

## TECHNOLOGY

# Save Money With Free Software for Your Computer

NewsUSA

(NU) - Looking to save money? There are ways to leverage great technology without burning a hole in your wallet.

Here are some safe, secure options – all of them free – that can help make your computer more productive, useful and fun:

- **Firefox Browser:**

([www.GetFireFox.com](http://www.GetFireFox.com)) – Get onto the Internet with this alternative to Windows Internet Explorer that is compatible with both Macs and PCs. It is fast and secure and allows you to download lots of free plug-ins that provide information, social media integration and multimedia capabilities.

- **TweetDeck:**

([www.TweetDeck.com](http://www.TweetDeck.com)) – This free program enables you to easily manage, monitor and post to all of your social media networks, including Facebook, Twitter and MySpace, from one place.

- **Trillian:**

([www.Trillian.im](http://www.Trillian.im)) – Not everyone uses the same instant message service. You might use AOL while your friend uses Yahoo. Trillian lets you combine all of your instant message accounts – AOL, Yahoo, MSN, ICQ and IRC – into one program. Recently updated, it can integrate your Facebook and Twitter accounts, too.

- **LogMeIn:**

([www.LogMeIn.com](http://www.LogMeIn.com)) – The free version of LogMeIn lets you securely access your computer from anywhere in the world. Want to check your home computer while you're on the road? Go to a web browser from any Internet-enabled computer or mobile device, and log in to your account to instantly connect and access any programs, files, photos or music on your desktop.



**Free software can make your computer more useful.**

- **Windows Live Desktop:**

([www.WindowsLive.com/desktop](http://www.WindowsLive.com/desktop)) – Windows 7, which will be loaded on many new computers and mobile devices this year, does not include its own email program. Instead, Microsoft offers a mail program as a free download from this site, along with other programs, including a photo organizer and an application for creating videos.

- **Picnik:**

([www.Picnik.com](http://www.Picnik.com)) – Picnik is a free alternative to Photoshop and offers photo-editing capabilities such as cropping, resizing, sharpening and red-eye reduction. You can add special effects, fonts, or various shapes to turn your precious memory into a work of art. Google's Picasa is another good option for free photo-editing software.

Any or all of these programs will immediately add value to your Mac, PC or laptop – at absolutely no cost.

Do your homework first and check out product reviews from reputable technology sites such as CNET's Download.com to find out more about free and safe software options before you install them on your computer.