



5 Free Tools for Automating Your Way to a 7-Figure Business

Without exception, all of the most successful entrepreneurs we've worked with – those who we've seen build 7- and 8-figure businesses – are **masters at delegation**.

They know how to break down their business into its component parts, and then train a remote professional (or “**virtual assistant**”) to handle tasks on their behalf. This then frees up their time to focus on further growing their business — and saves them from being bogged down in the day-to-day work of customer service, lead gen, social media, data entry, and other such tasks.

Some of our highest performing clients have something else in common: they use various types of software/online tools designed to save them time, increase their efficiency, and help them scale.

Here are five of those tools that many of the highest-performing entrepreneurs we work with have told us that **they use to grow their companies!**

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Tool #1: Vocus

(<http://vocus.io>)

For simplifying and delegating inbox management.

Inbox management can devour your time. Whether it's managing customer service inquiries, interacting with new leads, or responding to a whole array of messages, most successful entrepreneurs delegate their day-to-day inbox management to a remote worker (or "virtual assistant").

But the trick to doing this successfully is using templates. Rather than having your remote worker "free write" emails, it's better for you to control the quality from the outset by pre-writing templates in response to the different types of emails you get. Then your remote worker simply selects the appropriate template that you've already pre-approved and pre-edited. This avoids written English mistakes, and also ensures that the kinds of responses they're providing are the exact responses which which you would want them to provide.

Vocus has a wealth of features, but the one most commonly used is the "snippet" feature, which allows you to easily create templated messages that can be inserted into any email. Now all that remains for you to do is teach your remote worker which emails you receive require which snippet. Easy.

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Tool #2: Streak

(<http://streak.com>)

For setting inbox reminders.

Ever feel like you're losing potential clients because you just lost track of them or forgot to follow up?

Streak is a free CRM for Gmail that allows you to track your contacts. It's one of the absolute best. But the feature that many of our highest performing clients have found most useful about it is that it allows you to set a reminder to follow up on specific email threads. Don't underestimate the power of this feature. Turning a lead into a client can often take 3, 5, or even 7 follow-up messages over the course of several months. Having a strong follow-up game is key!

So let's say your remote worker is using pre-written Vocus templates to manage your inbox. They can then set themselves a reminder on Streak to follow up within 1-2 days if no response is received. Once they send that follow-up, they would then set another Streak reminder for, say, 7 days in the future for another follow-up. And so on until the person responds (or until you decide not to follow up further).

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Tool #3: Buffer

(<https://buffer.com/>)

For managing your social media.

Social media is a major time suck for lots of entrepreneurs. In fact, crossing it off the list and putting someone else in charge can save up to 10 hours/week, a huge savings to channel into more important business activities. What is so useful about Buffer is that it's a centralized platform where you can post to all your social media profiles without having to log into them individually. You just link them up to Buffer, and then you can have someone on your team create content and even post it in advance for you to review.

What's nice about Buffer, too, is that you won't have to give anyone else access to your social media profiles in order for them to be able to post content. In other words, if you want to delegate your social media to a graphic designer, you can have that virtual assistant create and post the content for you via Buffer but without the security concern of having someone else actually have login access to the accounts themselves. What's more, Buffer has the best free plan we've seen among comparable services so you shouldn't ever need to pay.

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Tool #4: Slack

(<https://slack.com/>)

For better communication.

Managing your team can be a full time job in itself if you're not using the right tools. Organization is key, particularly as you scale. Avoiding having numerous communication platforms (Outlook, Gmail, Skype, text message, etc) is an important first step to limiting the chaos and better organizing your — and your team's — time. Slack is the communication platform that most of our highest performing clients use for this purpose. Free for most use-cases, create a team account on Slack and make sure your remote worker is signed up as well and knows how to use it. Then establish with them what kind of communication you need from them on Slack — whether it's a daily update of the tasks they've completed, or more regular messages throughout the day as situations arise or projects are finished.

All the remote professionals on iWorker are excellent (we accept only about 2% of those who apply) and are keen to be successful with their clients. But good communication with them is key. For the relationship to be a success with a remote worker, you'll want to spend some time with them at the outset training them in what you need, checking in with them as to how it's going, giving them gentle feedback, and establishing a communication system that works for both you and them. After a few initial Skype calls to get to know them and to train them in their tasks, Slack is a great way to manage ongoing day-to-day communication.

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Tool #5: Zapier

(<https://zapier.com/>)

For automation across apps.

Zapier is a crazy tool. You can link up a bunch of different apps with it in order to automate everyday tasks you would have otherwise had to spend time doing manually. For instance, you can make Zapier link up with Google Sheets or another app to automatically send out invoices. Or every time a form comes in from your website you can have it logged in your CRM using Zapier. There are so many options and so many integrated apps that many entrepreneurs we work with swear that Zapier is at the core of their success in growing their company because it's helped them automate numerous processes.



Bonus tip: The Free Website Guys

(<https://thefreewebsiteguys.com/>)

If you're a new entrepreneur, or just don't have a website yet, The Free Website Guys builds people websites for free. They're good, too. We used them for a website we needed built at one point and many of our clients have used them as well. If you want a complicated website with lots of bells and whistles, they're not the right fit. But if you just want a professional site for your brand that's simple and elegant and puts forward a good image to potential clients, they're an excellent option.

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