

# Group Collaboration Tools

This guide details the various synchronous and asynchronous collaboration tools one can use to work with others around the world. Depending on your project or the people you are collaborating with, an email or a phone call may not suffice. Some learn best with audio and visual content, while others may need asynchronous tools to fit their busy schedules.

Collaboration tools can solve the headaches of managing multiple versions and drafts of a document, provide much needed "face time," and enhance the collaboration process. Every resource--both free and subscription-based--has its pros and cons. Free resources may entail being subjected to advertisements or email newsletters while subscription sources may be costly or require significant training. It is up to you to ascertain which resources best suit your collaboration needs and comfort level.

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## Audio/Visual Collaboration

### Tool Tutorials

- [Google Talk Tutorial](#), From Georgia Southern University
- [Skype User Guides](#)
- [YouTube: Getting Started](#)
- [Slack: How it works](#)

### Audio/Visual Collaboration Tools

There are multiple free and subscription-based tools to collaborate with others around the world, both publicly and privately. A few of our favorite tools are included below, but don't forget to research other options such as [WebEx](#), [GoToMeeting](#), and much more. Resources like [CNET](#) and [PCWorld](#) provide analysis and comparison of many collaboration tools.

- [Google Chat](#)  
Type: free  
Purpose: instant messaging/chat tool  
About: A free product in the Google suite. Must set up a Gmail account to utilize this feature. Access virtually via Gmail or download chat plugin to computer desktop.
- [Google+ Hangouts](#)  
Type: free audio/video conferencing tool  
Purpose: Engage up to 10 people in an audio/video conference to share screens, Google documents, chat, and much more  
About: A free product in the Google suite; must set up a Google+ account and log in to Google+ to utilize this tool
- [Join.me](#)  
Unlike Skype and Google+ Hangouts, you don't need to sign up for an account. Audio is done through the Internet. Download the free desktop or mobile apps (click "Apps" to download the free apps).
- [Realtoru.net Live Chat](#)  
Type: free to REALTOR® University students  
Purpose: synchronously "chat" with fellow classmates and professor using Realtoru.net's live chat feature  
About: Found within an RU course by clicking the "Live" tab at the top of the Realtoru.net course platform.
- [Skype Basic](#)  
Type: Free audio/video conference (with one person at a time)  
Purpose: Audio/video call a friend for free from anywhere in the world
- [Skype Premium](#)  
Type: \$ subscription resource for audio/video conference with multiple parties  
Purpose: audio/video conference with multiple people simultaneously, screen sharing, dial US and Canadian land lines, and instant message
- [YouTube](#)  
Type: free  
Purpose: Video creation and distribution; users can create their own YouTube channels that compile all their

original videos in one place

About: "YouTube provides a forum for people to connect, inform, and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers large and small" (YouTube).

## Document Collaboration

### Tool Tutorials

- [Apple iCloud Setup](#)
- [Dropbox Tour](#)
- [Google Drive Overview](#)
- [Microsoft Track Changes](#)

### Document Collaboration Tools

There are lots of free and subscription-based document collaboration tools available. We've included several low to no-cost options below, but you might also consider exploring tools like [Basecamp](#), one of the most commonly used project management in companies worldwide, or [Springloops](#) and [Jumpchart](#) for website planning and collaboration.

- [Amazon Cloud Drive](#)  
Type: First 5GB free; additional storage for purchase  
Purpose: access files (documents, photos, music) from anywhere in the world  
About: Amazon.com tool
- [Apple iCloud](#)  
Type: \$ subscription; 20GB free to MobileMe subscribers; cost based on amount of data stored  
Purpose: access files (documents, photos, music, books, apps, calendar, mail, contacts) from anywhere in the world. Auto-sync content from multiple devices, accessible from the cloud at any time.  
About: Apple tool  
Cons: If your Internet connectivity is bad, you may not be able to access content from the cloud. Auto stores content in the cloud, not on the device; need to download individual content pieces if traveling or not Internet access.
- [Dropbox](#)  
Type: free  
Purpose: file and document sharing  
About: "Founded in 2007 by Drew Houston and Arash Ferdowsi, two MIT students tired of emailing files to themselves to work from more than one computer"
- [Google Drive](#) aka "Google Docs"  
Type: free  
Purpose: create and share (privately or publicly) online documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and more  
About: One of the many resources in Google's online suite of free, virtual tools
- [Microsoft SharePoint](#)  
Type: subscription software  
Purpose: Document sharing  
About: A Microsoft resource available as stand-alone software for purchase

## Library

- [Microsoft Track Changes](#)  
Type: part of the Microsoft Office Suite  
Purpose: collaborate with others on the same document by suggesting edits, inserting comments, and making editorial changes ease to view and incorporate. For use within Word, PowerPoint, and Excel (under the "review" tab)  
About: Part of the Microsoft Office suite
- [WordPress.com](#)  
Type: free  
Purpose: personal blog publishing  
About: WordPress.com is a popular personal blog publishing tool.
- [WordPress.org](#)  
Cost: free; need to pay for a hosting service to publish on the Internet  
Purpose: a customizable open-source software tool used for personal blog publishing  
About: WordPress.org is a blog tool for personal publishing and also a Content Management System (CMS).

## Social Collaboration

### Tool Tutorials

- [Facebook Help Center](#)
- [How to use TweetChat](#)
- [LinkedIn Help Center](#)
- [Pinterest Help](#)
- [Twitter Help Center](#)
- [WordPress Codex](#)
- [Wunderlist Support Center](#)
- [Yammer Help Center](#)

### Social Collaboration Tools

Social collaboration is the next wave of technology to infuse the business world. Resources like [Socialtext](#) combine business collaboration capabilities, like those offered by [Microsoft SharePoint](#), with a social media element (like Facebook) for use in business. Such tools allow a company to integrate and unify internal and external company communications, and can create a greater sense of cohesiveness and collaboration amongst employees. The tools below will help you collaborate with your peers and co-workers in unique and interesting ways.

- [Facebook](#)  
Type: free  
Purpose: social networking, image sharing  
About: "Millions of people use Facebook everyday to keep up with friends, upload an unlimited number of photos, share links and videos, and learn more about the people they meet" (Facebook Company Overview).

## Library

- [LinkedIn](#)  
Type: free; subscription plans available for added features  
Purpose: professional networking  
About: The world's largest online professional network, with members from all industries and geographic areas.
- [Pinterest](#)  
Type: free  
Purpose: Online pinboard  
About: Visual platform allows users to organize ideas and share them with friends and people with similar interests
- [Tweet Chat](#)  
Type: free  
Purpose: Real-time conversations on one specific topic on the Twitter platform  
About: A Twitter account is required for us; choose a hashtag to follow, and converse with other tweeters about the topic in real time
- [Wunderlist](#)  
Type: free  
Purpose: task management and sharing  
About: Task management app that allows users to organize to-do tasks and share lists via email, Facebook, Twitter, and more. REALTOR® Magazine notes that "Wunderlist stands out for its ability to sync across multiple platforms and with multiple people."
- [Yammer](#)  
Type: Basic service is free, but a subscription is required for increased levels of service  
Purpose: Knowledge sharing and document collaboration with the same ease of use as Facebook or Twitter  
About: Yammer describes itself as "a private social network for your company"
- [Evernote](#)  
Type: Free; premium options available for a fee  
Purpose: research findings management tool