Best cloud services for small businesses

Originalartikel

Backup

<html> <p class=„speakableTextP1">When it comes to cloud services and software-as-a-service (SaaS), we're all familiar with the usual cloud providers. But for small businesses and larger enterprises, there's a huge world of opportunity and available resources beyond those best-known cloud storage and cloud computing services: Google, Dropbox, Salesforce, Amazon and Microsoft. </p><p class=„speakableTextP2">In this guide to services for business, we're looking at 24 incredibly valuable services that solve real-world business problems. A few of you may have heard about before. Many may be new to you. All are capable of providing nearly instant benefit – without you having to make any infrastructure investment whatsoever.</p><p>With that, let's get started with our first cloud-based service… </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode"></figure><h3>1. Approval Donkey</h3><p>Cloud-based approval workflows</p>
Free version: Up to three workflows
Plus program: $13 per month
<p>How many times has a project come to a screaming halt, simply because the next approval in the chain never happened? </p><p>Often, these bottlenecks aren't because a higher-up didn't actually want the project to go through, but simply never got around to signing off. The approval email might have gotten lost or, if you're still on paper approvals, buried in a huge inbox mound. </p><p>Approval Donkey (which has our nomination for best cloud-based service name ever) automates this process. It can integrate with hundreds of other applications using Zapier (see below) and provides a centralized interface. You can set up certain approval workflow patterns, which move the approval along a pre-defined chain. You can also track the status of any approval and see if there are any bottlenecks. </p><p>If you're dealing with accounting and finance approval flows, stakeholder approval flows or operations and administration approval flows, give Approval Donkey a try. There's a free version that allows for up to three workflows, and a Plus program at $13 a month. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode"></figure><h3>2. Asana</h3><p>Work manager application </p>
Free version: Up to 15 members, limited features
<strong>Paid version: $9.99 per month</str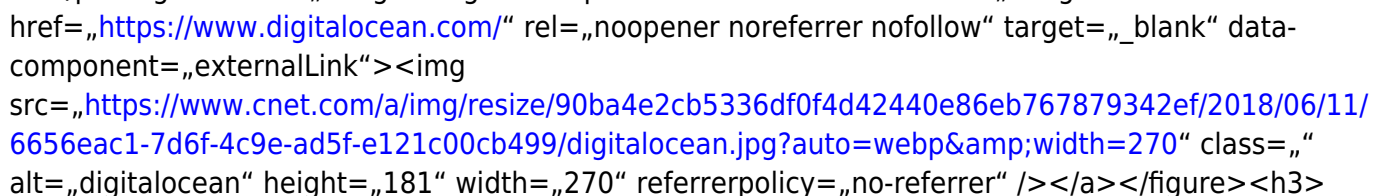ong>
<p>Imagine if your favorite to-do manager and <a href=„http://slack.com/" rel=„noopener noreferrer nofollow" target=„_blank" data-

component=„externalLink">Slack got together and had kids. That's Asana. Asana is a project management app that organizes projects across teams. It manages sets of tasks across people and groups and allows for connected conversations, reporting and tracking. </p><p>What makes Asana stand out is that all of the project-related work is transparent to the team members, visible, and easily accessible. If you've been managing projects through a pile of spreadsheets or emailing attachments to everyone, Asana will be like a breath of fresh air. All your project's documents can also be embedded with the project, for everyone to work on and collaborate together. </p><p>Asana has a free version for up to 15 members, but it has limited features. If you want to expand beyond 15 people to large teams, SSO, custom fields, specialty dashboards, and the rest of the project management kitchen sink, Asana runs $9.99 a month. There's also an enterprise version if you need to go really big. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode"></figure><h3> 3. Airtable</h3><p>Mix of cloud-based spreadsheet and database </p>
Free version: Manage up to 1,200 elements, limited features
Paid version: $10 per month
<p>Airtable is an interesting product. It's billed as part spreadsheet and part database, but it's really a flexible information manager that can look a bit like Trello, a bit like Google Docs, and a bit like a structured Evernote. </p><p>Airtable allows you to store information, structure it, share it among collaborators, and work on it in a variety of forms. The key is that Airtable comes with a wide range of templates, so you can structure your data to look like an inventory, a Kanban chart, a calendar, a catalog or whatever fits your project. </p><p>If Asana helps you manage the stages of your project and the inter-team communication, Airtable helps you manage the stuff that your project is made up of. There's a free version that lets you manage up to 1,200 elements and store up to 2GB of data, along with two weeks of revision tracking. Move up to $10 per month and you get more data, more items and six months of revision tracking, along with support. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode"></figure><h3> 4. Backblaze</h3><p>Easy and less expensive cloud storage </p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: $5 per machine every month
<p><a href=„http://backblaze.com/" target=„_blank" rel=„noopener noreferrer nofollow" data-

component=„externalLink">Backblaze is trying to straddle two aspects of the cloud storage market: End-user backups and object-based cloud storage. </p><p>In the end-user backup market, they're competing with the likes of Carbonite and CrashPlan by providing a very simple-to-set-up backup mechanism for end-user machines. Let's be clear: This isn't cloud sync like Dropbox, Google Drive or OneDrive. You're not mirroring portions of your cloud storage on your local machine. Instead, Backblaze offers a set-it-and-forget-it backup system that keeps copies of your local data (including some system files) in the cloud. </p><p>For end-users, BackBlaze is $5 per machine every month. You can backup any drive inside the machine, as well as any drive connected via a USB connection. This won't back up your personal NAS boxes, but it's still pretty generous. </p><p>Backblaze also competes against object-based cloud storage like that offered by Amazon S3 and Azure. Backblaze's service is called B2. Like other object-based cloud storage providers, you're going to pay both a monthly cloud storage fee, plus a download fee for any data you want back. Backblaze's differentiation is that it's generally less expensive than the big guys, yet still offers a rich API and some nice integrations, including into the Synology NAS boxes we reviewed previously. </p><p>There's one other thing to like about Backblaze: Its data center approach. It regularly reports on hard drive reliability and even the challenges of running a data center. In a world where most cloud storage providers are opaque, Backblaze's transparency is a breath of fresh air. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode"><a class=„imageContainer"

href=„https://cloudphone.pxf.io/c/159047/430481/5613" rel=„noopener noreferrer nofollow" target=„_blank" data-component=„externalLink"></figure><h3>5. Cloudphone</h3><p>Virtual PBX</p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: Starts at $12 per month for one local number <p>When my first small business started to grow into offices, we needed a phone system. This was back in the days when landlines were common. We needed a way for calls to come into a central location and for them to be routed to individual extensions. </p><p>I wound up paying way more than I wanted for an AT&T Spirit system, which was the smallest PBX-like system I could find that could handle enough employees. It required wiring, physical phones, a central box, and so much more. It was a hassle. </p><p>Today, of course, we have the cloud. We don't need physical boxes or phones. We don't even need landlines. But we still need to be able to route calls, have automated attendant services, business voice mail, conference calling and business phone numbers (because no one wants to give out a personal number to every customer). </p><p>Enter Cloud Phone. It's like having a fully functional corporate PBX without all the hassle. It turns individual smartphones into business phones, allowing your employees to work anywhere and still be on the corporate phone system. </p><p>There's no free plan, but the company has a 30-day money-back guarantee. The base plan starts at $12 per month for one local number and three extensions, and goes up to $49 per month for five local numbers and unlimited extensions. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode"></figure><h3>6. Cloudways</h3><p>Managed IaaS with hand-holding </p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: Starts at $10 per month
<p>Cloudways is cool in a way only an over-worked geek or overwhelmed web developer would understand. To fully grok this service, we need to chunk up a bit

and look at infrastructure as a service. Elsewhere in this guide, we profiled Digital Ocean, a service that provides virtual cloud servers nearly instantly. We discussed how Digital Ocean makes it easier to deploy servers than Amazon's AWS, which is complex and sometimes arcane. </p><p>The problem with Digital Ocean (and don't get me wrong, we like them a lot) is that their support stops at the OS install. They'll help you set up the virtual metal of their servers, and they provide a lot of good documentation for configuring the apps, but if you're stuck on how to perform a Linux security update or configure the apps that run on their servers, you're on your own. </p><p>That's where Cloudways comes in. Cloudways actually runs on top of AWS and Digital Ocean (and a bunch of other IaaS platforms as well). When you buy infrastructure on Cloudways, you can specify the underlying infrastructure provider. They'll automatically do the configuration, set up your servers, and customize (usually, with a single click) your applications on those servers. Plus, they offer actual humans 24-7-365 that can provide you with support. </p><p>With an entry price of $10/month for 1GB virtual RAM, one virtual core, and 1TB of storage, Cloudways is just about twice the price of Digital Ocean. But if having someone available on the other end of a chat window at 3AM who can help you fix your security problems or set up automated deployment makes you feel warm and fuzzy, the few extra bucks may well be worth it. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3>7. Digital Ocean</h3><p>Alternative to AWS </p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: Starts at $5 per month
<p>Digital Ocean provides IaaS (infrastructure as a service) services. You can create virtual machines in the cloud, load them up with resources, and operate them as if they were physical servers. In addition to cloud-based virtual machines, Digital Ocean recently added cloud-based object storage. </p><p>What I like about Digital Ocean over Amazon's AWS is the simplicity. You create droplets (Digital Ocean's term for virtual machines), provision them with RAM and processing power, decide what region you want them to run, and you're up. You can preload the VMs with a relatively wide range of configurations, from WordPress to Ubuntu, a prebuilt LAMP (Linux/Apache/MySQL/PHP) stack, an e-commerce stack and more. </p><p>Don't get me wrong. You still need some solid geek skills. Once you start configuring your own virtual Linux environment, you're on your own for the Linux part of the project. But setting up the actual virtual machine droplets and performing IaaS administration is a breeze. </p><p>Increasing RAM footprint is pretty much a button-press away. You can easily scale up and down RAM, but once you increase your virtual disk storage, you can't go back without migrating your configuration to another droplet. </p><p>Standard droplets and spaces start at $5 per month. Depending on what kind of resource load you need, that can go up (and up). Digital Ocean is pretty scalable. I wouldn't want to run Netflix

or Hulu on it, but for most good-size projects, Digital Ocean is definitely a good IaaS solution. </p><p>Read also: Cloud storage becomes the de facto data lake | What's the best cloud storage for you? | Eliminating storage failures in the cloud | TechRepublic: Cloud storage confusion leading to major security issues </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3> 8. Drip </h3><p>Marketing automation </p> Free version: For less than 100 subscribers Paid version: Starts at $43 per month for up to 2,500 subscribers <p>Drip bills itself as „the CRM Salesforce didn't build,“ but that's both confusing and misleading. Drip isn't a Salesforce-style CRM at all. Instead, it's a marketing automation tool that automates customer interactions, mostly via email. Think of it as a list manager on steroids. </p><p>Drip takes its name from the practice of drip marketing. The idea of this is that a pre-written set of messages are sent out to customers or prospects over a period of time. One message might welcome a prospect to a mailing list. Another might introduce one or two products. Another might provide an „exclusive discount,“ and so on. </p><p>The Drip service integrates with many different shopping carts and lead capture tools. Once a customer's contact is brought into Drip, it can be subject to any number of campaigns, which are drip mailings sent out over time. This is a very powerful way to maintain customer engagement and to do so without direct labor on the part of individual sales folks or marketers. </p><p>If you have less than 100 subscribers, Drip is free. It's $43 per month for up to 2,500 subscribers. Drip's prices go up as you add subscribers. For that rate, you can have an unlimited number of „sends,“ or the messages you send out. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3> 9. Help Scout </h3><p>Help desk software </p> Free version:

N/A
Paid version: Base $10-a-month program per support provide, requires at least three provider licenses
<p>Help Scout helps your small business manage support interactions with customers. While the core of Help Scout is a shared email support environment, Help Scout has integrations that allow it to manage incoming voice calls, voice mail, and more. </p><p>Each customer interaction gets a ticket. Help Scout can route customer requests to individual agents, as well as prevent collisions (when more than one agent tries to manage a ticket). The product has a support chat component as well as a centralized knowledge base, precanned replies, customer satisfaction ratings, and automated workflows. </p><p>We like Help Scout a lot because it's easy to set up, but it can be extended in so many ways, whether that's integrating into Salesforce, your e-commerce system, or just your website. </p><p>There's a base $10-a-month program per support provider, but you need to purchase at least three provider licenses. Sadly, individual developers managing their own support need not apply. If you have a greater number of support providers, there are more advanced programs that add workflow, add providers and add inboxes. The company does offer a free 15-day trial. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3> 10. Hootsuite</h3><p>Social media management </p>
Free version: Up to three social profiles
Paid version: Starts at $29 per month for 10 profiles
<p>Despite (or, perhaps, because of) its odd mix of what-I-ate-for-breakfast reports, random news, Presidential tweets, and cat pictures, social media has become an incredibly powerful force for corporate communications. </p><p>The problem for marketing managers is that the signal-to-noise ratio favors the noise. Without help, it's almost impossible to sift through all the chaos across services, ranging from Twitter to Facebook to YouTube to Instagram (and others), to pick out what's important to your company. </p><p>That's where Hootsuite comes in. Hootsuite allows you to schedule and prepare corporate messaging across many popular social networks, listen for requests from consumers and prospects, watch for key trends, and keep up with the constant flow. We particularly like the browser extension that allows you to immediately grab the article you're currently reading and share it to your audience or queue it for later transmission. </p><p>There's a free plan for monitoring up to three social profiles. The price then goes up, starting at $29 per month for 10 profiles and one user all the way up to enterprise levels, where an entire marketing team can manage tons of social profiles across different departments or groups. </p><p>Let's be clear about one thing: If you're not doing social listening, you're putting your company at risk. You need a social media management tool like Hootsuite (or one of its competitors, like Buffer), because that's where your customers are at all times. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“><img src=„https://www.cnet.com/a/img/resize/c3bcbdffd65bf72d887d93b128066cd455cd0ca1/2018/06/12/57b791ad-5ba1-4123-bb01-340f0272540e/hubspot.jpg?auto=webp&width=270“ class=„“

alt=„hubspot" height=„181" width=„270" referrerpolicy=„no-referrer" /></figure><h3> 11. HubSpot </h3><p>Inbound marketing </p>
Free version: Base plan
Paid version: Goes up as you add services
<p>Most of us are familiar with the concept of outbound marketing. That's the practice of sending mailings, making phone calls, and otherwise putting ourselves in front of customers. It's what you'd consider traditional marcom. </p><p>Inbound marketing is a buzzword for what is, essentially, the opposite. It's creating an environment where you attract interactions to you. Inbound marketing can be used to drive all the content creation, social media, SEO optimization, mail list subscription campaigns, and other activities where customers self-select their interest in your products. </p><p>HubSpot manages this process. It does a bunch of the things other services in this directory perform (like social media monitoring, mail list management, landing pages, SEO), but it integrates it all together into one platform. Rather than logging into a bunch of different services that probably won't share data, you can consolidate it all in HubSpot. </p><p>HubSpot isn't for everyone. Pricing is free for a base plan, but it quickly goes up as you add services. But if you're running a marketing-oriented company and you want a single, central solution to manage most of the process, HubSpot may be ideal for you. </p><h3> </h3><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode"></figure><h3> 12. Jira</h3><p>Beyond bug and issue tracking </p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: Starts at $10 per month for up to 10 users
<p>Jira is a tool for software development teams. That doesn't mean you need to be running a software company to benefit from Jira. Any organization that has software projects – whether for internal use or for market – can benefit from the tools Jira provides. </p><p>Jira is known for being a bug- and issue-tracker. It allows you to create a database of bugs and development issues, track how they're being handled, and follow up on fixes and solutions. </p><p>But Jira adds a number of agile team coordination tools, including scrum and kanban boards. While the boards look similar, Jira's implementation of scrum focuses on schedules and sprints, while its kanban implementation focuses on ongoing improvement. The Jira scrum boards also provide for management and roles. </p><p>If you're thinking Jira's scrum and kanban boards look a lot like Trello, you'd be right. Jira is owned by Atlassian, which bought Trello in 2020 for $425 million. That's a heck of a lot of money for a virtual post-it note board, but once you start looking at agile development, the synergies become obvious. </p><p>Beyond organizing agile development, Jira also provides for a wide range of powerful reporting oriented at the agile development process. This allows teams of developers to work together while also managing workflow, production velocity, and quality. </p><p>Jira offers a free seven-day trial, and then it's $10 per month for up to 10 users. If you have more than 10 users, the price is $7 per month for every user. There's also an enterprise solution, so if your small team grows big, Jira can grow with you. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode"><img

src=„https://www.cnet.com/a/img/resize/8f0c89f66b2538633bf9eafeda1a5fd391c332b4/2018/07/02/f1dc498e-b2a2-405b-a97d-49b318fcfd1b/12.jpg?auto=webp&width=270“ class=„“ alt=„12“ height=„181“ width=„270“ referrerpolicy=„no-referrer“ /></figure><h3> 13. MailChimp</h3><p>Mailing list management </p>
Free version: Up to 2,000 subscribers and a 12,000 emails
Paid version: Pricing goes up, depending on the number of subscribers and services used
<p>If you can have an approval donkey, you might as well have a mail chimpanzee. MailChimp is a mailing list management service that, like Drip and HubSpot, does basic marketing automation via email. </p><p>What we like about MailChimp is that its very careful about list management, has a great management dashboard, and excellent integrations with tools like shopping carts and blogging systems. The company also provides sign-up templates and other tools that allow you to easily integrate mailing list capture into your website. </p><p>Recently, MailChimp added display ad retargeting to its offerings. This allows you to display ads in Google's advertising network automatically. The idea is that if someone visits your site, they may get distracted. But as they surf other sites, they'll see Google ads for your products and services. By doing this automatically as part of MailChimp's automation process, you don't need to schedule or run ads. Just pay Google for the clicks as they come in. </p><p>MailChimp provides a free plan for up to 2,000 subscribers and a generous 12,000 emails a month. After that, pricing goes up, depending on the number of subscribers you maintain and the services you use. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3> 14. Shopify </h3><p>Turn-key ecommerce </p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: Starts at $9 per month for lite version
<p>There are a ton of e-commerce and web-hosting cloud providers, but we chose to spotlight Shopify because it's about as complete an e-commerce experience as you're likely to find. </p><p>Not only will Shopify set up an online store for you, the company offers mobile apps and two variations of „chip-and-swipe“ readers for use in physical point-of-sale retail environments. The company has a full cash register option as well. Add in integrations with Pinterest, Facebook selling, and Amazon, and you have an end-to-end selling system that gives you a lot of choice in setting up both (or either) your online store or physical selling environment. </p><p>We like how Shopify comes with a bunch of nice templates, and for those of you running online shops, there are tight shipping integrations with DHL, UPS and the USPS. </p><p>Shopify offers a 14-day free trial, a $9 per month lite version, and then it starts at $29 per month for a basic plan that provides a whole host of services. There are transaction fees for credit card processing, but they're in line with most other services. </p><h3> </h3><h3> </h3><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“><img

src=„https://www.cnet.com/a/img/resize/761f72ad069a698ecd0c13071b4b97ed959e9229/2018/07/0
2/014af8bb-1876-479c-9651-3d76a8a6c105/14.jpg?auto=webp&width=270“ class=„“ alt=„14“
height=„181“ width=„270“ referrerpolicy=„no-referrer“ /></figure><h3>
15. <a href=„https://www.surveymonkey.com/“ target=„_blank“
rel=„noopener noreferrer nofollow“ data-
component=„externalLink“>SurveyMonkey</h3><p>Survey building and
tracking </p>
Free version: Unlimited surveys with up to 10
questions and 100 responses
Paid version: Services start at $34 per
month and go up depending on how many respondents and how many team
members
<p>Earlier, we showed you MailChimp. Now, we're looking
at <a href=„https://www.surveymonkey.com/“ target=„_blank“ rel=„noopener noreferrer
nofollow“ data-component=„externalLink“>SurveyMonkey. For the record, <a
href=„http://knowledgenuts.com/2013/11/04/chimpanzees-are-not-monkeys/“ rel=„noopener
noreferrer nofollow“ target=„_blank“ data-component=„externalLink“>chimps are not monkeys.
Chimpanzees are actually members of the great ape family, have longer life spans, and are greater
tool users. That said, SurveyMonkey is a great tool for researching opinions and determining
sentiment. </p><p>As you might have guessed, SurveyMonkey lets you design and field surveys
online. Surveys can be simple, or have multiple stages based on the information you're trying to
gather. What we particularly like about SurveyMonkey is the many different types of questions and
formats you can include in your survey. You can even turn a survey into a quiz. </p><p>Additionally,
SurveyMonkey supports robust report and analysis tools, allowing you to explore the data you've
gathered in a variety of ways – including real-time results. </p><p>Of particular note is an add-on
service offered by SurveyMoney, where it'll find folks to fill out your surveys. So, if you need to gather
data and you don't have an available audience, SurveyMonkey can help you get one. That alone can
be a huge boon for certain projects. </p><p>The company offers a generous free version that allows
unlimited surveys with up to 10 questions and a hundred responses. Beyond that, services start at
$34 per month and go up depending on how many respondents and how many team members you
have. The company also offers enterprise services, particularly for measuring customer satisfaction.
</p><h3> </h3><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“><a
class=„imageContainer“ href=„https://teachable.com/“ rel=„noopener noreferrer nofollow“
target=„_blank“ data-component=„externalLink“><img
src=„https://www.cnet.com/a/img/resize/f13dcc80629f96dd939c59dd1b21025de3d87a38/2018/07/03
/40990f01-f380-42a6-bf2c-844d9efef59e/15.jpg?auto=webp&width=270“ class=„“ alt=„15“
height=„181“ width=„270“ referrerpolicy=„no-referrer“ /></figure><h3>
16. <a href=„https://teachable.com/“ target=„_blank“ rel=„noopener
noreferrer nofollow“ data-
component=„externalLink“>Teachable</h3><p>Cloud-based learning
management system </p>
Free version:
N/A
Paid version: Starts at $39 per month for a basic
plan
<p>Online learning is a fast-growing field. Not only have traditional
universities embraced online learning as a way to extend their reach, many companies and trainers
have found they can reach a wider audience and bring their knowledge to more people. </p><p>The
appeal is strong to learners as well. Folks are busy and need to fit in their learning process around
work and life responsibilities. Online learning allows students to learn where and when they want, at
whatever pace works for them. </p><p><a href=„https://teachable.com/“ target=„_blank“
rel=„noopener noreferrer nofollow“ data-component=„externalLink“>Teachable helps
create online courses. It combines the necessary learning management features of course
preparation, grading, and reporting with the business necessities of a great landing page and
payment processing. In addition, Teachable allows you to create quizzes and group class discussions.

It also provides integrations with conferencing and video collaboration software. </p><p>Teachable starts at $39 per month for a basic plan. Unfortunately, the company does keep a full 5 percent of fees paid. If you want to avoid these transaction fees, you'll need to upgrade to the $99 per month professional plan, which also adds additional services and priority support. </p><h3></h3><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3> 17. Twilio </h3><p>Add voice services and SMS messages to cloud apps </p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: Pricing is pay-as-you-go
<p>Twilio is another service aimed mostly at software developers. Twilio provides a series of communications APIs (applications programming interfaces) that developers can use in their applications. These include inbound and outbound SMS messaging, voice and chat. </p><p>What makes Twilio particularly interesting is that the company provides all the communications infrastructure to back-end the communications services. This means that if you want to add SMS messaging into your app, all you need to do is add the code. There's no need to negotiate with carriers, build out infrastructure, or anything else. Just code and go. The same applies for voice services, chat, video conferencing, screen sharing, and more. </p><p>Pricing is pay as you go, which means you can pay a predetermined fee based on the number of messages, number of calls, etc. There is a free layer for basic coding, but the company watermarks the interactions. That allows you to get a feel for how the code will work without paying, but you'll definitely need to upgrade to a paying account before customers encounter your apps. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3> 18. Unbounce</h3><p>Drag-and-drop landing pages </p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: Entry-level program is $79 per month, pricing goes up for more features and landing pages
<p>In the world of web analytics, the bounce rate is a measure of how many visitors do a quick hit and split on a webpage. This happens often as a result of a search. A user finds a result in a search that seems interesting and clicks into the site – only to find that the destination site doesn't have what he or she was hoping to find. That user then leaves, bouncing on out. </p><p>Unbounce is a service that helps you build landing pages that… wait for it… bounce less. Hence the name Unbounce. The service has a webpage builder with a large array of very highly customizable templates. You can drag and drop elements to create the destination page that best meets your needs. </p><p>Unbounce also allows you to A/B test your pages, so you can experiment with different approaches and see which format works better. You can

also use tools for lead capture, capture on scroll and more. You can test and customize your pages, so they work well on mobile devices as well as computer screens. </p><p>Unbounce offers a 30-day free trial. After that, the entry-level program is $79 per month, which gets you 75 published landing pages. Prices go up, but so do the features and number of landing pages. The company also offers an agency program, so if you build pages for your clients, you'll have spe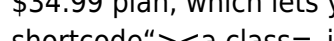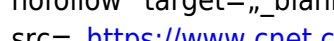cial tools to help you manage those projects. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3>19. VirtualPBX </h3><p>A virtual PBX service for the mobile age </p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: $12.99/month for up to 1,000 US minutes
<p>Earlier, we talked about CloudPhone and called it a virtual PBX. Now, we're looking at service called VirtualPBX. So, what makes it different from CloudPhone? </p><p>From my perspective, the most interesting and forward-thinking aspect of VirtualPBX is how it integrates smartphones into the solution. For every other PBX-like solution I've seen, some sort of fiddly fussing has to be done on the part of the users to connect into the PBX. Either a special app has to be launched, or numbers forward to other numbers, or... well, the idea is that it's an aftermarket solution not built into the phone. </p><p>But what VirtualPBX does is issue you phones as if they were the carrier. You can get Apple and Google phones, so you're not sacrificing performance. But your phone number is part of the PBX, outgoing calls are part of the PBX, and your phone is completely integrated into the PBX system. Yes, you can also have landline phones as well, but we know that we're all so much more mobile-centric these days. </p><p>This approach also allows you some very advanced capabilities if you want it. VirtualPBX has the ability to integrate web hooks with more than 750 other applications, including click-to-call from SalesForce - on your mobile device! </p><p>Other features we like is the ability to make calls using nothing but your browser, international numbers and the ability to send and receive faxes. </p><p>There's no free plan, but there is a 14-day free trial. Starting plans are $12.99/month for up to 1,000 US minutes, with two local or toll-free numbers. If you don't want to count minutes at all, go for the $34.99 plan, which lets you talk as long as you want. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“><img src=„https://www.cnet.com/a/img/resize/eb2072d6c502f681e73a657eec41ad62a2e4f275/2018/07/03/2789b902-08c8-435e-9bc7-7e197b7d7c45/18.jpg?auto=webp&width=270“ class=„“ alt=„18“

height=„181" width=„270" referrerpolicy=„no-referrer" /></figure><h3>20. WuFoo</h3><p>Online form generator and database </p>
Free version: Up to 5 forms and 100 form entries
Paid version: Base price of $19 per month, pricing goes up with more forms and features
<p>If there is any category of SaaS service that has an almost unending number of similar service providers, its online forms. You can even build very powerful forms right in Google's apps. That said, we chose to spotlight forms-builder WuFoo pretty much (OK, mostly) because of its name. It's whimsical, and who doesn't need a bit of whimsy these days? </p><p>Actually, we really like that WuFoo goes beyond traditional form-filling by allowing you to design forms that upload files. That way, you can build out a form that captures more than just text. You can build a form that captures images, PDFs, or other files as well. </p><p>Another feature we like is that WuFoo integrates with many other web services, ranging from CRMs to project management services. This allows you to extend your existing applications with custom forms and have the mash-up work well together. WuFoo forms can also be integrated with payment processing services, so you can create forms that result in transactions. </p><p>WuFoo is free for up to 5 forms and 100 form entries. If you want the file upload feature or other integrations, you'll need to pay the base price of $19 per month. Pricing goes up as you add more forms and more features. You can start accepting payments with their $39-per-month plan. WuFoo is owned by SurveyMonkey, the survey service we spotlighted earlier in this guide. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode"></figure><h3> 21. Xero </h3><p>Accounting alternative to QuickBooks </p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: Starts at $9 per month
<p>If there's one thing you never want to see in your banking software, it's a zero (or negative) balance. On the other hand, if you're looking for accounting software, you might want to consider Xero. It's pronounced the same, but has an X. </p><p>Xero is often viewed head-to-head against QuickBooks Online. In reviews, both are considered very strong competitors. QuickBooks tends to have slightly better integrations and features for the US domestic market, while Xero is particularly strong in the UK, New Zealand and Australia. </p><p>The differences between these products is subtle. If you're building a larger business, you may find yourself drawn to the wide range of features and automation capabilities of Xero. If you want a more straightforward entry-level tool, you might prefer QuickBooks. </p><p>Xero isn't the only competitor to QuickBooks. There's also FreshBooks and ZohoBooks, along with a range of free accounting services like Wave and ZipBooks,

which make their money off your transactions and add-on services. </p><p>Xero has a 30-day free trial. The company's starter plan is $9 per month for just a few invoices, transactions and bills. In practice, you're probably not going to be able to get much value out of the service until you start using their $30-per-month plan. There are also premium plans available, which allow for multiple currencies and teams of users. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3> 22. Zapier </h3><p>Inter-application automation system for cloud apps </p>
Free version: Simple two-step Zaps
Paid version: $20 per month
<p>If you've ever tried to automate smart home devices like light bulbs, you may be familiar with a service called IFTTT, which stands for „If This Then That.“ IFTTT connects web applications. So, if Weather Underground indicates rain, then set the living room Hue lights to blue. If the weather is going to be sunny, then set them to yellow. </p><p>The idea is the output of one web application triggers the behavior of another. Zapier takes that to a whole new level, allowing you to link more than just one input and one output, but entire sequences of behaviors across many different sites. These sequences are called Zaps. </p><p>You can, for example, create a Zap that monitors Twitter, and based on certain phrases, triggers a new help log in Help Scout while also posting a note

on Slack. Or, you could create a Zap that watches Shopify, and when a new sale occurs, records the customer information in MailChimp and sends a text via Twilio. </p><p>Zapier is incredibly powerful. While it involves creating workflows, real programming skill isn't required. As such, line-of-business managers can use Zapier to create mashups quickly. While IT can certainly get involved, you're looking at mashup apps that take minutes or hours to create, not weeks or months. </p><p>Think of Zapier as the connective glue that ties together almost all the other web services highlighted in this guide. If you want to make some simple two-step Zaps, that's free. There is a 14-day trial for Zaps with more steps. After that, it's $20 per month. There's also a team-based service that allows for many users and unified billing. That's priced higher. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3>23. Zoho One</h3><p>Almost everything (and more) that G Suite does, without the Google </p>
Free version: N/A
Paid version: $30 per month for every user annually or $35 per month for every user if you pay month-by-month
<p>At its core, Zoho One has a web office offering, comparable with G Suite or Office Online. But there's more. Zoho One is actually 40 different web apps, along with companion mobile apps. </p><p>There's a full-featured CRM application, a help desk application, a complete accounting application, a survey system, a conferencing and chat system, an e-commerce system, an HR management system and on and on and on. </p><p>What's more impressive is that these aren't little mini-apps. Each application is a fully powered solution, the sort of thing a web startup would create and would be its entire business. Zoho has more than 40 of these – and they're all very good and very complete. </p><p>There's a 30-day free trial. After that, all the apps, together in a bundle, are $30 per month for every user if you pay annually, and $35 per month for every user if you pay month-by-month. </p><figure class=„image image-small pull-left shortcode“></figure><h3>24. Zoom</h3><p>Video conferencing alternative to Skype, GoToMeeting and Hangouts </p>
Free version: Free for up to 100 participants
Paid version: Basic program is $14.99 per month or $149 for a year
<p>Zoom is a video conferencing and webinar alternative to <a href=„http://skype.com/“ rel=„noopener noreferrer nofollow“

target=„_blank" data-component=„externalLink">Skype, GoToMeeting and Hangouts. While it offers many of the same features as the market leaders, in my experience, Zoom has been a more solid application than Skype, less expensive than GoToMeeting, and has better in-the-video-conference management tools than Hangouts. </p><p>It's also easier for participants to join meetings. Unlike either Skype or Hangouts, your participants don't need to register and create an account. All they need to do is have the web URL provided for the meeting. Click it, install a little helper app, and go. </p><p>That means you're no longer stuck just before a meeting explaining to the one manager without a Gmail account how to set up a full account, just to be able to join a meeting. </p><p>Zoom is free for up to 100 participants – as long as your meeting is less than 40 minutes. If you want your meetings to run longer and want to add cloud-based recording, scheduling, and some administration features, the basic program is $14.99 per month or $149 for a year. There's a slightly more expensive program that allows you to use your own branding (rather than that of Zoom). </p><p>Zoom also offers a webinar management system that handles registrations and promotions to create virtual, live events. That starts at $54 per month and scales to enterprise level, depending on your needs. </p><h3> Build your own cloud service with InMotion Hosting </h3><p>In this guide, we've spotlighted 24 cloud-based services that can take your business to the next level. But what if you want to create your own cloud-based service? Then you need a hosting provider that can scale with you. </p><p>InMotion is the top-rated, 5-out-of-5 hosting provider in

our Best Web Hosting Providers for 2018 directory. They impressed us with its wide range of services, hands-on site migration assistance, and all-SSD infrastructure. </p><p>The company also offers managed hosting (where it does a lot of the work for you), virtual private servers, and dedicated server hosting. If you want to build a web application that requires its own data center, but you don't want to build (or pay for) the data center, then InMotion is a great option. </p><p>Let's be clear, though: You don't have to start big. InMotion's basic plan starts at $3.49 per month. It also offers 24-7 support, so you can start small and just grow and grow and grow, without having to find another hosting or infrastructure solution. </p><h3> Wrapping it all up </h3><p>In this guide, I've shown you 24 lesser-known web services that can take your business to new heights instantly. This goes to the core of the cloud. </p><p>When I started my first online company, it took months of infrastructure development. We had to run lines, order gear, build servers, install everything, and provision everything. It was expensive, because we had to buy enough to accommodate what we thought would be our peak demand. </p><p>If you couldn't build the infrastructure and get the dedicated internet cables run to your building, you just couldn't be in business. </p><p>Today, all it takes for your small business is a credit card number. No matter what sort of solution you want, just go to the service provider's website, create an account, fill out a few forms, and you can be up and running. All the heavy lifting (sometimes quite literally) is done for you. </p><p>With the services we've spotlighted here, you can focus on your business operations and let each of these companies do what they do best: Provide top-notch web applications that help you find, win, and keep customers. </p><p>Read more:</p><p>Which Cloud storage service is right for you</p> </html>

From:
https://schnipsl.qgelm.de/ - **Qgelm**

Permanent link:
https://schnipsl.qgelm.de/doku.php?id=wallabag:wb2best-cloud-services-for-small-businesses

Last update: **2025/06/27 11:17**