

How I Legally
Acquired Over
\$5,000 Worth
Of Software
Free!

by
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Like many folks out there, I was sick and tired of spending so much money on software for my home computer. Moreover, the alternatives to some of the high-end programs were not necessarily inexpensive. I hope you find this knowledge helpful. For more information about the free software described in this publication, including how to download them, please visit my website www.FinalFreeware.com.

My quest for free software began the day I was sitting at my computer about 7 or 8 years ago. I had a program called McAfee VirusScan. I received a notice on my computer that my virus definitions were out of date. Unfortunately, my subscription had expired as well. I proceeded to get out my credit card as I clicked on the button to purchase the update online. The program basically said it couldn't access the website to make the purchase. I couldn't believe it! Here I was, trying to pay for their product and I couldn't. Needless to say, I wasn't happy. I then started my quest to see if any free anti-virus programs existed.

I came across a program called AVG Anti-Virus. There was a free version for home users that sufficed for a couple of years until the company changed the way the program worked. The program would notify you of a virus but not clean it from your system. Ugh! My quest continued.

I then came across another anti-virus program called Avast! anti-virus. It's free for home, non-commercial use. I fell in love with it. I still use the program to this day! It will notify you, while you are online, if a worm or virus is attempting to infect your computer. Since I've installed it, I've been virus-free! I not only got a great, useful program. I also saved

about \$30-40 per year!

As you can imagine, my mind started racing with the prospects of this “free software” thing. I started wondering, if I could get free anti-virus software, what other free quality software is out there? I soon began to find out.

I remember using an old MS-DOS program called PKZIP. It was a great program in its day. However, I wasn't using DOS anymore and it was a pain to go to a DOS prompt and type in some command to extract or view a Zip file. I tried several free programs before settling upon 7zip. It offers file archiving with high-compression as well as extraction. That's all I needed! That saved me about \$29, which is what I would have paid for the Windows version.

My next free software acquisition was a Firewall program called ZoneAlarm. I used it up until a few months ago when I started to experience some connection issues. Once I turned off ZoneAlarm, I was able to access the Internet. I immediately searched for a free Firewall program. I came across a great program called Comodo Firewall Pro. What can I say? Once I set it up, I haven't experienced any issues. Their website states, “Out-of-the-box protection against identity theft, hackers, Trojans, viruses, scripts and other unknown threats.” I may not have saved any money on this one, but I solved my problem with an excellent program.

Around this time, I wanted to create a website. Unfortunately, I couldn't afford the nearly \$400 for Microsoft Frontpage. There were other web development programs out there. Just none that I wanted to pay money for. I came across a program

called Nvu. It was great for creating webpages in the WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) style. Unfortunately, the people that designed it stopped development of it. Good news though! They offer a program called KompoZer as a replacement for Nvu. It's a complete web authoring system, according to their site. Once again, I found what I needed for free!

I then started looking at my email program. I was using Microsoft Outlook at work and wanted something for home that was robust and allowed me to receive email from multiple accounts. Plus, I didn't want to shell out \$109.95 for Outlook. That's when I came across Thunderbird. It was able to do everything I needed. It's made by Mozilla, the makers of Firefox – a great web browser that I use today!

I remember the time I needed to access/create some spreadsheets, documents, etc. I didn't want to wait to do them at work, since they were personal. I had Microsoft Office Professional at work. This included Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and Access. I turned my pockets inside out but didn't find the nearly \$500-\$1,000 needed to make that purchase. Therefore, I scoured the Internet in search of an equivalent package. It wasn't long before I found Open Office. This package includes: Base (database application); Calc (spreadsheet application); Impress (presentation software); Writer (text document software); Draw (used for creating flowcharts – similar to Visio but without the programming capabilities). Not needing Visio saved me another \$259! Also, the Open Office programs can read and write in Microsoft formats, if needed. I was giggling like a little kid at Christmas time as I installed my new free office

suite!

The rest of my free software acquisitions were a blur. They happened rather quickly thereafter. I've always admired the programmers and hard workers who created this free software that I use every day. They developed these programs for folks like you and me. I felt this small paper was my way of thanking these fine people and to pass along to you the knowledge that I've attained over the years acquiring free software. By now, you've probably added up the money savings and it's not adding up to the savings I've suggested in the title. You'd be absolutely correct in thinking that. However, I haven't shared all of my free software acquisitions with you. The table following this article shows my list (as of right now) of free software.

Before I turn you loose on all this new software, please keep in mind the free software discussed are not clones of the software I replaced. In other words, they may not have all of the same features as the commercial versions. The commercial programs referenced in this article are quality programs. They were just not affordable for me. I'm just offering the reader another alternative to the commercial software that's out there on the Internet. I hope the software is as helpful to you as it has been for me.

Software: 3D Modeling / CAD

Free Software Alternative: Google SketchUp

Description:

Developed for the conceptual stages of design, Google SketchUp is a powerful yet easy-to-learn 3D software tool that combines a simple, yet robust tool-set with an intelligent drawing system that streamlines and simplifies 3D design. From simple to complex, conceptual to realistic, Google SketchUp enables you to build and modify 3D models quickly and easily.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$200.00

Commercial Software: Adobe Acrobat

Free Software Alternative: PDFCreator

Description:

PDFCreator is a free tool to create PDF files from nearly any Windows application.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$299.00

Commercial Software: Adobe Illustrator

Free Software Alternative: Inkscape

Description:

An Open Source vector graphics editor, with capabilities similar to Illustrator, CorelDraw, or Xara X, using the W3C standard Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) file format.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$599.00

Commercial Software: Adobe Photoshop

Free Software Alternative: GIMPshop

Description:

GIMPshop is a modification of the free/open source GNU Image Manipulation Program (GIMP), intended to replicate the feel of Adobe Photoshop. Its primary purpose is to make users of Photoshop feel comfortable using GIMP.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$649.00

Commercial Software: Adobe Premiere Pro

Free Software Alternative: Avidemux

Description:

Avidemux is a free video editor designed for simple cutting, filtering and encoding tasks. It supports many file types, including AVI, DVD compatible MPEG files, MP4 and ASF, using a variety of codecs. Tasks can be automated using projects, job queue and powerful scripting capabilities.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$799.00

Software: Anti-Virus

Free Software Alternative: Avast! anti-virus

Description:

Avast! anti-virus Home Edition represents the best FREE anti-virus protection currently available on the market.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$40.00

Software: Computer Aided Drafting

Free Software Alternative: Envisioneer Express

Description:

Envisioneer Express is the easiest to use residential design program available. Specifically designed to introduce clients to the simple creation of floor plans, 3D models, and interior design concepts. Envisioneer Express uses real world objects such as walls, doors, windows and stairs to make creative designs fast and easy.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$200.00

Software: Firewall

Free Software Alternative: Comodo Firewall Pro

Description:

Out-of-the-box protection against identity theft hackers, trojans, viruses, scripts and other unknown threats.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$0.00

Commercial Software: Microsoft Access

Free Software Alternative: Open Office - Base

Description:

Base – lets you manipulate databases seamlessly. Create and modify tables, forms, queries, and reports.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$229.00

Commercial Software: Microsoft Excel

Free Software Alternative: Open Office - Calc

Description:

Calc is a powerful spreadsheet with all the tools you need to calculate, analyse, and present your data in numerical reports or sizzling graphics.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$229.00

Commercial Software: Microsoft Frontpage

Free Software Alternative: KompoZer

Description:

KompoZer is a complete web authoring system that combines web file management and easy-to-use WYSIWYG web page editing.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$399.95

Commercial Software: Microsoft Outlook

Free Software Alternative: Thunderbird

Description:

Mozilla's Thunderbird 2 email application is more powerful than ever. It's now even easier to organize, secure and customize your mail.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$109.95

Commercial Software: Microsoft PowerPoint

Free Software Alternative: Open Office - Impress

Description:

Impress – the fastest, most powerful way to create effective multimedia presentations according to the Open Office folks.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$229.00

Commercial Software: Microsoft Project

Free Software Alternative: OpenProj

Description:

OpenProj is a free, open source desktop alternative to Microsoft Project.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$599.95

Commercial Software: Microsoft Word

Free Software Alternative: Open Office - Writer

Description:

Writer is a word processor you can use for anything from writing a quick letter to producing an entire book.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$229.00

Software: Music Burner

Free Software Alternative: InfraRecorder

Description:

InfraRecorder is a free CD/DVD burning solution for Microsoft Windows. It offers a wide range of powerful features; all through an easy to use application interface and Windows Explorer integration.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$50.00

Software: Music Ripper

Free Software Alternative: BonkEnc

Description:

BonkEnc is a CD ripper, audio encoder and converter for various formats. It can produce MP3, MP4/M4A, Ogg Vorbis, AAC, Bonk and FLAC files.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$0.00

Software: Picture Resizing

Free Software Alternative: PIXresizer

Description:

PIXresizer is a photo resizing program to easily create web and e-mail friendly versions of your images with reduced file sizes.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$20.00

Commercial Software: PKZIP

Free Software Alternative: 7zip

Description:

7-Zip is a file archiver with a high compression ratio.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$29.00

Commercial Software: QuarkXpress

Free Software Alternative: Scribus

Description:

Scribus is an open-source program that brings award-winning professional page layout to Linux/Unix, MacOS X, OS/2 and Windows desktops with a combination of "press-ready" output and new approaches to page layout. Underneath the modern and user friendly interface, Scribus supports professional publishing features, such as CMYK color, separations, ICC color management and versatile PDF creation. I actually used this program to write my first book, "Cryptograms of the World" as well as this publication.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$799.00

Commercial Software: Quicken

Free Software Alternative: Money Manager Ex

Description:

Money Manager Ex© is a free, open-source, cross-platform, easy-to-use personal finance software. It primarily helps organize one's finances and keeps track of where, when and how the money goes. It is also a great tool to get a bird's eye view of your financial worth.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$49.99

Commercial Software: Sound Forge

Free Software Alternative: Traverso DAW

Description:

Traverso DAW Is a GPL licensed, cross platform multitrack audio recording and editing suite, with an innovative and easy to master User Interface. It's suited for both the professional and home user, who needs a robust and solid Digital Audio Workstation.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$299.95

Commercial Software: Microsoft Visio

Free Software Alternative: Open Office - Draw

Description:

Draw lets you produce everything from simple diagrams to dynamic 3D illustrations.

Estimated Savings (by not purchasing commercial software):
\$259.00

Note: The pricing shown is based upon prices gathered from commercial websites and based upon single-item purchases (not suites).