



7 Ways to Work Smarter in the Cloud



Efficient collaboration and communication are vital components in the success of every business. Luckily, Office 365 makes it easier than ever to work smarter, not harder, so you can do your best work. With Office 365 apps like Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook, as well as other productivity apps, you can redefine how you communicate and collaborate. Features such as co-authoring in real time, instant messaging (IM), video, and voice make it easier to create, share, and work together wherever you are, across your favorite devices.

In this ebook, you'll learn 7 ways Office 365 can help you improve communication and teamwork to make your business more effective, collaborative, and successful.

1



Increase Productivity by Working Together in the Cloud

Businesses of all sizes are taking advantage of the convergence of cloud and mobile technology to enhance collaboration and productivity, accommodate different work styles, and reduce costs. Many companies now let employees work from anywhere, provide cloud-based productivity tools so those workers can communicate and collaborate more effectively, and encourage them to use their own devices for work.

In a March 2014 Dimensional Research survey of 300 SMB information technology professionals, 97% said that anytime, anywhere access to data and applications makes employees more effective.³ Enabling employees to work where, how, and on the devices they prefer can lead to greater productivity and improved

collaboration—especially when they are empowered to work together using Office 2016.

With the new Office 2016 apps, you and your employees can use a mix of business and personal devices to access trusted business applications while benefitting from a consistent experience across your favorite desktops, laptops, smartphones, and tablets running iOS, Android, and Windows operating systems. Office 2016 gives you the flexibility to securely access and edit documents in real-time across devices, so your team is always working from the latest version with everyone's changes saved. Your company will benefit from the collaboration boost that comes from sharing documents fluidly and holding productive meetings from multiple locations.

2

“Our employees can install Office programs on up to five devices, which really helps them stay productive when mobile,”

–Rick Owens, McClone Construction

Go Mobile

The world reached a new milestone in 2014, as mobile devices began to outnumber people for the first time. Mobile technology is now multiplying five times faster than the global population, at a rate of about 10 new devices every second.⁴ In addition, more than 260 million people who work in small businesses now telecommute or use cloud-based services.

Meanwhile, the emerging global generation is mobile by nature. As mobile technology continues to redefine how and where people communicate and collaborate, businesses have the opportunity to tap into this developing market and to capitalise on the evolving mobile workforce as their business grows.

Office 2016 offers you and your team full-fidelity viewing and editing of Office documents across Windows, Android, and Apple devices. That means you and your team can review, edit, analyse, and present with a consistent, familiar user experience optimised for your preferred devices. You can also switch easily from one device to the next without missing a beat. With the Office apps' integration with Microsoft OneDrive for Business, you can access documents from anywhere, pick up where you left off on whatever device you were working on last, and even co-author with others when you are on the go.

3

Synchronise Your Business

It's rare to find a business today that sticks to strict 9:00-to-5:00 operations. The most successful businesses have become much more fluid, using cloud and mobile technology to broaden their reach and compete within the market. These businesses often need to communicate and share information with customers, partners, and suppliers in different time zones or different countries.

Cloud storage synchronises information across different devices, so you and your colleagues are always viewing the latest version of a file no matter where you're working or what device you're using. When you use cloud-based productivity and collaboration tools, you can stay on the same page with distant partners and offsite employees, who can see the most up-to-date content. The cloud also provides high-level security and privacy while ensuring the access control you need.



Work Out Loud

A growing number of forward-thinking businesses are taking collaboration to a new level by adopting Microsoft OneNote shared notebooks to provide a centralised place where they can share all project information, including photos, videos, drawings, typed or handwritten notes, screen clippings, and web pages. When team members work together in the same notebook, OneNote syncs their changes within seconds. With powerful search and versioning, everyone can quickly find just what they're looking for.

In addition, the adoption of social technologies like Yammer, an enterprise-grade social network, can connect remote employees and enhance collaboration. Organisations that use social technologies see a 37% improvement in project collaboration,⁵ and almost 70% of users agree that social technology improves collaboration across remote locations.⁶ With the right set of social technologies to support open communication and seamless collaboration—no matter where people work—companies can respond more quickly to changing market conditions.

These real-time collaboration tools can not only help your employees work better internally, but also with those outside of your business. Yammer and files created in OneNote shared notebooks in Office 2016 can be shared with external partners, suppliers, and customers. According to a 2013 Yammer survey, companies that use such technologies experience a 20% improvement in supplier and partner satisfaction.⁷



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“Being able to meet online will become even more important as we expand geographically. We can hold effective meetings without our managers spending time commuting back and forth.”

—Ted Vu, Taster

Meetings, Simplified.

Meetings are an important part of business, providing valuable opportunities for people to brainstorm, collaborate, strategise, and share information. According to information compiled by Atlassian, most employees attend 62 meetings a month, including the 31 hours they spend in unproductive meetings. Those unnecessary meetings carry a high price, costing US businesses \$37 billion annually.⁸

New communication and collaboration tools like Skype for Business make it easy to conduct modern meetings that are more efficient and productive by providing familiar, easy-to-use features plus enterprise-grade security, compliance, and control.

It can be tough for growing businesses to get everyone together in the same room. Using Skype for Business HD video calling, co-

authoring, app sharing, and presentations, the members of your team who need to actively participate can do so from anywhere. Host or join a meeting from any of your favorite devices—whether you’re running on iOS, Android, or Windows—and easily present, share, and collaborate on documents or a virtual whiteboard during the meeting.

Need to ping someone for a quick question? Use Skype for Business IM, and then add voice, video, and screen sharing as the conversation evolves. With just a click or two, you can initiate an IM chat, share documents, or set up an online meeting where team members in different locations can meet face-to-face and view the same information, without spending the time or money to travel to meet in person.



6

Turn Your Data Into Valuable Insights

An increasing number of businesses are using Business Intelligence (BI) solutions to spot trends, identify risks, and find new opportunities. One-click forecasting in Office 2016 helps SMBs quickly turn historical data series into an analysis of future trends. New Treemap and waterfall charts in Office 2016 make it easier to visualise complex data, and they can be published directly to Microsoft Power BI from Excel.

Use these new tools to connect, view, and shape data from multiple sources, including tables from websites, unstructured sources like Hadoop, and services like Salesforce. The improved Power Pivot features can help you map different data sets with drag-and-drop ease, and calculate hundreds of millions of rows of data with the new analysis functionality.

By using business intelligence tools, your business can transform dense company data into easily digestible insights and make informed decisions to help you help maintain a competitive edge. According to a study by IBM and MIT Sloan Management Review, organisations that achieve a competitive advantage with data analytics and business intelligence are 2.2 times more likely to substantially outperform their industry peers.⁹

7

"I think we need Office to go to the next level, because it's really imperative that we're all communicating, and we're all on the same page."

—Julie Gaines, Fishs Eddy

Co-author Documents in Real-Time

Competitive markets move fast, and businesses that rise to the top do too. To keep up with the pace, employees often need to work together on the same documents, such as sales reporting spreadsheets and marketing plans. An important collaboration feature of productivity tools like Office 2016 and Office Online is real-time co-authoring, which makes it possible for you and your team to edit and contribute to documents at the same time. These cloud-based features automatically save as you go. When you work

together on a Word document, you will see everyone's edits to text and formatting exactly when they are made. Use the version history to refer back to snapshots of the document throughout the editing process. Because Office 365 supports mobility and flexible work styles, it doesn't matter whether you and your team members are working on the web, a desktop, a laptop, or a mobile device. Every change will be synced in the document, automatically saved to the cloud, and made visible to the team.



Citations

- ¹ *Bridging the Information Worker Productivity Gap: New Challenges and Opportunities for IT*, IDC, September 2012
- ² *The Science of Teams and Teamwork*, Lifetime Reliability Solutions, 2014
- ³ *Business Applications and Tablet Adoption: A Survey of IT Professionals at Small and Mid-Sized Organizations*, Dimensional Research, March 2014
- ⁴ *There are now more gadgets on Earth than people*, CNET, October 6, 2014
- ⁵ *Inside Communication*, 2012
- ⁶ *Business Trends Customer Survey*, Yammer, 2013
- ⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁸ *You Waste a Lot of Time at Work*, Atlassian
- ⁹ *The New Intelligent Enterprise*, MIT Sloan Management Review and IBM Institute of Business Value, 2011

To learn more about how cloud, mobile, and social technology solutions can make your organisation more collaborative, call 0800 160 1920 or email contact@classnetworks for a call back.

Visit www.classnetworks.com for more information.

Non-profit organisations are eligible to get Office 365 for free or at a discounted rate, depending on the functionality.

