



# Six Ways Google Docs Can Improve Your Team's Efficiency

[By Lynette Chandler](#)

Author of this report, Lynette Chandler is a marketer with a knack for helping entrepreneurs interpret and apply technology in their business – even if they are technophobes. Always willing to assist, you'll find her at her [website](#) and [blog](#).

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Ever been in this situation? Your writer needs to send you a document. They email it to you but it is too big for your inbox. She revises it and sends it again. This time, it is small enough to get through but gets eaten up by your spam filter since it considers any document or spreadsheet attachment malicious.

You make a few changes to your computer settings and ask them to send again. Finally! You receive it but it won't open because they used a newer version of the software. You get it all straightened out, both of you start working together on the document, you revise the content, send it back and forth. Next time you look, you have multiple copies of this document, each one a little different than the other. You have no way to track who has revised which part and a lot of time wasted in between trying to clarify things with each other.

If you answered yes. Stop! Use Google Docs instead. I'll show you how Google Docs will save you from all those hassles, cut the time spent working together on any document and much more.

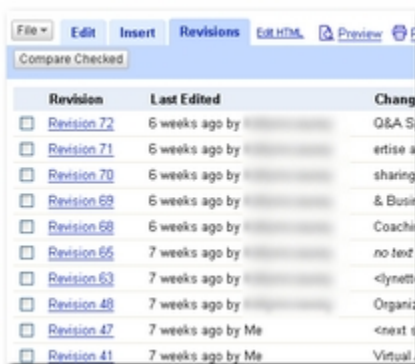
## ***What is Google Docs?***

Google Docs is a web based office suite. It includes a document writer/editor, spreadsheet and presentation software. You can create documents from Google Docs or you can upload one you already have.

## ***What Can I Do With It?***

Plenty. But the best way to explain it is to show you. So here are six ways you can use this fantastic free application in your business.

## ***Case 1 – Collaborate On A Document or Spreadsheet***



Revision	Last Edited	Change
<input type="checkbox"/> Revision 72	6 weeks ago by [redacted]	Q&A S
<input type="checkbox"/> Revision 71	6 weeks ago by [redacted]	ertise a
<input type="checkbox"/> Revision 70	6 weeks ago by [redacted]	sharing
<input type="checkbox"/> Revision 69	6 weeks ago by [redacted]	& Busin
<input type="checkbox"/> Revision 68	6 weeks ago by [redacted]	Coach
<input type="checkbox"/> Revision 66	7 weeks ago by [redacted]	no text
<input type="checkbox"/> Revision 63	7 weeks ago by [redacted]	<lynett
<input type="checkbox"/> Revision 48	7 weeks ago by [redacted]	Organiz
<input type="checkbox"/> Revision 47	7 weeks ago by Me	<next s
<input type="checkbox"/> Revision 41	7 weeks ago by Me	Virtual

I recently hired a new writer and needed her to re-work and polish up a report sitting on my hard drive for months. When we sealed the contract I simply uploaded the file into Google Docs. In places where I had a few comments I simply added one. It shows up in a small note with my name, and date and time the comment was left.

When she sent it back to me, I could see exactly where she modified the document since Google keeps a copy of each revision. Just click on the Revision tab to see the changes. You can also compare them and revert back to an earlier one. Very handy for accidental overwrites.

## ***Case 2 – Crunch Numbers Together***

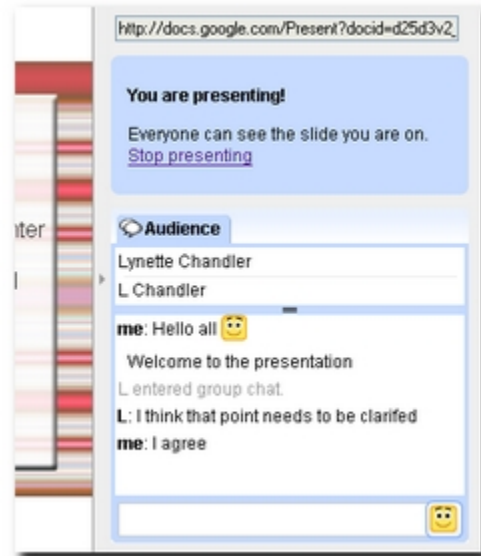
When two or more people are editing or viewing a spreadsheet, you will see the option to discuss the spreadsheet. You'll see the names of who's viewing or editing the document. Simply type into the chat area and you can conduct a real time discussion with them. What is nice: Whenever the spreadsheet is saved, you'll see the changes appear on your screen as well. Perfect for talking budget with your partner(s), accountant, sales or affiliate managers.

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### Case 3 – Train Your Team or Hold A Teleseminar

The discussion or chat feature is also available for Presentations. When you are in View Presentation mode – this chat option automatically opens. Everyone who is viewing the presentation can chat with each other. Or, you can get on the phone and do a small group presentation to train your staff.

If you have a teleseminar, you can also invite people to view the presentation with you while on the phone. When you advance the slides it'll be updated on other people's browser as well. The best thing is, nobody has to download or install anything special. Just their browser. Pretty sweet.



### Case 4 – Create Check Lists And Training Materials

Google Docs is excellent for creating and storing training materials for your team. Now you can have a central repository for all your check lists, training material and company documentation. It's also a good way to share passwords and logins privately with your team. No more emailing passwords!

Any documentation you create is updated live so if you have new policy or procedures, everyone gets the same copy immediately. You can also allow key team members the privilege to edit and maintain these documents while everyone else only has viewing access. This means you can control your information and still distribute it efficiently.

But what happens when a team member leaves? It is super easy. You just remove them. When they log into their Google Docs account, they will no longer see that file. What I really like about using Google Docs for internal documents is, you don't have to scour your computer for all the information. No more uploading to your website either. When you hire a new team member, just add them. So easy.

### Case 5 – Budgeting & Simple Accounting

Are you a spreadsheet type of person? Me too. No fancy accounting/budgeting software makes more sense to me than a plain old spreadsheet. Using Google Docs spreadsheet, I have logged income, expenses and profit reports on some Joint Venture products. By doing this, all members of the partnership can review what's going on with the money in real time. They can also update the log when they spend some of the money. You know exactly what is going on and it reduces a lot of partnership friction. You can also invite your book keeper. I bet he/she will be really happy not to be the only one entering transactions into the book.

Date From	Date To	Amount	Reimbursed
5/28/2007	6/3/2007	\$44.44	Yes
6/4/2007	6/10/2007	\$70.00	Yes
6/11/2007	6/17/2007	\$81.55	Yes
6/18/2007	6/24/2007	\$88.88	Yes
6/25/2007	7/1/2007	\$140.65	Yes
7/2/2007	7/8/2007	\$14.89	Yes
7/9/2007	7/15/2007	\$92.66	Yes
7/16/2007	7/22/2007	\$103.77	Yes
7/23/2007	7/29/2007	\$77.77	Yes
7/30/2007	8/6/2007	\$48.77	Yes

If you have things to hash out, just invite everyone to log in at the same time. Click Discuss and you're ready to chat with each other.

### Case 6 – Track Your Team's Work Hours

Having multiple team members can get a little crazy

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sometimes. One challenge is, you don't quite know how many hours someone has clocked until you get the bill at the end of the month. Yikes! At other times, you get different bills in different formats. To do your own accounting, you or your book keeper has to spend time re-entering everything. Outsourcing should simplify your life not create more administrative work.

So, make your team log the hours worked in a spreadsheet you create. Show them how to use it and let them know you'll only pay for hours recorded in that spreadsheet. With some simple mathematical formulas, you can make this spreadsheet calculate time & amount owed to them automatically. All they need to enter is time in/time out or how much time was spent working on your project. At the end of the month, you don't even need to tally it up. The totals are already there.

Best thing is, you know exactly up to the minute how much you are spending on outsourced labor. This way, you can take action to slow down or speed up the project based on your finances.

### ***How Do You Get Started & How Much Does It Cost?***

It is free. All you need is a Google Account. You can sign up by visiting <http://docs.google.com>. If you already have one then it's really easy since you only need to sign on with your existing Google Account logins.

### ***Are There Alternatives?***

Absolutely. There is company called [Zoho](#) that has a web based office suite as well. It too is free and very feature rich and at the time of writing perhaps more feature rich than Google Docs. They also have a ton of other applications like Project Management software, web conferencing, planners and note takers that make working with your team online a joy.

Happy outsourcing!

Lynette  
Chandler

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## **Resource List**

Here are some other tools and resources you might find helpful running your web business.

### **Get your own team**

This report assumes you already have a team but if you don't or you need to consider expanding your team, these are excellent places to look. I have personally used them and been quite satisfied.

[Outsourcing Sweetie](#) – perfect for those who do not have a team yet, are new to outsourcing or want to start outsourcing. The Platinum is the best deal because it includes hours of work from writers, virtual assistant, technical help and graphics designer. Consider it buying a ready made team who is web marketing savvy.

In addition, you get excellent checklists you can hand off to other assistants you may have plus calls with Alice Seba to help you be a pro at outsourcing so you can focus on doing the things you do best to grow your business.

[Workaholics4Hire](#) – A professional company who has been helping other web marketers for years. They offer pretty much everything that can be outsourced in a web business except copywriting. I personally have contracted them for customer service and been assigned a fantastic agent. She's courteous, responds quickly to customer concerns, quick to learn and professional.

[Odesk](#) – if you are the type who prefers to assemble your own team, hire directly and manage your own team members, Odesk is a good place. It is rather technically skewed, but you can still find help for other jobs there. The nice thing about it is, you pay by the hour. Unlike other freelance sites where you pay by project or task. I find this much easier especially when you are building a team for the long term.

### **Communication Tools**

While GoogleDocs does have real time chat built in, sometimes you may want something more. Like the ability to draw and illustrate your thoughts, share your desktop or have a voice conversation without the phone. You might want to take a look at one of these.

- [MeetingOnNow](#)
- [DimDim](#)
- [CrossLoop](#)
- [Twiddla](#)