly in Forbes.com and Businessweek.com and bi-weekly in over 25 American City Business Journals. He appears quarterly on MSNBC's Your Business and monthly on WFMZ-TV's Sunrise morning show. Gene also appears frequently on Fox Business, MSNBC and other local and national TV networks. He has been quoted in the New York Times, USA Today and other newspapers and magazine.

Gene is the author of five best-selling small business books, most recently *In God We Trust, Everyone Else Pays Cash – Simple Lessons From Smart Business Owners..* His other books include the *Streetwise Small Business Book of Lists*, *Outfoxing The Small Business Owner*, the *Small Business Desk Reference* and *The Idiot's Guide To Successful Outsourcing*.

Gene frequently presents his Quicker! Better! Wiser! keynotes and seminars to business owners and managers nationwide. He also visits companies around the county offering profit-making ideas.

More about Gene is on www.quickerbetterwiser.com and The Marks Group at www.marksgroup.net.