

It's a Google World

Google never ceases to amaze me with the useful and fun tools they give away for free.

Start with <http://www.google.ca> ... one of the cleanest, fastest-loading, search-engine pages with the most complete list of results ... it is highly recommended as your browser home page.

In case you didn't know, Google provides alternative search pages: <http://igoogle.ca> for a "richer" home page, <http://m.google.ca> for mobile devices, <http://www.gothic.com/> for you Goths, or choose your preferred language from a list of 130 on <http://www.google.ca/preferences> ... everything from English to Elmer Fudd to Swedish Chef ("Bork, bork, bork!") or even Klingon!

Of course, there are the ever-useful specific search engines for searching Web, Images, Maps, News, Books, Groups, and Blogs. Then there are the amazing downloadable tools like Picasa (photo manipulation), Earth (mapping and more), and Chrome (browser). And if you create a free account with Google, your options expand even further: from notifying you of news items to their shareable Google Calendar to free Blog space and even an area for your documents in Google Docs. For a full list, go to <http://www.google.ca/options>.

One of their upcoming products, Google Chromium OS (<http://www.chromium.org/>), is an alternative to full-blown operating systems like Windows or Mac OS X. I run an early release of Chromium on a 7-inch netbook; it's an efficient operating system that offers a great online experience on lower-powered computer hardware. A very useful tool as the world becomes more web-centric.

Another product on the horizon is Google Wave (<http://wave.google.com>). I believe Wave has what it takes to be the next wave (pardon the pun) of social networking, combining the features of email, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and even serious business collaboration.

For all that you have given us ... Thank you, Google!



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