

[Free Business Templates for Your SMB From Google](#)

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You know what's really nice? When you need something and you instantly know where you can go to get it. You don't have to buy it or make it yourself or reinvent the wheel – you can simply solve your problem by taking advantage of the work that someone else already put in. As a small business owner, this doesn't happen too often. And that's why you want to take advantage of it when it does.

I'm a huge fan of Google Docs. I use it while writing on the go, I use it to collaborate with others on projects, and I take advantage of the rich [Google Docs template gallery](#) that's available. If you *haven't* yet taken advantage of this resource, you may want to check it out. Because by using shared content it can help you work more efficiently and put more time back in your business.



So what kind of free templates can you benefit from courtesy of Google? Below's a short list.

1. [Budgeting Templates](#): Whether it's for home or work, we can all benefit from having a budgeting template nearby. One that helps you break out your costs for the month and lets you see where your money is going, what costs you have, and that helps you stay accountable to your receivables. You could waste time creating one yourself *or* you could do a search for a [budget template] and use one that's already been created.

2. **Invoices**: Another staple for small business owners. While there are all sorts of other programs that will help you create attractive invoices, a quick search in Google Docs may help you find an invoice already crafted to your specific industry or need. Whether it's an invoice for your snow blower business or an invoice that includes room for instructions, Google already has you covered.

3. **Timesheets**: It may not take much effort to throw together a weekly timesheet for your employees but why dedicate mental resources to doing it? You can find all sorts of timesheet templates directly in Google Docs. Do a search, pick one, and go.

4. **Company Letterhead**: So not all of us have been blessed with a gift for design. So what? Google Docs can help you create professional looking letterhead that you can customize to meet your needs. It can be as simple as swapping out a generic logo for your own.

5. **Business Cards**: They may not be the sexiest business cards on the market, but if you need something in a jiff, you can find plenty of business card templates to help you show up to that networking event looking prepared (even if you really weren't).

6. **Request Forms**: Because Google Docs gives you the ability to embed forms right into your Web site, you can find Request Forms for both internal use and customer use. Maybe it's a request for time off, new software, for someone to sign up for your catalog, to customize a product, to make a reservation, etc, you can customize these forms to serve whatever need you or your customers may have.

7. Customer Surveys: One reason why I'm such a big fan of Google Docs is because of its survey functionality. You can go directly into Google Docs and they'll walk you through a professional-looking survey that you can use to get customer feedback about your blog, how you handle customer service, what social networks they wish you'd use, or anything else. Taking advantage of the templates provided in the gallery will help you see what your survey could look like and maybe help you prepopulate some questions.

Above are just a handful of ways you can take advantage of the templates provided in Google's gallery. It's worth noting that what separates Google Doc templates away from, let's say, templates you can download in Word is that these are a lot more functional. You can embed them directly on your site, there are more (and more updates ones) to choose from, and you get a lot more flexibility. Sure, you could create all these documents with your own hands, but why would you want to?



About Lisa Barone Lisa Barone is Vice President of Strategy at Overit, an Albany Web design and development firm where she serves on the senior staff overseeing the company's marketing consulting, social media, and content divisions.