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"RESEARCH AND WRITTEN ARTICLE ON TOP 10 REMOTE WORK TOOLS EVERY BUSINESS SHOULD LEVERAGE ON DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC"

The importance of remote work tools during a global pandemic cannot be overemphasised. Remote work tools help workers stay productive and effective while working out of the office.

Remote work tools are tools that allow employees and workers conduct their day to day business activities out of the office environment. Remote workers can work from wherever they please.

Prior to the intrusion of the COVID-19 virus into the world economy, working remotely was not a necessity for every business and organisation so using remote work tools was optional. Employees worked from their traditional offices day in day out and made use of the usual work tools. But the advent of COVID-19 caused a shift in the norm by which businesses were conducted, workers across all spheres of organisations therefore had to adapt to the new system and embrace the use of remote work tools.

The implications of the ongoing global pandemic caused by the rapid and infectious spread of the COVID-19 virus on the economy of every nation which includes both small and large businesses have made remote work tools a necessity.

In response to the pandemic, national governments worldwide declared a state of emergency and ordered a complete lockdown of states, restriction and cancellation of large gatherings. These changes have made remote work compulsory.

For businesses to survive and thrive in this global pandemic period, remote work tools must be adopted and made use of effectively.

There are numerous remote work tools available for use by businesses, however, the top ten remote tools are outlined below;

1. **VIDEO CONFERENCING APPS:** Video conferencing apps are tools that allow the participation of multiple persons in a meeting at the same time. An example is Zoom. Zoom is one of the best apps for video conferencing. It allows employees to hold businesses online and also for businesses and customers to interact face to face.
2. **SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS:** For both small and large businesses, social media networks like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest and more can be used to create awareness about businesses and to advertise businesses to a larger audience. Physical networking is limiting but social media networking provides unlimited opportunities. There are millions of prospects that businesses can reach if they make good use of social media.

3. **DESKTOP/COMPUTER/MOBILE PHONE:** These handheld devices enable other remote network tools. These devices are means by which remote tools can be used. They include laptops, desktops, computers and mobiles. Without these devices, using remote work tools would be impossible.
4. **MOBILE HOTSPOT/INTERNET:** Working remotely is highly dependent on dependable Internet access. Mobile hotspot and Internet access are one of the most important remote work tools since the absence of these tools will lead to the inability to use other remote work tools and apps. If the Internet is unreliable or unavailable, mobile hotspot serves as reliable backups.

(OPTIONAL) ILLUSTRATION: Remote tools are like household appliances like the refrigerator, Cooker, Television, washing machine while desktops and mobile phones are like houses or enclosed spaces where household appliances are kept and used. While Internet connections are like electricity mobile hotspot can be likened to backup generators. The effectiveness of their functions is dependent on their interdependency.

5. **SCREEN SHARING SOFTWARE TOOLS:** Screen sharing makes it possible for team members connected to your computer screen to see what you're doing. It makes illustrations easy. These tools often come with desktop and mobile devices.
6. **PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS:** These are tools used to manage personal and team tasks. Project management tools help keep remote workers on track. Jira is a popular project management tool.
7. **TOOLS FOR TIME MANAGEMENT:** These are tools used to manage work hours. These tools are needed to track hours for client or organisational project or to track status updates. Time management tools help workers stay productive and keep to schedule. For example Google calendar.
8. **TEAM COMMUNICATION TOOL:** These are chat platforms that allow for communication between teams and individuals for instance; slack. Slack is a remote work tool that enhances communication among team mates.
9. **NOTE TAKING APPS:** These apps are tools that help businesses and workers stay organized. Things are stored easily on the app to avoid forgetfulness. Examples are Notebook and Diary apps.
10. **FILE SHARING TOOLS:** File sharing tools like Google drive are used to save files and information irrespective of the user's location. With Google Drive, these files can be accessed offline on mobile devices and can be shared with other people.

TOP TEN ONLINE COURSES FOR DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The world is now a global village. It is no news that education can be acquired online and certificates can be bagged from taking online courses. Moreover, online classes have one major advantage and it is that the classes are very flexible. People taking online courses can determine when they want to attend training or classes. The lessons are also not limited by locations. Online classes are indeed a blessing. For suave and new digital entrepreneurs, some courses can be taken online to enhance their digital marketing knowledge. The top ten online courses include the following

1. **SIMPLILEARN DIGITAL MARKETING SPECIALISTS PROGRAM:** Offer training covering a wide range of digital marketing lessons. Students have access to seven courses that cover all aspect of digital marketing.
2. **COURSERA DIGITAL MARKETING SPECIALIZATION:** Coursera is one of the topmost online learning websites. Like Simplilearn, they also offer seven courses covering all teachings on digital marketing. Successful completion of the course earns the student a certificate.
3. **GOOGLE'S ONLINE MARKETING CHALLENGE:** Google offers digital marketing courses which include video tutorials on digital marketing essential courses and training.
4. **AMA'S DIGITAL MARKETING LEARNING CERTIFICATE MODULE:** They offer digital marketing training for digital marketing beginners and their courses are not as comprehensive as other digital marketing online courses.
5. **MARKET MOTIVE'S MASTER IN DIGITAL MARKETING:** Offers one of the best online digital marketing online training. The program provides members and students with access to over two hundred and fifty hours of training. Their courses are designed for persons with any skill level.
6. **WARD STREAM'S GROWTH ACADEMY:** Provides an interactive road map training to improve your business through digital marketing using e-commerce, online advertising, lead generation and more.
7. **DS106 - DIGITAL STORYTELLING AND SOCIAL MEDIA:** Teaches how to influence social media and understand digital storytelling.
8. **HUBSPOT AND INBOUND MARKETING TRAINING PROGRAM AND CERTIFICATION:** They give training on blogging, keyword strategy, email marketing, Search engine optimization and more.
9. **UDEMY:** Udemey is an online academy and has one of the most popular. They offer various courses on digital entrepreneurship and marketing with certification after each course.

10. SHAW ACADEMY: Recently, Shaw academy has risen to become one of the best and most popular online academies. They offer various courses on digital marketing and the various types of digital marketing. They also offer certification after each course.

These online courses will help employees and employers become better digital marketers which in turn will increase sales and profits

To sum up, as stated earlier, the pandemic has halted businesses from being physically functional and for businesses to survive, there must, therefore, be continuity and sustenance of day to day business activities to ensure productivity. Using remote work tools are currently the only means by which business continuity can be ensured therefore it is important to maximise remote work tools to be able to produce more output either as an organisational employee, a small or large business worker or owner.