

FREE Stuff!

Or...

Dear Chief, wait until you see how much money I saved you by going to this class.

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Why free?

Obviously, because you can save your agency a lot of money! Software programs for law enforcement can cost thousands of dollars and support can cost thousands more.

We are at a point where **you should not be wasting money** on basic software packages that you no longer need to buy. There are also a number of opportunities to obtain free training for yourself and for members of your department.

Why people are willing to charge \$0.00

http://www.wired.com/techbiz/it/magazine/16-03/ff_free - King Gillette didn't succeed until he started giving away his razors - the fortune his company eventually made came from selling the replacement blades. This is a "cross-subsidy" where one gets something for free in exchange for buying another product or service. Today think free cell-phone with expensive plan, cheap game console with expensive games, etc...

With internet technology, the cost of products is at times nearly nonexistent - as costs for processing power, storage and bandwidth drop so do prices.

Different economic models include:

"*Freemium*" - where some users pay for enhanced versions of free software.

"*Advertising*" - where content is provided for free along with paid advertising - like television, radio and Google.

"*Cross-subsidies*" - get you something for free or at a discount so you buy something else - like razor blade refills or as in the case of the \$1 turkey that gets you in the store.

"*Zero marginal cost*" - where the cost of production is nothing, such as online music.

"*Labor Exchange*" - where you get something for free but you are providing something to the distributor - this would apply to porn sites that gather your information for spammers, Google 411, which is trying to figure out speech recognition or Yelp.com, a site that needs content to attract more users and advertising revenue.

"*Gift Economy*" - where Altruism is the reason for people helping each other out. Examples of this can be found in many open source software movements and sites such as Wikipedia.

These economic models will fuel a trend where even the cost of law enforcement software and services approaches \$0.00

“Open Source Software” is software that is freely distributed, has open source code, and has a number of license conditions such as - allowing derived works, protecting the original author’s source code, does not discriminate against people, professions or groups, does not require a new license with every distribution, not dependent on other software and technology neutral.

“Free Software” is basically the same as Open Source Software except there are even less licensing restrictions - Free Software people like to say the difference is that free software is like free speech compared to open source software, which is more like free beer. Hmmm.....Free speech or free beer?.....

“Web 2.0” refers to internet applications that allow interactive information sharing, interoperability, user-centered design, and collaboration. Examples include blogs, wiki’s, social networking sites, and video sharing sites. Web 2.0 sites allow users to interact with each other as contributors to the website’s content as opposed to sites that only allow passive viewing of content.

Downloads vs. Clouds

Open Source software typically needs to be downloaded and stored on a computer but increasingly, there are many web-based applications that can do the work of many software programs for free and never require a purchase or download.

Advantages of cloud computing can be found in that data can be redundantly backed up online, there is never a need to upgrade software, there are no compatibility issues with new machines or operating systems and there is less need to have the most powerful computer system available to handle huge computing tasks. You only need a simple computer with a browser and you (almost) no longer need to worry about that hard drive exploding!

Disadvantages of using web-based programs are being tied to the internet and not having full control of the program or the data you have entered into it. There are also security concerns, which will be discussed later.

Trends are pointing to a future where users are getting online using less powerful devices, such as netbooks, smart phones and Ipads, to use programs that are hosted on the web instead of their machine. Programs are shrinking as well into simple “Apps.” or Applications that perform a limited number of specific tasks, often using internet based resources.

Now for the free programs and applications you came for:

Presentation Software:

www.Prezi.com - The on-screen presentation you are seeing was produced on Prezi.com. Prezi’s can be displayed directly from the website or downloaded to your computer. Powerpoint has become a bit monotonous and Prezi is a fresh alternative. One great aspect of Prezi is that you can throw your ideas around a large canvass and creatively explore and organize the ideas you want to present.

Zoomit allows you to draw on screen and zoom in and out during presentations. You don’t need the zoom feature in Prezi but this can help make your old PowerPoint’s look better.

<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/sysinternals/bb897434.aspx>

Browsers:

Firefox is the king of free browsers <http://www.mozilla.com/> but there are other widely used options such as Google Chrome, Opera and Apple Safari. I personally like Firefox because of the wide array of extensions available in order to customize the browser. Many free online tools are also available as Firefox extensions.

Office Suites:

Bill gates has pushed us all around for long enough! Available options allow you to download a fully functional office suite or to use a host of online programs. If you do not need all of the little bells and whistles from Microsoft, then these suites have everything you need. A police department with only ten computers could easily save over \$1,000 on Office software.

Open Office is a free, open source, office suite that includes a word processor similar to Microsoft Word, a spreadsheet program similar to Excel, a presentation program similar to Powerpoint and a database program similar to Access. There is also a drawing program included. Open Office is compatible with the Microsoft programs and files can be saved in Microsoft formats or as .pdf's. There is a shallow learning curve and controls will be very familiar to Microsoft users. The whole package can be easily downloaded free from <http://www.openoffice.org/>

Web-Based Office Suites:

<http://www.zoho.com/> - Zoho offers an entire office suite and then some. Zoho has more applications than any comparable service including an e-mail account, word processing, spreadsheet, note taking, presentation, project management, wiki's, invoicing, CRM or Customer Relationship Management, **and a database program**. If you want to run an entire small business online for free then Zoho is the way to go...

<http://www.docs.google.com/> - Google is offering a great online office suite with Google Docs. The suite includes word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, drawing and forms. The applications are compatible with Microsoft and Open Office; creations can be saved as .pdf.'s.

The forms application allows you to create forms that can then be used to perform online surveys. Answers are saved as spreadsheets. New features are being added constantly and one of the newest features is online collaboration. Another new feature is the ability to save any file type to your Google Docs account. As of this time, the only thing Google Docs does not have is a database program comparable to MS Access or even Zoho Creator. It is probably only a matter of time...

Microsoft is getting in on the act with Microsoft Office Live - <http://workspace.officelive.com/en-us/> This online suite supports Microsoft Office Documents with online editing. You can't use Access (yet) but you can create and edit projects in Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote. You also get 25 GB of free storage to with as you please.

Crime Mapping with GIS:

For advanced crime mapping there are a number of free GIS programs available but this could be the subject of a year-long conference. If you have no money but plenty of time then your best bet is to start here:

<http://www.osgeo.org/> The Open Source Geospatial Foundation. OSGeo supports programs such as Grass <http://grass.osgeo.org/> and QGIS <http://www.qgis.org/> .

You can also find free mapping and analysis tools from esri.com
http://www.esri.com/software/mapping_for_everyone/index.html

Falcon View <http://www.falconview.org> offers some analytic tools and works with Esri, Mapinfo and .kml files

(Google Earth)

A useful place to get free mapping data, ortho-photos and training is Mass GIS - <http://www.mass.gov/mgis/>

CrimeStat III is a spatial statistics program for the analysis of crime incident locations. It is provided for free from the NIJ MAPS program and can be downloaded from <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/CRIMESTAT/> There is a big learning curve on this but free training is available.

Geoprofile is a free geographic profiling tool that was designed to be easier to use:

<http://www.wesleyenglish.com/geoprofile>

Easy Maps:

If you are a simple person, like me, then there are a number of free, user friendly options available to make simple maps for crime analysis, emergency management and planning.

Google Maps - <http://maps.google.com/> is a great tool to easily map incident locations. You can add notes to each marker and draw markings. With the Google Earth Plug-in you can see a simulated 3-D view. It is no longer necessary to download the full version of Google Earth to see this effect. Many large buildings and landmarks have been modeled in a 3-D format so you can see these. Google Street View lets you see recent photography at a street level view anywhere that Google has driven to.

Bing Maps - <http://www.bing.com/maps/> is similar to Google Maps but offers one great feature that Google doesn't - 4 way Pictometry - these aerial images are taken from flyovers and look at terrain and buildings from an angle. This is called "Bird's Eye View" and it allows you to look at buildings like you were flying around them, instead of looking straight down directly over them.

Zee Maps - <http://www.zeemaps.com/> is an excellent tool that allows you to easily produce maps with multiple data points and share them online. In fact, there is an option to create a crime map. One great feature of this program is that you can use your existing spreadsheet with all of your crimes and map them out easily. You can also use Google Spreadsheets to create your map so everything is FREE.

RAIDS Online <http://www.bairsoftware.com/raidsonline/> from Bair Software is a free alternative to Crimereports.com and other commercial public crime mapping applications. There are no fees and no obligations. They offer this basic package in the hope that you will eventually want some high end paid analytical applications.

Training - Possibly, the biggest money-saver you will find in this presentation:

E-learning technology allows us to learn a lot of new things and easily share our own knowledge. Many law enforcement agencies are turning to online training in order to save money. Many of these online Learning Management Systems (LMS's) charge agencies several thousands of dollars to participate.

Moodle - is the most popular Learning Management System and can be downloaded at <http://moodle.org/> . You will need a server to host this. The advantages of Moodle are that it is hugely popular, you can find a lot of online help and you have complete control. The downside is that you need to host this yourself and you need to figure out how to use it.

+ Free Moodle hosting can be found at <http://www.keytoschool.com/> Set-up is painless, learning Moodle and creating content is another thing 📁

Alternatives to Moodle include Dokeos <http://www.dokeos.com/> OLAT <http://www.olat.org> and Sakai <http://sakaiproject.org/> These all have a learning curve and hosting issues but they all have thousands of users.

Course Authoring:

Udutu offers a free online course authoring system <http://www.udutu.com/> - courses can be exported to any server or hosted by udutu for a modest fee. Udutu also offers integration with Facebook.

Courselab is a downloadable course authoring system <http://www.courselab.com/> - Like Uduku you can export your courses to a compatible LMS.

Simple Solutions:

If you want simple Mycourse <http://www.mycourse.com> offers a free simple to use hosted Learning Management System. The system is easy to set up and multimedia courses can be easily created. It is also easy to track users' progress through courses and keep statistics and transcripts. Mycourse is supported by advertising but you have options to control your own ads for a small fee and to charge for courses.

Other hosted options include <http://www.edu20.org/> , <http://www.wiziq.com/> , <http://www.schoolology.com> and a few others.

Screencasts:

Screencasts allow you to record video of your screen and your voice as you explain what you are doing on screen. This is great for online classes as well as saving you from having to show your boss how to pull up that report for the 50th time...

Jing can be downloaded from <http://www.jingproject.com/> / Tipcam can be downloaded from <http://www.utipu.com>

Screenr - <http://screenr.com/> requires no download and allows you to share screencasts with Twitter.

Screen Toaster - <http://www.screentoaster.com/> is another option that requires no download.

Capture Fox is a Firefox Add-on that allows you quick and easy access to a screen recorder. Browse Firefox Add-Ons to get this one.

Some online classes that you can take for free:

Anacapa offers some free non-certificate online courses geared towards intelligence analysis - <http://www.anacapatraining.com/webtraining/index.html>

<http://free-ed.net> offers a large number of free classes online but there are limited course on Criminal Justice. There are 2 courses related to statistics as of May 4, 2010.

The Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force offers free training online, through the mail and in person - <http://www.mctft.com/>

The National Terrorism Preparedness Institute has some free online training - <http://terrorism.spcollege.edu/ntpi>

The Florida Regional Community Policing Institute has a few free online courses <http://cop.spcollege.edu/>

The Institute for Preventive Strategies offers an online anti-terrorism course with a comprehensive simulation (You need to stop a terrorist attack!) <https://www.preventivestrategies.net/>

MIPT, the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, offers online training related to intelligence gathering and terrorism prevention for line officers. <http://www.mipt.org>

New Mexico Tech offers *Understanding & Planning for School Bomb Incidents*

<http://campus.emrtc.nmt.edu/campus/> They also offer the Free DHS Sponsored courses - Incident Response to Terrorist Bombing (IRTB) and Prevention of and Response to Suicide Bombing Incidents (PRSBI) DHS Pays your way for these courses if you are in law enforcement. <http://www.emrtc.nmt.edu/training/>

The International Association of Arson Investigators offers training that any law enforcement officer can use to increase their skills in investigating fires and arson cases. <http://www.cfitrainer.net/>

The Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) currently offers 5 anti-terrorism classes online (More classes are in the works) - <http://www.chds.us/?special/info&pgm=Noncredit>

FEMA Offers independent study in several topics <http://training.fema.gov/is/> *If your agency has never sent you to anything -you should absolutely make sure that you are trained in ICS and NIMS

For your detectives and wanna-be CSI people, the DNA Training initiative offers a wide array of free online forensics courses <http://www.dna.gov/training/#>

28CFR23 Training is a must for any law enforcement analyst and the BJA National Criminal Intelligence Research Center offers this free online. - <http://www.ncirc.gov/28cfr/>

The Massachusetts State Police in Conjunction with the Municipal Police Training Committee offer free online training to any Massachusetts law enforcement agency through their LMS. Your department can complete nearly all of their police annual in-service training requirements through this system. CPR/First Responder and Defensive Tactics still require a few hours of hands-on training. <http://www.msponlineacademy.com>

The FBI Virtual Academy offers free online classes to law enforcement. <https://fbiva.fbiacademy.edu>

The Center for Task Force leadership and Integrity (CTFLI) offers free online training in Leadership <https://ctfli.org/>

Become a better writer or a tool or those who are deeply challenged by the peculiarities of the English Language:

<http://www.paperrater.com/> allows you to make up for the deficiencies in QED and IMC in regards to spelling and grammar checking. It is also useful for any writing that you do for school or business and has a plagiarism detector that can save you or your school-aged child from an embarrassing situation. (I ran these notes through the system and got some good scores.)

Social Networking:

Twitter - <http://www.twitter.com/> is a natural tool for law enforcement agencies; it is a simple micro-blogging program that allows you to send 140 character messages to anyone who wishes to subscribe to what you have to say. With additional applications Twitter can also be used to send podcasts, screencasts and pictures.

Twitter feeds can be added to your website and many other social networking sites such as Myspace and Facebook.

Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/> is now the number one social networking web site in the world and you should probably be on it. If not to catch up with friends, just to visit the MACA Group page. You should also be familiar with Facebook as an investigative tool and be able to set up undercover profiles in order to gather information and intelligence.

The Facebook Visualizer is still in Beta and is restricted to law enforcement but this has great potential as an investigative tool - It maps out Facebook associates - <http://www.lococitato.com/facebookvisualizer/> Check out the Myspace Visualizer to create a link analysis chart of Myspace associates - <http://www.lococitato.com/myspacevisualizer/> There is also a Youtube version.

Myspace - <http://www.myspace.com/> has become less relevant within the past year but is still a viable tool for community policing and investigations.

Know-em - Make sure nobody is using your good name! <http://knowem.com/> allows you to search a wide array of

social networking sites to make sure nobody is pretending to be you. It also allows you to find most of the social networks that are out there.

Set up free Web Sites:

Google Sites allows you to easily create full web sites <http://sites.google.com/>

There are also a number of alternative free site options such as <http://www.webs.com/> and Bravenet - <http://www.bravenet.com/> Wix <http://www.wix.com/> offers very nice looking flash websites for free. <http://byethost.com/> offers excellent free hosting.

If you have space on the web or if you find yourself in control of an existing website there are several free tools to create, maintain, and update your site. I recommend Filezilla as an FTP tool <http://filezilla-project.org/> and Kompozer <http://www.kompozer.net/>

You can also use Google Blogger to create a free blog for your agency. <http://www.blogger.com> and Wordpress is another incredibly popular free blog site - <http://wordpress.com/>

Intranet:

Google Sites can do this too! You just choose who can view your sites during set-up.

Photo editing:

GIMP GNU Image Manipulation Program is an open source image editor that you download here - <http://www.gimp.org/>

Sumo Paint <http://www.sumopaint.com> allows you to edit photos on a level close to Photoshop and requires no download.

Aviary <http://aviary.com> offers an entire suite of photo editing products that all work online with no download. Phoenix, Peacock, Raven, Falcon and Toucan offer image editing, visual effects, vector editing, quick image markup and color editing. There is a Firefox Extension called Talon that integrates Falcon into your browser.

Paint.net is another great free photo editor - <http://paint.net/>

Microsoft offers the **Image Composite Editor** - The program allows you to easily stitch together multiple photographs into a high resolution panorama that can be viewed in 3-D. This could have a lot of potential for crime scene photography. <http://research.microsoft.com/en-us/um/redmond/groups/ivm/ice/> Creations can be uploaded to <http://photosynth.net/>

Picassa from Google allows you to edit photos, more importantly, it allows you to organize all of your photos in one place so that you can find them easily. - <http://picasa.google.com/>

Analytical Chart Creator:

ORA <http://www.casos.cs.cmu.edu/projects/ora/> is an alternative to I2 Analyst Notebook and can be downloaded for free from Carnegie Mellon University. There is a large learning curve but the software has several advanced analytical capabilities.

A simple charting solution can be found at Lovely Charts <http://www.lovelycharts.com/> There is no download required and the interface and ease of use are actually... lovely.

Google Docs has a drawing program that does good diagrams <http://www.google.com/google-d-s/drawings/>

The Brain <http://www.thebrain.com/> is a nice downloadable tool that allows you to organize your thoughts and ideas visually

Web Brain <http://webbrain.com/> allows you to share your mind map online.

Optical Character Recognition (OCR)

OCR allows you to convert images of written words into usable text. In other words you have a pdf that contains a lot of text and you really don't feel like re-typing the whole thing. OCR is not perfect right now (think about all of those little word puzzles you need to do to sign up on various websites) but a free OCR application could save you a lot of time.

<http://www.free-ocr.com/> and <http://free-online-ocr.com/> are two tools to try out. Google also offers this feature as a part of Google Docs. I would see how Google Docs works for your document first before trying one of these online converters.

Text to Speech:

Ispeech <http://www.ispeech.org> allows you to convert text or files into speech. Need a voice for your screencast or movie? How about when you don't feel like reading something? You can also create podcasts and imbed creations in your web site.

Firefox also has extensions that convert text-to-speech including Speak It, Accesibar and Text to Voice.

Learn to type:

Tired of using the "Hunt and Peck" method of report writing? <http://www.typingweb.com/typingtutor/> will teach you to type like a pro for free.

Sound Editing:

Audacity can be downloaded from <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/> With this program you can fix your audio tracks on screencasts and training films.

Aviary <http://aviary.com> also offers a full sound editing application that requires no download.

Movies - Unleash your inner Scorsese

Movie Masher <http://www.moviemasher.com/> is an open source movie editor that can be downloaded.

Animoto <http://animoto.com/> lets you put together short movies online for free. Longer movies can be made for a small one-time fee or with a subscription. Who liked the MACA conference commercial?

Jaycut is another online movie making option <http://jaycut.com/>

Windows Movie Maker is often already on your computer, if it isn't you can download it for free from Microsoft - <http://explore.live.com/windows-live-movie-maker?os=other>

File Converter:

Zamzar can convert almost any type of file (pictures, audio, video, text) <http://www.zamzar.com/> to almost

anything else

You Convert It <http://www.youconvertit.com> is another free online file converter.

Storage:

Once you have converted those files you will need to store them somewhere. **Windows Skydrive** offers 25GB of free online storage for your stuff - <http://explore.live.com/windows-live-skydrive>

Google Docs also allows you to store files for free, they give you over 7.4 gigabytes as of today.

Box.net offers 5GB of free storage to share those files that are too big to e-mail. <http://www.box.net/>

Community Notification System:

www.nixle.com - offers a system to alert citizens of public safety matters through text messaging. The service is completely free and is fully compatible with Twitter. You and members of your agency can sign on as administrators and anyone who wants to subscribe can easily do so. The service can be operated from a cell phone so it can be used by officers in the field.

Find new and free Web 2.0 Tools and free software:

There are new tools being added to the internet every day. One site that has a useful index of them is <http://www.go2web20.net/> These sites are divided into categories and there are comments and ratings as well as information from blogs, Twitter and Delicious Bookmarks.

Free open source software for almost any purpose can be found at <http://www.osalt.com/> and <http://www.webi.org/>

Gizmos Freeware gives you links to free software and tools with reviews: <http://www.techsupportalert.com/>

Free stuff to make you a better police officer, supervisor, dispatcher, or analyst in Massachusetts:

Masspolice <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Masspolice/> is a compilation of free resources specific to Massachusetts. I regularly post updated criminal case law, relevant labor law decisions, and local training opportunities to this site. You can subscribe to receive all e-mails, a daily digest or just to log on when you want to.

Free Live Training:

The Massachusetts Association of Crime Analysts, in partnership with Middlesex Community College and the North East Municipal Law Enforcement Council (NEMLEC) offer free computer courses at the MCC Campus in Lowell. <http://www.macrimeanalysts.com/>

How about a free phone number?

Google Voice <https://www.google.com/voice> will give you a free phone number with voicemail and texting. My Google number is 774-452-9776 or 774-4-LAW-PRO - Don't call this number unless you actually want to hire me. (Sorry, I enjoy helping people out and giving away free stuff but I can't do *everything* for free.)

It isn't quite free but it is real cool and very cheap

How about a Smartboard for about \$50! <http://johnnylee.net/projects/wii/> and <http://www.wiimoteproject.com/>

The downsides of free

Crash!

How can a company that offers everything for free possibly go out of business????...

What happens to all of your data, content, user information and passwords?

Just like on your computer - never keep all of your hard work in one place, back up everything you can offline or on other sites.

Security Concerns

Open Source can be as secure as any other software, just follow the same rules regarding passwords, antivirus software and regular updates.

You better not be using one of these passwords (From 32 million passwords compromised on rockyou.com):
123456, 12345, 123456789, Password, iloveyou, princess, the website you are logging in to - ex. rockyou, 1234567, 12345678, abc123.

Even good passwords can have issues - What happens if this site goes under and is bought by China, Russia, the Mafia, Al Qaeda, Hell's Angels, your ex!, Skynet, Cylons, you get the idea...

Sensitive Data - Don't put anything that is sensitive on a site that is not fully secured (hosted by a government agency, government security contractor or you)

Read those big long End User License Agreements (EULA's) - they often address your privacy rights.

Hidden Costs

You are the support and time is money...

If considering a consultant, do a cost benefit analysis - \$100 an hour to get it done in one day or your rate of pay for the weeks it will take you to figure this out.

Remember that for any open source program there are often online communities of users that will help you out with free advice.

The future of free

PosSE? - Public open source Safety Environment - <http://www.oss-institute.org/>

Who's going to step to the plate with the \$\$\$? CJIS, EOPS, NESPIN, BJA, FBI, DHS, etc... How about a CAD/RMS vendor who decides to jump in to the free market?

The future is hosted on the clouds and is completely mobile - Want to run a plate? There's already an App. for that. Want to book a prisoner, write a report, document evidence, record a traffic stop? There's going to be an App. for that... Some Day.

As competition in the future increases expect more features - be aware that someone in charge who doesn't know any better might try to replace analysts with programs... Who needs an analyst when you have the "Crime Analyst App." for Droid, iPhone and Blackberry?

That's it for now

I hope that you find one or more of these tools to be useful and that you save your agency and yourself some money.

Please feel free contact me if you need any assistance. If I can help you, I will.

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<http://www.macrimeanalysts.com/>

Please see free resources at **Open Source Policing** and please send me any free resources you become aware of so that I can share them.

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Open Source Policing - www.opensourcepolicing.org

MassPolice: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Masspolice/>