# Google Suite: An Integrated IT application for Improved Business Efficiency

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*Abstract*— Google Suite is a package of integrated cloud based services that provide an organization a novel way to work together online. The advantages are not just limited to personalized business Gmail and instant chat messaging but extend to real time document collaboration, social media, video conferencing, increased cloud storage capacity, eDiscovery, log analysis, audit reports, enhanced security controls & data loss prevention. It is a set of applications that can prove invaluable to the organisation as it facilitates communication & information sharing for quick decision making and follow ups. With this, G Suite has emerged as a competitor to MS Office 365 which offers similar package benefits to users. Still, the innovative model of G Suite proves more promising when it comes to versatility, cost efficiency and feasibility.

*Keywords*—Google, Suite, Cloud, Storage, Collaboration, Gmail

## I.    G SUITE: REBRANDING THE BRAND

Modern organisations are working globally with apparently no fixed physical boundary or office-times. Employees are expected to be on their tasks 24* 7 leaving no chance to grab an exciting deal or pursue a potential client who can benfit the company in multitude. For this to accomplish, one has to be 'connected' with colleagues, subordinates, client representatives and of course the boss! Rapid exchange of information pertaining to business is required to convince and argue the case. To clinch the deal, one has to have all supporting documents within grasp and if needed, arranged from necessary sources within minutes and further present it to the concerned party at the earliest. Hence, it is imperative for a modern business organisation to have dedicated application software for producing information such as databases, charts, graphs, digital video and so on [1]. Considering this, Google had launched Google App for Work in 2006 to increase collaboration, engagement and productivity with a view to streamline business processes and enhance innovation [2]. A decade later, it has rechristened the brand to bring all the trademark applications under one brand.

Taking a step that caters to its enterprise customers, Google on September 29, 2016 announced the rename of its trademark app 'Google for Work' as 'Google Suite'. It encompasses. Gmail, Hangouts, Google+, Google Calendar,

Drive for storage, Slides, Docs, Forms, Sheets, Sites to name. Additional administrative tools and advanced features like Admin Panel & Vault as well as domain address are provided on paid basis. The benefit of going premium is ensuring increased security of personal data as no information is used for advertisement purposes [3].

## II.    BENEFITS TO ORGANISATIONS

While Cloud computing is not a new concept, Google suit has certainly redefined the technology with businesses taking advantage of speed, accessibility and storage [4] [5] [6] [7]. Employees are able to access information remotely and collaborate effectively thus enhancing the communication channels between clients or customer and making the work flow more fluid. The noted benefits of Google Suite in an organisation are-

**Versatility:** Compatible with iOS and Android, Google Suite allows employees to share files, send emails, engage in video calls and therefore collaborates in real time from anywhere on Earth. It has encouraged reduced travels and in-person meetings that incur a lot of time and money expenditure. Thus there is increased innovation to effectively achieve the work targets with minimal cost on company. Further, from organisation's vantage point, undertakings like annual/quarterly assessments or training are now being dispensed virtually through Hangouts and hence again increasing cost efficiency of management operations.

**Efficient Teamwork:** Tools like Google Docs, Drive, Sheets and Hangouts are used by employees to consolidate their individual efforts in real time in the same document, presentation or spreadsheet, eventually leading to shortening of total time in conducting in-person meetings or post meeting workload thus rendering speed to reach a conclusive decision relatively faster for an idea, concept or product. With each member of the team having the correct and current information at their disposal, work efficiency improves leading to improved employee productivity.

**Streamlined Communication:** Cloud based communication of Google Suite has decommissioned legacy email and servers, causing reduced development and substitution costs associated with these systems. For instance, Gmail has proved to be a really simple yet most collaborative app cutting through all barriers of communications. It synchronises all contacts and messages without downloading them into devices. Further, it simplifies message storage with each new follow up or reply message being reflected at the top along with previous conversation in the bottom thus shortcutting the need to go back and find the old text. Even more, the G Chat in Gmail provides the option of quick, by-the-minute transfer of information through messaging or video conferencing and thus reducing dependency or costs of telephony system. Going a step ahead, syncing Gmail with Google Calendar helps create events and send an invitation to the entered Gmail id. Multiple employees, depending upon the granted access, can also post color-coded events in a single Google Calendar for the entire organisation to view.

**Multiple Email/Domain Aliases:** Whether it's johndoe@companyname.com, john.doe@companyname.com or john@companyname.com created under G Suite, all points to one address and mails sent to each one of them would reach the same destination. Also, multiple domains can also be associated with each user's email account. For instance, if company name changes from abc to xyz, then john@abc.com or johndoe@xyz.com would have the same destination inbox if the other domain name xyz is attached with the G Suite account.

**Building Knowledge Hub:** Google Sites is an easy way to create an internal company website without having to write codes for desktops, mobiles or tablets. It helps in creating a team oriented web page where multiple people can collaborate and share opinions, ideas or information. Data can be imported from other apps like Calendar or standard client forms to post it for employees or customers to have access to it. Therefore, either through private intranet hub or through public domain that serves as the face of business, knowledge sharing is realized.

**Ownership**: In an event of employee lay-off, through G Suite administration, password for employee's business Gmail can be changed to prevent sensitive data leaking to anyone outside company's purview. Moreover, with G Suite, all the documentation with Docs, Slides, Sheets done by the employees are owned by the company and can further be backed up in the company's drive as a mandatory policy.

**Freedom to go beyond:** If Google Suite seems to still not serve the purpose fully, Third-party apps like Intuit Online Payroll, Zoho CRM and Tungle.me, to name a few, are provided on Google Apps Marketplace to fulfil a variety of specific business functions and integrate with other standard apps too.

## III.  MICROSOFT OFFICE – ALREADY ESTABLISHED ALTERNATIVE?

While Google has its share of fame in small or big organisations, the yet another IT giant Microsoft is not an unfamiliar name too, when it comes to Productivity Suites. As understood, modern organisations are centred on seamless communication and information flow which in turn lead to effective collaboration among all involved in business process. Choosing a suite thus becomes critical for the smooth functioning of various interlinked functions involved in a business organisation. And to help with the decision making both tech giants offer free trial to gauge the extent to which each package meets company requirements.

Both Microsoft and Google offer a similar feature set of Productivity Suite. Most of us are relatively familiar with working on MS Word, Excel and Power Point for documentation purposes. Google Drive came up with the equivalent versions of Google Docs, Sheets and Slides. However, there are certain reviews which highlight the limitation of Google Docs in creating embellished marketing brochures or templates that are possible in Office 2013. Further, it is slow in accessing heavy content-filled and complex documents causing editing an arduous task with it. But for regular daily work, Google Docs has proved to be an excellent collaborator tool which helps all employees in sharing, editing and commenting from anywhere. Similarly, Google Sheets inherent tools GOOGLEFINANCE() and GOOGLETRANSLATE() helps in extracting information from other applications and thus collaborating data at one place [8].

Additional applications for note taking (ONENOTE – Office 365 and KEEP – Google Suite), instant messaging and conferencing ( SKYPE – Office 365 and HANGOUT – Google Suite) and email management (OUTLOOK – Office 365 and Gmail – Google Suite) are available which are analogous to each other. Unlike SKYPE, HANGOUT has

integration with other Google apps like Docs, Maps, Calendar and other social media like YOUTUBE.

Then again, familiarity and simplicity is the biggest strength of Gmail. It allows applying multiple labels to an email. Instant messaging inside Gmail allows communicating immediately with a colleague who is online and thus removes long formal email follow ups. Also the Search is quick and further integrates with other Google apps like Calendar. The attachment handling is smooth with easy access to previews, editing and saving to the Drive.

The two Productivity Suites have their own advantages over each other. Microsoft combines traditional desktop applications with browser based versions of software; whereas Google is entirely online, offering vast majority of services through net-connected applications. Still, one can use Docs, Sheets, Slides offline in Chrome with some changes in Admin console and the user side to permit this. Also, through add-on chrome, one can work in Gmail while offline [9].

In February 2017, Google extended its brilliant Search application into the Suite as Google Cloud Search to help companies sort through their complex internal data stored on Cloud every day. It combines Google-Search and machine intelligence to provide a unified search experience as well as proactive recommendations to help user steer their work day more resourcefully.

Some of the advanced functionality is due to Google's recent updates which could prove to be quite convenient while making the work proficient. A few of these updates are –

- ✓ Natural Language Processing in Google Sheets
- ✓ Machine Intelligence in Google Calendar and Docs
- ✓ Dynamic Layout Suggestions in Google Slides
- ✓ Granular Content Ownership with focus on team in Google Drive

A host of other useful applications come bundled with both MS Office and Google Suite. Selecting between the two Suites is a matter of preference and necessity which in turn is dependent upon the type of business processes that runs in the company. Microsoft has had long ruled the field with feature packed applications and services but Google's focus has been on collaboration. A pure online play, it has the advantage of real-time update of changes and comments. Also, a less feature-packed Google Suite gives a distraction free and more content-focused working environment leading to easier learning curve for users. Furthermore, third-party integration with a variety of CRM, PM and HR software provides flexibility and options for a company to choose among a large number of productivity apps to ease operations. For employees, new or old, who have had

developed a habit of using OUTLOOK, Google Suite sync for Microsoft Outlook is available which helps in letting employees use the interface they are comfortable for email, notes, calendar, contacts etc. and importing the existing and new data to Google. All versions of OUTLOOK 2003/07/10/13/16 are compatible with G Suite [10] [11] [12] [13].

## IV. COST OF OBTAINING SECURITY AND COMFORT

For Indian business market, Google has launched a Basic Professional Office Suite at the rate of 150 INR per user per month, where user denotes to a personalised email id excluding group emails such as support@companyname.com or sales@companyname.com. Company has a choice of going for a Flexible plan to add/delete a user or an Annual plan where fixed number of user ids are created and paid for in advance at a discounted rate @ INR 125/user/month.

Along with personalised business email, the Basic plan offers 30GB cloud storage and collaboration friendly facilities like video/voice conferencing, smart shared calendars, integrated spreadsheets, documents and presentations. To keep control over data access, admin and security management is provided. Further, for technical support regarding the productivity suite 24/7 customer helpline is available by all means of communication i.e. call, email and online chat [7].

While small business houses can manage its processes through the Basic plan, medium and large enterprises can benefit from buying advanced premium packages where additional advantages like unlimited photo, drive and Gmail cloud storage, eDiscovery for emails/chats/files, audit report for individual user activity, data loss prevention, Gmail log analysis, third-party integration with Gmail, advanced security controls for data access etc. can be valuable. Through audit logs, suspicious activities, failed login attempts, changes to admin account can be obtained. eDiscovery presents web based features email/chat - search, legal holds, archiving and export. G Suite for mid-market and large business provides opportunity for mid to large businesses to innovate and boost productivity [14].

## V. CONCLUSION

Google Suite is not just a rebranding of Google Apps for Work. It pulls together a large number of functionalities with enhanced features. Whether it's SMART – storage, - scheduling, - presentation, - documentation, - drive or - spreadsheet, there is a new found 'smartness' in the collaboration features across the suite. Professional business emails, online cloud storage across email/chat/files, shared calendars for easy meeting setup, shared documents for teamwork, video conferences with Hangouts, instant

messaging for swift interaction and many more tools to help businesses succeed in today's aggressive corporate world.

While it's fair to say that Microsoft is more popular with large organisations, Google's popularity has been increasing too, especially in small to mid – market size companies. The corporations are locked in battle over transitioning customers to online storage, and Microsoft being a competitor means Google already exerts a huge influence in this market segment. However, both G Suite and MS Office 365 has their own shares of strengths and limitations; and the best possible way for a business establishment to decide which option to select is through test deployment of both packages. The performance should be measured against pre set criteria, user acceptance and legal compatibility.

With advanced machine intelligence, G Suite is mostly intuitive requiring assistance at certain times only. There are array of resources to answer all concerns pertaining to its functioning. It is reliable, secure and cost efficient, giving any company an advantage over the rest in the market. With coordinated functions going on internally and externally, collaboration is achieved and with it comes boost in innovation and productivity, which in turns gives a competitive edge to the organisation [15].

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