



Google vs. Microsoft productivity suite comparison series

Collaborate and communicate faster and more efficiently

A comparison of Gmail and Outlook Online

August 2019 (Revised)

This Principled Technologies report was commissioned by Google and is distributed under license from Principled Technologies.

The other report in the Google vs. Microsoft productivity suite comparison series:



Store, access, and share files faster and more efficiently

A comparison of Google Drive, Microsoft OneDrive for Business, and SharePoint Online



Collaborate and communicate faster and more efficiently

A comparison of Gmail and Outlook Online

Email is an important business tool in any productivity suite. Companies that use Google™ G Suite™ have access to Gmail™, while organizations relying on Microsoft Office 365® may use Microsoft Outlook® Online, a browser-based email service. Which gives employees more time to communicate effectively, meet deadlines, and deliver great work? To find out, we evaluated how quickly we could transfer information via email on laptops and smartphones using both productivity suites.

When we used Gmail on laptops, we could upload an image as an email attachment and open a cloud-based shared document more quickly than we could using Microsoft Outlook Online. We also found that saving email attachments directly to the cloud via Google Drive™ (another G Suite tool) was faster than with Microsoft OneDrive® for Business. Additionally, we found previewing calendar invite attachments on smartphones was also generally faster with Gmail. When teams wait less on their email, they have more time to move projects forward and keep customers happy.



Upload an image as an email attachment in up to 78% less time with Gmail*



Open a shared document in up to 61% less time with Gmail*



Save email attachments to the cloud in up to 85% less time with Gmail*

The clock is ticking...

According to HubSpot, “86% of professionals prefer to use email when communicating for business purposes.”¹ And some experts predict the global mobile worker population will grow to 1.87 billion people, or 42 percent of the global workforce, by 2022.² This makes reliable email—no matter what device you’re using—a must if your company wants to keep far-flung workers in the loop. Plus, the less time your employees waste waiting on your productivity suite, the more time they have to tackle the work at hand.

No matter how often people check their work email, some functions are universally important, so we tested actions that most business professionals use regularly.

To make sure we accurately represented real-world users in our testing, we chose popular laptops and smartphones running multiple operating systems and browsers.

Next, we timed how long it took to open cloud-based shared files and perform calendar-related tasks on these representative devices. We used both Gmail and Outlook Online for email duty and utilized Google Drive and Microsoft OneDrive for Business to upload attachments to the cloud.

In most of these tests, Gmail and Google Drive took less time to get the information where it needed to go. This means that by choosing G Suite over Microsoft Office 365, your employees can spend more time focusing on work and less time staring at their inboxes.



The following fictional scenarios illustrate hypothetical situations where employees might benefit from using Gmail and Google Drive. Though the stories are fictional, each example is based on facts we found here at Principled Technologies. For detailed testing information, see the [Science addendum](#) to this report.

Hit the ground running

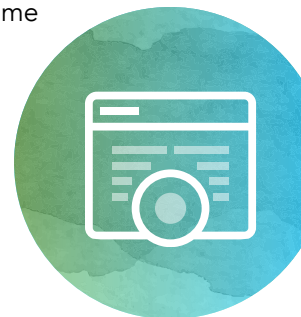
Sarah, a senior financial analyst at a property and casualty insurance company, aspires to be the youngest CFO in her company's history. Sarah realizes that relationships are important in her line of work, so she relies on email to keep interactions personal and to make sure projects stay on track. A productivity suite like G Suite or Microsoft Office 365 can give her the tools she needs to provide senior management with the up-to-date information and in-depth analysis they need to make informed budget and investment decisions.

Keep information flowing

Effective email correspondence allows Sarah and her team of analysts to share critical updates, keep an eye on trend indicators, check in with stakeholders, and amend financial plans—no matter where the collaborators are or what device they're on.

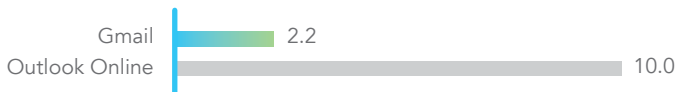
According to our test results, Sarah, could upload a hi-res image as a Gmail attachment in just over two seconds—one third of the time it could take with Outlook Online.

Saving email attachments to the cloud was also much faster with the G Suite tools. In this scenario, Sarah could save that hi-res image to a centralized cloud folder in under three seconds with G Suite, while the same process with the Microsoft Office 365 tools took almost twenty seconds.



Sarah could upload an image as an email attachment in up to 78% less time

Time to upload a 25MB JPG email attachment using Edge on a Windows 10 laptop. All times in seconds (lower is better).

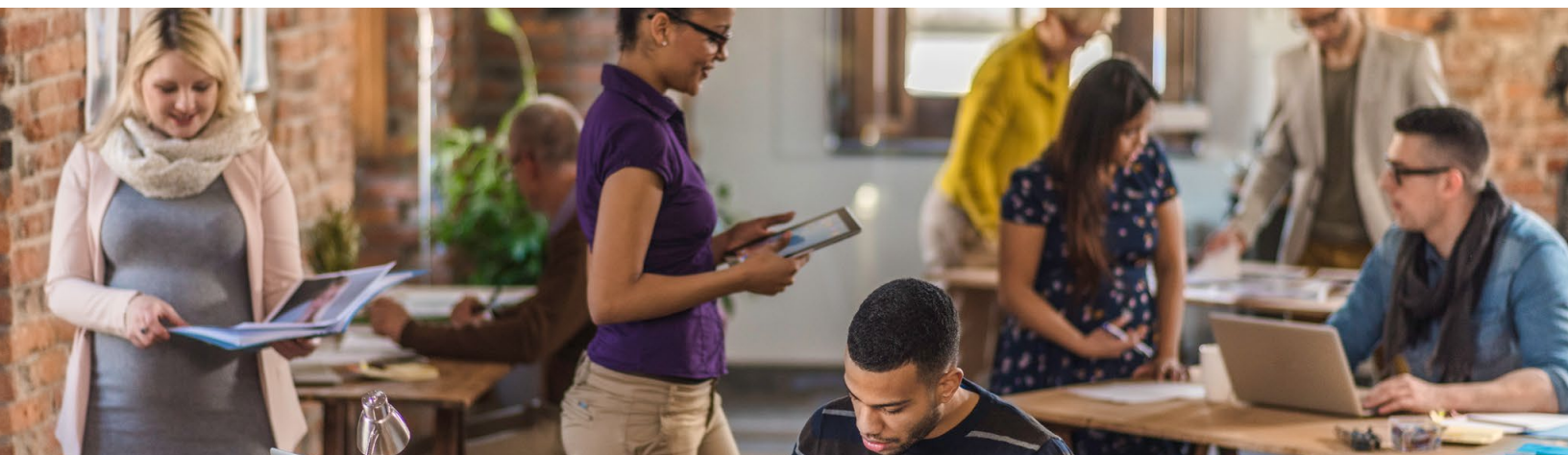


Sarah could save email attachments to the cloud in up to 85% less time

Time to save a 25MB JPG email attachment to cloud storage using Edge on a Windows 10 laptop. All times in seconds (lower is better).



To see results from every configuration we tested, read the science behind the report.



Connect with your audience

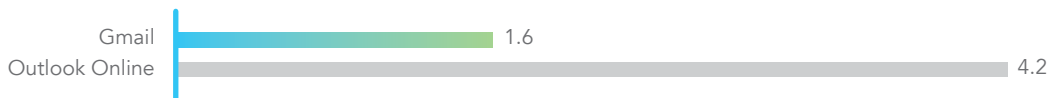
Sarah is working on a presentation for company management. To make sure she's hitting the mark, she asks Charles, her mentor, to review her presentation before the big day.

According to our test results, if Sarah and Charles collaborate with G Suite cloud storage services, it could take Charles, who uses a Safari browser on a MacBook Pro laptop, less than two seconds to open the linked file. That's probably less time than it would take to read the request itself.



Charles could open a shared document in up to 61% less time

Time to open a cloud-hosted 1.3MB doc from email share link using Safari on a MacBook Pro laptop. All times in seconds (lower is better).



To see results from every configuration we tested, read the science behind the report.

On-the-go analysis

Sarah relies on email to stay on top of incoming information while juggling back-to-back-meetings, running errands, and networking with industry contacts. If she can't jump on her Windows 10 laptop, she can always check her Android™ smartphone during breaks in her busy schedule.

Our test results show that, if Sarah's company utilizes G Suite productivity tools instead of Microsoft Office 365, previewing calendar invite attachments for an upcoming meeting will take less time—and give Sarah more time to prepare for meetings, no matter which browser or device she's on.

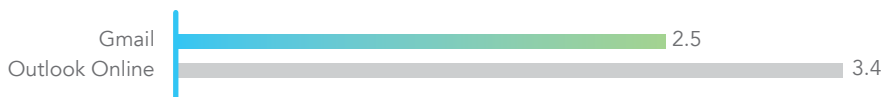


Sarah could preview calendar invite attachments in up to 75% less time

Time to preview a 10MB PDF calendar invite attachment using Edge on a Windows 10 laptop. All times in seconds (lower is better).



Time to preview a 10MB PDF calendar invite attachment on a Pixel 2



To see results from every configuration we tested, read the science behind the report.

Conclusion

Americans spend an average of 5.4 hours each weekday checking email, their preferred form of communication at work.³ And the lines between work and personal email have blurred, with people keeping business interactions going after hours, on weekends, and even on vacation.

In our hands-on productivity suite laptop testing, we found that uploading an image as an email attachment, opening a cloud-based shared document, and saving email attachments directly to the cloud was faster with G Suite than with Microsoft Office 365. Additionally, we found previewing calendar invite attachments on smartphones was predominantly faster with Gmail. When teams wait less for feedback and input, they have more time to move projects forward.

Want to try out the tests yourself? Follow the methodologies in the science behind the report.

This is one report in a two-part series that examines the performance of various components of the Google G Suite and Microsoft Office 365 productivity suites. Read both reports for a broader picture of how each choice can affect your business.

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- 1 HubSpot, "The ultimate list of marketing statistics for 2018," accessed January 8, 2019, <https://www.hubspot.com/marketing-statistics>
- 2 RCR Wireless News, "2017 Predictions: Mobile workforce to drive further enterprise changes in 2017," accessed January 8, 2019, <https://www.rcrwireless.com/20170104/opinion/2017-predictions-mobile-workforce-to-drive-further-enterprise-change-in-2017-tag10>
- 3 Adobe blog, "Consumers are still email obsessed, but they're finding more balance," accessed January 8, 2019, <https://theblog.adobe.com/consumers-are-still-email-obsessed-but-theyre-finding-more-balance/>

This project was commissioned by Google.

Read the science behind this report at <http://facts.pt/621kr5> ▶



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