8 Killer Web Form Builders for Your Site

5 days ago by **Lauren Hockenson** 26

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So you have your website set up with all the necessary features, but what about customer feedback? You have to be prepared to field the questions and concerns of your users, and nothing really does that better than a form. In one simple form, you can open your business up to constant feedback, while still maintaining an air of privacy and professionalism that a simple contact page can't do. Forms can be done by a professional programmer, but why waste money when you have so many intuitive web-based form builders available at a fraction of the price?

However, not all form builders are created equal. While they all seem to have some basic parts, there are special details and customizable options that make each builder unique. Here are eight great form-building options to choose from — find the one that fits you and your company's needs.

1. Google Docs

Sometimes, it's best to take the Occam's Razor approach to app selection, and Google Docs is definitely the simplest option out there for form building. Already rolled into your Google Apps package, this free service has seamless integration with Google's other apps, including Gmail and spreadsheets. Simply choose one of the seven question formats, which include a simple text option as well as scales and multiple choice, and then frame questions to get the feedback you need. Google will not only record all responses, but tabulate everything into helpful and visual analytics for each question.

Google Docs is a simple answer, and it unfortunately only comes with those simple features. Unlike other services, Google doesn't offer branching questions, custom visuals or ecommerce integration, which means that it can leave users wanting more. You can't find an easier form builder, so if you're looking for bare bones, this is ideal.

2. Wufoo

You know a form builder has credentials when big-name brands are using its services, and with clients like Twitter and Y Combinator, Wufoo has some serious supporters. Wufoo's interface is a seamless drag-and-drop system that allows for total customization and logo integration (including customized CSS, for dev-savvy users), meaning your form will tailor to your aesthetic needs. There's even payment integration with PayPal, which makes for seamless ecommerce forms if you're keen on selling merchandise on your website.

Unfortunately, all of these options don't come cheap. Wufoo does offer a free option, but its offerings are weak: You can only manage three forms at a time, and the service will only record the first 100 entries in a given month. In order to access more, you have to upgrade to a paid plan, starting at $14.95 per month. And if payment is really what you're looking for, be prepared to shell out nearly $30 for a mid-range plan. It's definitely an investment, but Wufoo's loyal companies and highly praised customer service experience make it enticing for those with a bigger budget.

3. FormSite

If you're looking for optimum flexibility and scalable options, then FormSite is a great choice. This application allows for a fully-customized form with more than 40 data fields to be either embedded into an existing site or built as a stand-alone questionnaire with a FormSite address. There are plenty of premium features available in the free version, including QR code integration, social sharing of form information and storage space to host attached files on forms. In a few simple clicks, you can have a great looking form to serve practically any customer experience need.

The largest issue with FormSite is the anemic results tabulation. With the free version, you're allowed five forms, but you can only see 10 results per form. For a highly trafficked company website, scaling up to paid versions is an absolute must. The most popular option, the "Pro 1″ plan, offers 1,000 results per form for a relatively inexpensive $20 bucks per month. This option is ideal for smaller companies looking for professional forms and premium features at a low cost.

4. FormAssembly
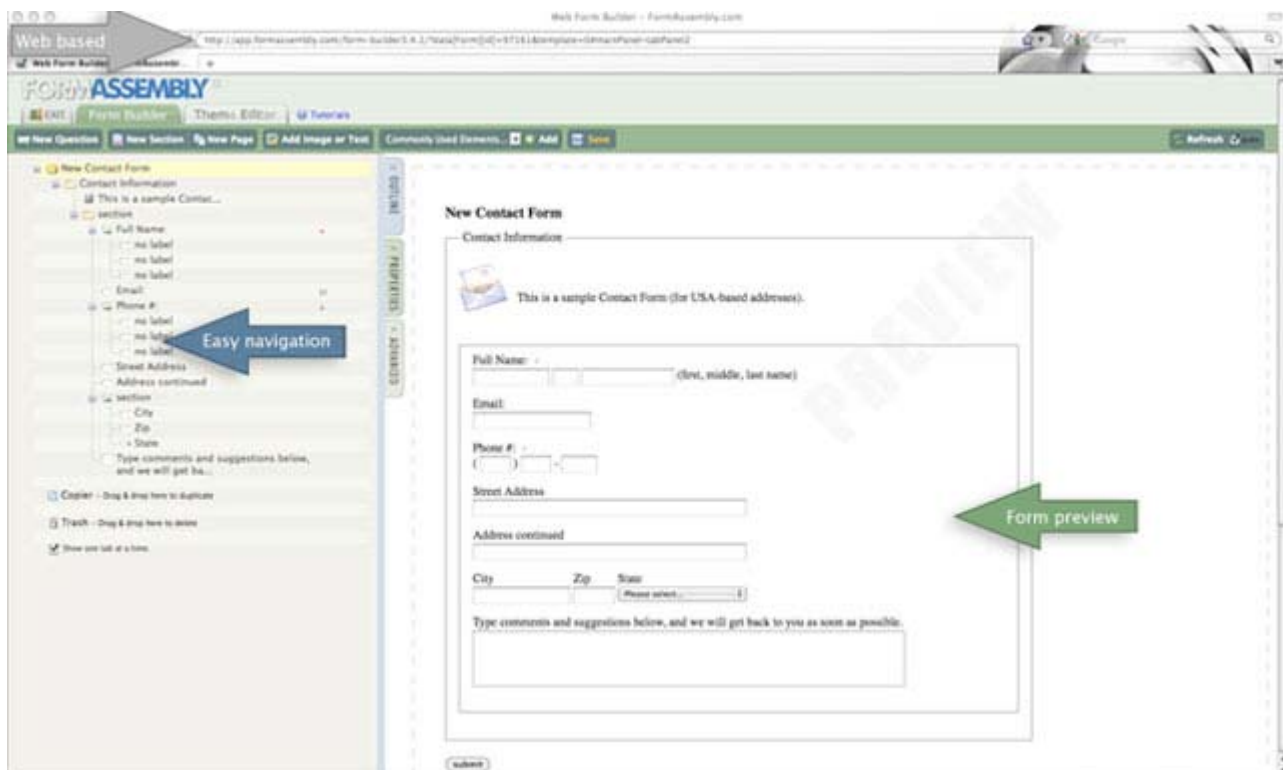
If cost is your biggest issue, then FormAssembly may have everything you need. Rather than a simple drag-and-drop interface, FormAssembly relies on a fully customizable free-form layout system — which ensures that users can control not only how the form looks, but also how the content is presented to a consumer. It's also very international-friendly, automatically reading a customer's server location and translating to one of more than 30 languages without any extra work involved.

Where FormAssembly really sets itself apart is pricing. It not only provides unlimited forms for free users, but FormAssembly also offers a pay-as-you-go plan for results. This offers the ultimate convenience for startups that are unsure how much traffic will be coming from feedback or forms — just pay as much as you think you'll need (as low as 5 cents per response) and pony up if more results are needed. There's even a guarantee against spam and junk responses, which means there will never be a wasted response. Traditional pricing plans are available too, starting at $14 per month, but you can't go wrong with FormAssembly if you're looking for a small response set or running a limited survey.

5. **Formstack**

Apps fans, rejoice: FormStack is easily one of the most connected and integrated form builders out there. It certainly keeps up with the pack by offering brand-friendly, customizable forms with a quick drag-and-drop interface. But it sets itself apart by offering third-party integrations with some of the most heavily-used web apps for small business. FormStack plays extremely well with WordPress and TypePad for websites on CMS platforms, builds businesses with BatchBook and Zendesk integration, and even ports financial transactions into FreshBooks for account management and invoicing. With these connections and many more, FormStack snaps in to a company's app workflow and automatically kicks into high gear.

However, FormStack is only free to users for a 14-day trial period. If you're looking for a long-term form, be prepared to shell out some cash. The starter plan, at $14 per month, offers a decent database of results and a few forms for flexibility. But if your company is particularly design-oriented, you may find the restriction on customized templates a reason to upgrade further.

6. Gravity Forms

Are you a WordPress user? Then you can't get a more seamless user experience than Gravity Forms. Specifically designed to be used within WordPress, Gravity Forms embeds itself into the backend of the CMS and automatically blends with the design of the website without any extra tinkering. With unlimited web forms on a given website and no restrictions on results, Gravity Forms is the simplest way to create a form without leaving your website. And, since it's license-based, all of the forms and results are hosted on your own site — meaning that your forms and your data are solely owned by you in perpetuity.

There's plenty to love about Gravity Forms, and its pricing system is very attractive. A year's worth of unlimited forms for a website begins at $39 per year, averaging to a wallet-friendly $3.25 per month. Renewing users also are privy to a special re-sign discount, so your second and third years cost less than the first. One issue with the system is that prime add-ons are premium, so don't expect to seamlessly integrate ecommerce unless you're ready to pay $200 for the top-tier service.

7. JotForm
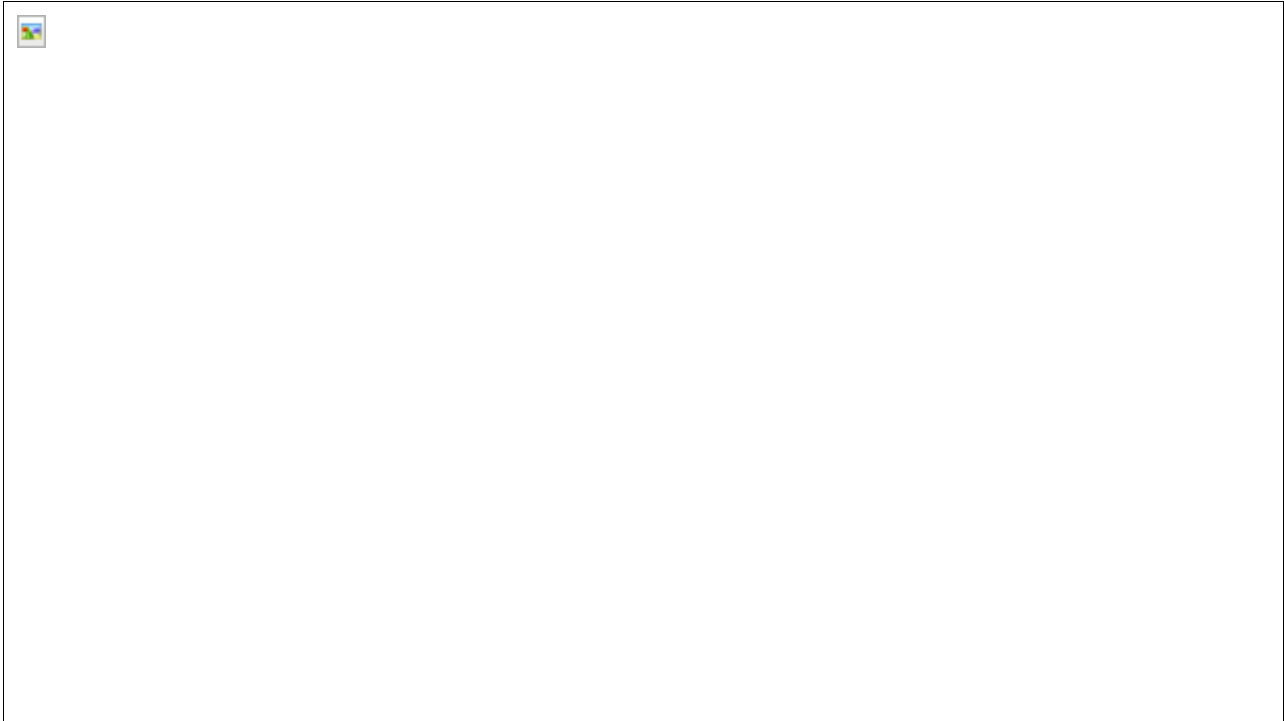
If ecommerce is what you're after, then JotForm is your best bet. Payment integration is available for all plans — even the free version. Simply drag and drop the payment tool of your choice (options include PayPal, Authorize.net and Google Checkout) into your form, and JotForm will take you through a setup wizard to ensure everything flows smoothly. Combine the ecommerce ease with a wealth of data storage to drop in pictures, and you have a merchandiser's best friend at your fingertips.

Pricing is also friendly too, with the paid plans beginning at $10 per month. That extra cost expands storage to 10GB and allows for 1,000 ecommerce transactions per month. All in all, it works out to less than a penny to implement a customizable grassroots ecommerce system.

8. reFormed

ReFormed invites forms to step into the world of HTML5, providing a dynamic and interactive form-builder that creates robust forms with a designer twist. Forms that are created within reFormed follow a fully-formed template — even radio buttons and drop-down menus have creative tweaks. The result is a form that looks and feels not only native to a website, but a step beyond traditional HTML forms. It's also incredibly cost effective, costing a mere $13 for a perpetual license of the product. If you're looking for custom options on the cheap, reFormed is the way to go.

However, it's not necessarily the most user-friendly tool on the web. Because of its close ties with jQuery, newbies to programming may feel intimidated by the way the interface requires the implementation of code-friendly language and knowledge of the way the form interacts with other programming. Companies may want to leave implementation of reFormed to a more technical person on staff to ensure no form-building headaches occur.

Do you have a form builder that you rely on for your website? Let us know in the comments below.

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Image courtesy of iStockphoto, BrianAJackson

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26 Comments

1.

Adam Williams Follow

Communicating with your visitors is Job One! These are great forms but it is more useful to use a form and autoresponder, it would have been nice to see some of the great word press forms / autoresponders / newsletter plug ins that are available here.

Adam
http://www.BuyingElectronicCigarette.com

5 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

○

michaeltorbert Follow

Autoresponders and newsletters really don't have much to do with forms, other than they use them for signup. Gravity Forms was addons for Mailchimp, etc for this purpose, and can easily work with any of them.

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

■

onlycubs Follow

It's quite powerful, and the output emails are very clean. Another option is PollDaddy. try out…http://goo.gl/CT66B

4 days ago 0 Flag this comment

2.

EdNichter Follow

I'm a big Jotform fan, however their web domain was seized by the government yesterday. Not sure what is going on.

5 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

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Jackie Leavitt Follow

I'm a Jotform user as well They sent out a message today asking users to transfer their forms to the dot net or dot us extensions. Apparently a phishing scam was perpetrated using a jotform account, hence the shutdown. No word yet on when they will be back up on the dot com.

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

○

RICHFITUSA Follow

Oh my, so do I need to create new forms with their new site?

RICHFITUSA
http://richfitusa.com/

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

3.

Irakli S Beselidze Follow

This is quite strange when a company sponsors a post about something it does not use. I visited Webtrends website http://www.webanalyticsondemand.com and found out that they are not using any forms on that website…

5 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

4.

kamaljitkaur Follow

I have used google doc's and wufoo till now but will try the rest of the forms listed over here.

5 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

○

Jackie Leavitt Follow

I've never used Google docs for forms, I will certainly give it a go though.

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

○

bbartolome Follow

I'm the same. I'll have to try out the others as well but probably not jotforms due to the seizing mentioned in the comments?

Benjamin
http://how-to-do-a-blog.com

3 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

5.

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WorkMobile ™ Follow

These are some good examples for building website forms, but how about if your company wants to get customer feedback in person? Or you require form building out in the field?

It would be interesting to see Mashable's thoughts on form building that can be deployed onto a mobile device. This type of technology used to only be available for those who could pay high set up costs and was time consuming to create a bespoke solution. There are a number of different products out there nowadays that allow companies to quickly and easily build their paper forms online and then deploy to mobile workers.

Apologies as we do not want to just direct readers to the WorkMobile solution, but felt that a comment on this post would be useful to those who are looking at other types of data capture services.

Many thanks

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

6.

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Geoff Rice Follow

Try Infopath by Microsoft. Easily integrate it into Outlook and attach it to any database.

Outlook integration video. http://blogs.msdn.com/b/infopath/archive/2006/05/19/602271.aspx

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

7.

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Andy M. Follow

We use Gravity Forms on our website. It's quite powerful, and the output emails are very clean. Another option is PollDaddy. Their surveys can be used for creating forms, as well – http://ocaoimh.ie/2011/05/16/build-contact-form-polldaddy/.

Andy

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

8.

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willkelly Follow

Why didn't you include Adobe FormsCentral? It's has a great workflow, solid UI, and some robust features certainly more than some of the offerings you mention in your article. You can find out more about it at http://formscentral.adobe.com.

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

9.

RICHFITUSA Follow

I'm using Jotforms, but since their domain was seized by the government yesterday I would really love to try these options!

RICHFITUSA
http://richfitusa.com/

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

10.

Garious Follow

Google Docs is my fave, but I will definitely try all of these.

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

11.

itsmeathar Follow

I think there are some more players and also some new entrants, Well these new entrants are looking very interesting, One such tool is CollateBox http://www.colaatebox.com/ , well I have registered recently waiting for their beta version. U all can check their video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KruqWWiw1s
Ur thoughts?

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

○

Jason Saltzman Follow

check out http://www.bizodo.com. They sync with box.

4 days ago Reply 1 Flag this comment

12.

itsmeathar Follow

I think there are some more players and also some new entrants, Well these new entrants are looking very interesting, One such tool is CollateBox http://www.collatebox.com/ , well I have registered recently waiting for their beta version. U all can check their video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KruqWWiw1s
Ur thoughts?

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

○

meetsantanudas Follow

Hey, how did you come across CollateBox. Thanks for mentioning CollateBox here. To give you a little bit of more information, CollateBox (http://www.collatebox.com) is an online service that lets you gather data from multiple sources to work on it, get ready online forms to collect-update data and collaborate with your team members or just stay informed on every activity that occurs in any row or column. Yeah, it

sounds like a marketing pitch but CollateBox is definitely going to be the next excel which will be totally online.

3 hours ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

13.

itsmeathar Follow

Sorry for the first comment, the link is in the second comment!!!!! Its CollateBox http://www.collatebox.com/ to avoid confusion

4 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

14.

Jason Saltzman Follow

I am very surprised you have not picked on on bizodo.com. Bizodo was rated top 25 Small Biz Apps of 2012. In light of the jotform seizure they are even discounting jotformers that were effected and they offer one on one support. It IS the form builder of the future.

4 days ago Reply 1 Flag this comment

○

Darren Nelson Follow

I totally agree, Bizodo is what i use. I can not believe they were not featured.

4 days ago Reply 1 Flag this comment

15.

Darren Nelson Follow

My jotform went down because of the government seizure. I am a Realtor in South Florida and do tons of online lead gen so it killed me. I sync my forms with Top Producer … but I got turned on to http://www.bizodo.com. I would check them out, they are the latest and greatest.

4 days ago Reply 1 Flag this comment

16.

WebEdinburgh Follow

I'm a wordpress developer and I can second the Gravity Forms is the best form builder when using WordPress. Great list and nice to see a couple that I didn't know about!

1 day ago Reply 0 Flag this comment

17.

Regarded49 Follow

I am a publisher on Seeking Alpha and use online forms for feedback from my readers. I found Bizodo from the PC Mag article and in my opinion, they are they best.

3 days ago Reply 0 Flag this comment