

Some "Free Stuff" Still Survives Online

By Jim Edwards

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Way back in the good old days of the Internet (mid to late 'Nineties), you could find all sorts of free "stuff" online.

Everything from website hosting and email, to software and long distance phone calls came free of charge.

Some of the free services survived, while others used their venture capital to pay for the mansions and yachts of their CEO's and then closed up shop within a few months - leaving investors high and dry.

A few free services still exist on the 'Net in today's more realistic dot-com economy and today rates as good time as any to take a closer look.

** Free Email **

Log on to HotMail.com and get yourself a free email account you can access from anywhere on the planet you can find an Internet connection.

HotMail.com and <http://mail.Yahoo.com> (with twice the free storage space of HotMail) rate as two of the most successful and long-lived no cost services left over from the "free" glory days of a few years ago.

** Free File Storage **

<http://briefcase.Yahoo.com> still ranks as the number 1 free remote file storage service on the Internet.

Store up to 30 MB of files remotely for access and sharing from any Internet connection anywhere in the world.

Instead of lugging floppy disks around between office, home, and laptop, you can store them online in your own password-protected briefcase on the Yahoo high-speed servers.

A great way to back up and share files worldwide.

**** Free Website Hosting ****

Tripod.com allows you to set up your own website absolutely free.

They support their service with third party banner ads at the top of every page you display.

A great way to get started, but any serious entrepreneur will eventually want to get their own low-cost hosting account costing as little as \$5 a month.

DotEasy.com presents an excellent alternative to Tripod.com if you want your own domain name and a year's hosting for only \$25 a year.

Other free hosting services include: GeoCities.com, gurlpages.com, and myfamily.com.

**** Free Software ****

Freeware and shareware, two ways software developers distribute their creations, either in a "try before you buy" mode, or as truly free software.

Many developers around the world create software for their own personal use but, lacking a huge buying market or the skills to sell the software, some of them just give it away or sell it for a nominal fee after you try it.

If you know where to look, you can get everything from graphics programs and website builders, to FTP programs and recipe books.

Log on to Download.com and Zdnet.com for two of the most popular places online to find software before paying full retail.

NOTE: make sure your anti-virus program is up-to-date and backup all your important files before installing any software.

Free stuff online will never disappear because, when

appropriate, it represents the perfect way to start and develop a relationship with customers. Unfortunately, the "boom" days of the truly free online "lunch" seem gone forever. Sigh.

Jim Edwards is a syndicated newspaper columnist and the co-author of an amazing new ebook that will teach you how to use free articles to quickly drive thousands of targeted visitors to your website or affiliate links...

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