



OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

MODULE: DIGITAL SKILLS

Learning Units: 1-3



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1 INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

The Internet, and the recent expansion of online social media platforms, offers a wealth of opportunities for communication that most of us use regularly these days. Much of what we have learned about online communication through the development of email, web chat rooms and learning forums applies also to social media exchanges via Facebook, Twitter and other channels which support online interaction between members of organisations and communities.

There are two main ways of communicating online, and these are called synchronous and asynchronous, which can be defined as follows:

- *Synchronous* communication means taking place in 'real time'; for example, via instant messaging or a 'chat' facility.
- *Asynchronous* communication takes place when participants communicate in their own time; for example, by responding to messages that have been posted in an online forum.

If you take part in social networks, you will recognise that these terms could be applied to those too.

In this module you will learn about the following online communication tools:

- Skype
- Zoom
- Microsoft Teams
- Google Hangouts
- Slack
- GoToMeeting
- Dialpad
- Free Conference
- Join.me
- Gather

You will also learn about 10 useful online collaboration tools:

- ClickUp
- MeisterTask
- BaseCamp
- Asana
- Trello
- Wrike
- FileStage
- Week Plan
- Mural
- Team Viewer



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2 LECTURE NOTES

2.1 DIGITAL TOOLS FOR COMMUNICATION PURPOSES

In this unit we will have a closer look at platforms allowing for audio and video communication, i.e. web conferencing, via the internet particularly on TCP/IP connections.

You can use digital platforms for several purposes, like:

- virtual conference & 1to1 meetings
- webinars
- virtual networking events
- training & workshops
- customers calls and many others.

Choosing good digital tools for communication can make things easier for the organisation and its employees. Such software should be part of a unified communication system and also needs to include security features. Among the options available, it is crucial to determine which tool best suits your requirement. Below you will find short descriptions and links to most popular digital tools for communication purposes.

2.1.1 SKYPE

<https://www.skype.com>

Skype is a hybrid instant messaging and voice chat application that allows users to connect with one another from any global location with Internet access. It is one of the most popular communications platforms in the world. Skype brings a number of significant advantages to both personal and business communication, depending on how it is utilized. Perhaps most importantly, Skype is free, which means you can test it yourself without making an investment.

Features:

- Video calls
- Phone calls
- Chat
- Messages
- Group conversations
- Screen sharing
- SMS text messaging
- Voicemail

Pros:

- Strong protection of the video conferences in the security tests
- Widely spread
- Available on many platforms
- Recording function for meetings



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- Comprehensive online help
- Integrated VoIP service

Cons:

- Source code protection capable of development
- Somewhat confusing user interface
- (Decent) ad inserts

2.1.2 ZOOM

<https://zoom.us/>

Zoom is a web video conferencing platform that a lot of teams use to hold meetings. It's one of the better substitutes for face-to-face interactions, and it's free to get started. You can also record and store meetings.

Features:

- Videoconferencing + in-conference chat
- Screen-sharing
- Call recording

Pros:

- Supports large audiences
- Stream your meetings/webinars on Facebook
- You can use Zoom for free
- Google Calendar support
- Scalable for small, medium, and large business
- Easy to use

Cons:

- Too many subscriptions and addons
- Lack of comment control
- HD video is not the standard
- You need to download an app
- Mobile application not as intuitive as the web application
- Video and audio lag and outages
- Screen sharing requires high-end computers but does not work so much with older versions

Cost: \$14.99 - \$19.99 monthly

2.1.3 MICROSOFT TEAMS

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software>



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Microsoft Teams, which is similar to Slack, is a collaborative communication tool where you can chat, create channels, and run your day-to-day correspondence. It works well for organisations that primarily use Microsoft products and need one central messaging app.

Features:

- Integrations with other Microsoft tools
- Chat and messaging
- Audio calling
- Meeting scheduling (links to Outlook)

Pros:

- Integration of all tools in a single place
- No additional cost for Microsoft 365 users
- Useful chat additions
- Seamless files search, backup, and collaboration
- Helpful bots

Cons:

- Too many similar tools
- No unified search for all products
- Unnecessary consumption of storage
- A limited number of channels

Cost: Free to sign-up

2.1.4 GOOGLE MEET

<https://meet.google.com/>

Google Meet (formerly known as Hangouts Meet) is a video-communication service developed by Google. It is one of two apps that constitute the replacement for Google Hangouts, the other being Google Chat.

Features:

- Two-way and multi-way audio and video calls with a resolution up to 720p
- An accompanying chat
- Call encryption between all users
- Noise-canceling audio filter
- Low-light mode for video



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- Ability to join meetings through a web browser or through Android or iOS apps
- Integration with Google Calendar and Google Contacts for one-click meeting calls
- Screen-sharing to present documents, spreadsheets, presentations, or (if using a browser) other browser tabs
- Ability to call into meetings using a dial-in number in the US
- Hosts being able to deny entry and remove users during a call.
- Ability to raise and lower hand
- Video filters, effects and augmented reality masks.

Pros:

- Free version for Google users and flexible paid versions
- Productivity tools and integration with other Google services
- Considerably straightforward user experience and user interface
- Video and audio quality, overall performance, and security

Cons:

- Relatively limited features when compared to others
- Can be taxing on hardware and system resources

Cost: Free to sign-up

2.1.5 SLACK

<https://slack.com/>

Slack, one of the best communication tools out there, is known for its intuitive UX. Many teams use it as a virtual HQ, and where they primarily share files and integrate tools.

Features:

- One-line messaging
- Ability to use integrations and plug-ins
- File-sharing
- Create separate channels



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Pros: Slack has a sleek, modern interface that users love. It's easy to install and get started with. You can add apps and integrations such as Zoom, Github, and Google Drive. Teams can also create channels for everything from marketing communication to somewhere to share memes.

Cons: Slack is designed for one-line-at-a time communications, so users get overloaded with messages, experience notification fatigue, and important context is lost.

Cost: Free to sign-up

2.1.6 GOTOMEETING

<https://www.goto.com/meeting>

GoToMeeting is a web conferencing tool specifically built for business. Users can collaborate effectively with clear audio, visual, and on-screen drawing tools, then later, use automatic transcripts for meeting notes.

Features:

- Video conferencing with 25 high-definition video feeds per session
- Chat
- Toll-free calling
- Personal meeting rooms

Pros: GoToMeeting is designed for companies, so it's great for meetings. One of their newest features, Smart Meeting Assistant, also transcribes calls automatically.

Cons: Users report sporadic issues with audio and inconsistencies between using GoToMeeting on Macs versus PCs that can add complications for users.

Cost: \$14 - custom pricing

2.1.7 DIALPAD (PREVIOUSLY UBERCONFERENCE)

<https://www.dialpad.com/meetings/>

Dialpad is a minimal video conferencing tool for teams that need a no-frills, easy to use platform.

Features:

- Conference calling
- Screen-sharing
- Record and playback
- Mobile access



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- No pins required to join calls

Pros: The platform is intuitive to use. You can easily log in and start a meeting right away.

Cons: Users report that there can be connectivity issues, such as screen-sharing not working properly. You also must use Chrome to screen-share.

Cost: \$15/month

2.1.8 FREE CONFERENCE

<https://www.freeconference.com/>

Similar to Dialpad, FreeConference is a pretty straight-forward web conferencing tool. You can get a link and join a meeting immediately, which makes it an ideal tool for people looking for something simple.

Features:

- Conference and video calls
- No hidden charges

Pros: For users that want a no fuss web conferencing tool, FreeConference is a good fit. You can log in and launch a meeting for free.

Cons: If your team needs something more robust, FreeConference will be too limited with features.

Cost: Free

2.1.9 JOIN.ME

<https://www.join.me/>

Join.me is another straight-forward web conferencing tool with minimal features. You don't need to download any software — log in from your web browser and get started.

Features:

- Easy conference and video calling
- Screen-sharing
- Customizable URL and background

Pros: Join.me is simple to use and has an intuitive interface, so no training or onboarding is needed.

Cons: Users report that there are issues with video and audio, and the tool is difficult to integrate with Google Calendar.



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Cost: \$12/month for lite

2.1.10 GATHER

<https://www.gather.town/>

Gather is a video chat platform designed to make virtual interactions more human. It is browser-based.

Features:

- Users are able to build their own customized spaces
- Whiteboards and shared documents
- Games are available to play with your team

Pros: Easy to have impromptu meetups with colleagues in your virtual space together, or enjoy happy hours.

Cons: Some reported audio breaking up, and customization being difficult.

Cost: Free up to 25 participants, then between \$2-7 based on user or time period.



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2.1.11 COMPARISON

Table 1. Comparison of the most popular web conferencing tools

Tool	Skype	Zoom	MS Teams	Google Meet	GoTo Meeting
Capacity	1-50	50-500 (10,000 webinar)	10 (250-10000 paid)	100-250	1-1000
Linux	Partially	Partially	✓	✓	✓
macOS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Microsoft Windows	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Audio support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Video support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Video quality	VGA, HQ, HD	HD	VGA, HQ, HD	HD	VGA, HD
Chat support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Desktop sharing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Whiteboard		✓	✓		Whiteboard Anywhere
PPT upload	✓	✓	✓	✓	
PDF upload	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Doc/docx upload	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Co-browsing		✓			✓
Mobile app	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Break-out rooms		ü	ü	ü	

Security access	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Encrypted communication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Host from mobile	✓	✓		✓	✓
Attend from mobile	✓	✓	iOS, Android, WebRTC	✓	✓
Cloud based		One-time download	Partially	✓	✓
Recording	✓	✓	ü (Paid)	✓	✓
VoIP		✓			
Dial in		✓	ü (Paid; add-on)	✓	✓



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2.2 ONLINE TOOLS FOR GROUP WORK/COLLABORATING TOOLS

Online collaboration tool is a collection of processes and tools that allow colleagues to interact with each other (as well as with partners and customers) via web-based systems to share information and work towards a common goal. An online collaboration tool helps people to collaborate remotely. When choosing the right tool, we should take into account a number of factors, such as:

- ease of use
- security
- integrations with other apps
- customisation and cost

The best way to make the right decision is to test the available tools against your own needs. Below you will find short descriptions and links to most popular digital tools for group work.

1.1.1 CLICKUP

<https://clickup.com/>

If you're looking for online collaboration tools to take your productivity to the next level, then look no further than ClickUp. It's a free project management and productivity tool, as well as a powerful team collaboration software.

Features:

- Subtasks
- Reminders
- Task priorities
- Time tracking
- Gantt charts
- Goals
- Dependencies
- Custom statuses
- Assigned comments
- Custom notifications
- Multiple assignees
- Chat view
- Custom access rights
- Docs Collaboration
- Real-time collaboration

Pros:

- With the real-time collaboration detection feature, you can see who's active and work alongside them.



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- A forever free plan.
- ClickUp is the perfect app for waterfall, agile, or whatever model works best for you and your team on any given project. It puts you in the driver's seat and adapts to your personal approach and to anyone you're collaborating with.
- User-friendly interface.

Cons:

- Too many features. Some users feel overwhelmed by the variety of features, especially during the initial set-up. Teams report that the learning curve is a bit high and their members find it hard to use all the features. Users sometimes can't effectively decide whether to use the tool for one purpose or another.
- Too many options for customization. One of ClickUp's greatest pros - its option for full customization can also become a con since such a high
- level of flexibility requires users to plan systematically for the implementation and use of the software to get the most benefit.
- UI needs improvement. Some users wonder what the empty panes and spaces are for. Additionally, the text size is small and the colors are too faint to give proper contrast.

Pricing: Free to \$9 per user/month

1.1.2 MEISTERTASK

<https://www.meistertask.com/>

MeisterTask is a Kanban board-based project management tool that's good at streamlining project processes through its drag and drop interface. As each project is listed on a card, it's easy for your entire team to collaborate over them and drag and drop them around to make quick scheduling changes.

Features:

- Kanban Project Boards
- Sub-tasks
- Customization Options
- Notes
- Comments
- Attachments
- Tags
- Automations
- Integrations
- Stars
- Task Relationships
- Mobile Apps
- Custom Dashboards



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Pros:

- Designed for project collaboration and management
- Every team member can see where they are
- Instant communication
- Integration with other apps
- Team Collaboration Features
- Streamlined Task Management

Cons:

- Basic features on the free plan
- Can be costly for large businesses
- Transferred to browser

Pricing: Free to \$20.75/month.



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1.1.3 BASECAMP

<https://basecamp.com/>

Basecamp is a decent project management tool in many ways. It has a top-notch instant messaging platform that promotes collaboration, a handy universal search, a central place for files, and a simple task management interface that's great for small team collaboration.

Features:

- Calendar
- Interactive Gantt Charts
- Project Templates
- Scheduling
- To-Do List
- Create Teams/Groups
- Document Management
- Forums
- Messaging or Instant Messaging
- Add Recurring Tasks
- Set Priorities
- Task History
- RSS Feed
- Resources Allocation and Forecasting
- Track Project Hours
- Social Collaboration Platform
- Issue History

Pros: Basecamp has a great portal for outside clients to manage projects and deliverables with the main project team, without altering any of the plans.

Cons: While the tool is still quite popular for most devices, it's one of the oldest project management tools in the market. Therefore, its features are rather basic and insufficient for modern project collaboration.

Pricing: \$99 per month

1.1.4 ASANA

<https://asana.com/>

Asana is one of the leaders of modern project management, having taken a very complex and rigid framework for team collaboration software and made it beautiful and easy to use.

Features:



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- Customizable Dashboards
- Activity Feeds
- Focus Mode & Individual Task Lists
- Subtasks assignment
- Prioritization
- Custom Calendar
- Email Integration
- Notifications & Reminders
- Automated updates
- Project/Task Creation
- Project Permissions
- Searched Views
- Tracking
- Setting Priorities & Due Dates
- HTML5 mobile site (supported by iPhone too)
- Integrations
- Customer Support
- Multiple Workspaces
- Adding Followers
- Group Discussions
- Tags & Comments
- Events & Meetings

Pros:

- Asana allows to assign tasks to team members – making it easier to notify them of important project developments.
- It allows team members to share goals and coordinate over milestones – making it easier to work as a team.

Cons:

- Not supporting multiple assignees and assigned comments.

Pricing: Free to \$19.99 per user/month

1.1.5 TRELLO

<https://trello.com/>

In a very similar way to Asana, Trello has also changed the face of project management apps by taking a different route – with card and board views. This popular Kanban board look has really taken off with Scrum and Agile teams or as personal to-do lists.



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Features:

- Detailed & Quick Overviews of Front/Back Cards
- Easy, Drag-and-Drop Editing
- Easy Organization with Labeling, Tags, and Comments
- Progress Meter Checklist
- Card Records Archive
- Easy Upload (Local Devices, Dropbox, Google Drive, and Box)
- File Attachment
- Data Filters
- Deadline Alerts and Notifications
- Automated Email Notifications
- Activity Logs
- Individual/Group Task Assignment
- Information Backup
- Information Retrieval
- SSL Data Encryption
- Mobile-Friendly Views
- Developer API
- Customer Support
- Easy Upload (Local Devices, Dropbox, Google Drive, and Box)
- File Attachment
- Individual/Group Task Assignment
- Voting Options
- Discussions

Pros:

- It's free.
- You can use trello on any size of the screen. Trello looks like an App, not a site.
- Real-time updates are amazingly fast.
- A board for a project and you can see all the items on one page.
- Creating issues and assigning someone to those issues are simple and easy.
- Adding a new member is easy. You can not only add an existing user to your board but also invite new users by type in emails.

Cons:

- No Gantt chart
- Can't write documents or wiki about boards, only simple description

Pricing: Free to \$20.83 per user/month



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1.1.6 WRIKE

<https://www.wrike.com/>

If you like folders, then Wrike is the project management software for you. They nest each of the project tasks and subtasks into more and more folders. This makes it easy for your teams to organize themselves.

Features:

- Task management
- Time tracking
- Email integration
- Box, Dropbox, and Google Docs integrations
- Workload management
- Recurrent tasks
- Customized reports
- Task prioritization
- Android and iPhone apps
- Discussions in tasks
- Document collaboration
- Apple Mail and Outlook add-ins
- Real-time newsfeed
- Interactive timeline (Gantt chart)

Pros:

- With real-time editing and time-tracking capabilities, your team will have no trouble working together while staying productive in Wrike.

Cons:

- As with most online collaboration tools, Wrike isn't perfect and doesn't let you add multiple assignees to a project.
- It's also not the most user-friendly – which makes onboarding new team members difficult.

Pricing: Free to \$24.80

1.1.7 FILESTAGE

<https://filestage.io/>

Filestage is a creative project management software that allows you to review and approve content and streamline your creative workflow. The software will work seamlessly with your existing workflows by offering different (internal and external) review steps.

Features:



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- Comment on videos, PDF documents, images, and audio files
- Collaborate in real time
- Clients can comment without registering
- Clear versioning
- Time-saving approval workflow
- Detailed documentation
- Integrated to-do list
- Archive and export comments
- Add your custom branding
- Works on mobile
- 256-bit SSL encryption for your data
- Paste review links in tools like Trello, Slack, or Basecamp

Pros:

- Fast client feedback without registration
- All projects and reviews at a glance
- Faster reviews, full documentation
- Transparent version control
- Your branding and your personal client platform
- Sophisticated design on your smartphone, tablet, and PC
- Easy to use
- High-security encryption
- European server, European privacy laws
- High performance, worldwide
- Multichannel support

Cons:

- Projects in the overview can't be sorted easily
- The app is clunky to use on mobile
- The tool is more expensive than its competitors

Pricing: \$89 per month for 5 users

1.1.8 WEEK PLAN

<https://weekplan.net/>

Week Plan is a task management software that makes teams more productive and effective. Inspired from 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and OKR (Objective Key Results) framework, Week Plan is designed to make your team more effective.



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Week Plan gives you a team-shared weekly tasks calendar to give your team an overview of what's coming up. This allows them to easily schedule their workweek and coordinate over tasks.

You also have an activity feed to keep up with what your teammates are up to. This helps you keep up with your team's progress without having to manually check on them.

Trusted by over half a million users, Week Plan also provides native integrations with Google Calendar, Outlook Calendar, SMS integration and over 400+ enterprise collaboration apps via Zapier.

Features:

- Intuitive
- Goals of the week
- Week view

Pros:

- Fast client feedback without registration
- All projects and reviews at a glance
- Faster reviews, full documentation
- Transparent version control
- Your branding and your personal client platform
- Sophisticated design on your smartphone, tablet, and PC
- Easy to use
- High-security encryption
- European server, European privacy laws
- High performance, worldwide
- Multichannel support

Cons:

- Bugs in the software
- No full-size calendar such as Google Calendar

Pricing: \$2 to \$3 per week

1.1.9 MURAL

<https://www.mural.co/>

MURAL is a collaboration platform designed to help organizations capture and analyze ideas and create custom workflows to handle project management operations across teams. The platform includes scheduling capabilities, which enable administrators to set timers for tasks, lock content, invite members and define role-based access, allowing members to view or edit specific sections of the whiteboard.



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MURAL lets managers schedule and run brainstorming sessions in a digital workspace using online workshops, customer journey mapping and strategy evaluation. Features include polls, post-meeting debriefs, custom templates, single sign-on, IP whitelisting, thinking canvas and more. Additionally, users can organize information in documents using flowcharts, lists, diagrams, and frameworks to streamline task assignment and planning processes.

MURAL supports integration with various third-party applications such as Jira, Slack, Dropbox, Google Calendar, Microsoft Teams, OneDrive and more. Pricing includes monthly/annual subscriptions and support is extended via phone, email and other online measures.

Features:

- Brainstorming
- Collaboration Tools
- Commenting/Notes
- Communication Management
- Data Import/Export
- Diagramming
- Digital Canvas
- Discussions / Forums
- File Sharing
- Flowchart
- Forum / Discussion Board
- Idea Management
- Ideation
- Knowledge Management
- Meeting Management

Pros:

- Fast, real-time collaboration
- Quick to set up and easy to use
- Whiteboards support many file types
- Varied collection of templates

Cons:

- Doesn't let you create interactive charts, reports, or tables
- No support for video calls
- Slightly pricier than closest competitors

Price: The Starter Plan for small teams is \$12 per membership per month. Larger teams can choose a Plus Plan for \$20 per membership per month.



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1.1.10 TEAMVIEWER

<https://www.teamviewer.com>

Teamviewer is a cloud-based software tool that allows team members to collaborate in real time across the globe. TeamViewer is not only a remote access tool; it also allows remote teams to create and record demos, give interactive training, hold video conferences, collaborate with whiteboards, communicate via text chat and more.

Features:

- Customer modules with your own corporate design
- Remote Administration
- Central setting policies
- Home Office
- Log every support connection
- Online Presentation
- Secure connection
- Online Teamwork
- See a list of all installed apps
- Push text to device clipboard
- Pull system log files
- Real-time screen sharing
- Chat and nudge
- User management
- Training Session
- Web-based connections
- Online Meetings
- Service queue with session codes
- Remote Access
- IT management with ITbrain™
- Remote Support
- Push and pull Wi-Fi settings

Pros:

- Very easy to use
- Secure connection between computers
- Fast file transfer between computers
- Available across various platforms and operating systems, such as Windows 10, macOS, iOS, Android 7, and Chrome OS.

Cons:



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- High pricing for small and medium-sized companies

Price: A single-user license is \$15 per month. The multi-user license is \$25 per month. The corporate license is \$50 per month.



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1.1.11 COMPARISON

- **Table 2. Comparison of the most popular online tools for group work**



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Tool	Slack	Asana	Wrike	Trello	Basecamp
Real-Time Collaboration	▪	▪	▪ ü	▪	▪
Track Changes	▪	▪	▪ ü	▪	▪ ü
Create surveys and polls	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪	▪	▪
Presenter mode	▪	▪ ü	▪	▪ ü	▪
File sharing	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü
Direct file editing	▪	▪	▪ ü	▪	▪
File version history	▪	▪	▪ ü	▪	▪
Event email notifications	▪	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪	▪ ü
Desktop and mobile notifications	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü
Task and event reminders	▪	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü
Email summaries of missed updates	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü
Restore from trash	▪	▪	▪ ü	▪	▪ ü
Available on iOS and Android	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü
Integration with Dropbox	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪

Integration with Google Drive	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü	▪ ü
Integration with SlideShare	▪ ü	▪	▪ ü	▪	▪



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2 ONLINE DATA SHARING TOOLS

- In this unit we will have a closer look at digital tools which make virtual work more efficient. Below you will find short descriptions and links to most popular digital tools for data sharing. Try them out and see which ones suit your work best

Table 3. Comparison of the most popular online tools for group work

	Tool	Website	Pros	Cons
1.	Files.com	https://www.files.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud-based app makes onboarding faster and more streamlined than most on-premise tools • Supports a single interface to manage multiple cloud storage solutions which is great for businesses who may already have their files in multiple places • File and folder security is highly customizable uses secure protocols by default • Allows for HIPAA/PCI compliant file storage giving businesses more flexibility with their data • Scalable pricing makes it a great fit for any size organization • 7-day free trial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No on-premises version
2.	FileWhopper	https://filewhopper.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows secure and auditable files sharing to third-parties, great for legal documents, and contracts. • Files are available after the transfer for 14 days • Can support massive files, making it a viable option for replication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay-as-you-go pricing can be over complicated for businesses who move files regularly • Sender must buy additional downloads if files are being shared with more than one person

3.	Dropbox	https://www.dropbox.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can automatically sync files across multiple devices, allowing teams to work in tandem across different hardware • Supports file sharing with users who do not have an account, making third party collaboration simpler • Flexible monthly price plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay-as-you-go pricing can be over complicated for businesses who move files regularly • File sync settings can be tough to manage and unexpected syncs can slow down machines
4.	Google Workspace	https://workspace.google.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers 15GB of storage free, allowing smaller businesses to get started right away. • Easy to understand pricing packages that suit small teams and enterprise clients • Features an impressive mobile app that makes working from a phone a viable option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offline files access is only available through Google Chrome browser • Teams may experience frequent authentication issues for offline files when password changes occur • Some organizations don't want to be too dependent on a single platform like Google • Google has had issues with helping users recover lost accounts
5.	Microsoft OneDrive	https://www.microsoft.com/pl-pl/microsoft-365/onedrive/online-cloud-storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple synchronization settings for both small and large teams • Reliable offline files access • Files access can be set to expire, great for projects with limited scope • Mobile documents scanning works well for teams on the move 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft is one of the most targeted platforms by hackers • Microsoft reserves the right to scan your files for content that may 'objectionable content' (Illegal, copyrighted, etc) • Collaborative features aren't as easy to use as other solutions
6.	Box	https://www.box.com/home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates with other cloud platforms, making migrations easier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks searchability features, specifically for

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simply monthly price for any sized organization • Features controls for multiple industry compliance guidelines such as HIPAA, PCI, and FINRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • metadata in files and photos • Mobile app is limited in terms of file editing • Trial period could be longer • Editing excel files through the web-app can be cumbersome
7.	Citrix ShareFile	https://www.sharefile.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comes with an email plugin that empowers users to send larger files without creating helpdesk tickets • Encryption during both in transit and at rest for maximum file security • Easy to understand pricing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any 'unlimited' storage plan is never truly unlimited. • Larger organizations may find managing files and users at scale to be difficult • Electronic signature support is only available under the Premium plan, which is a commonly used feature for many businesses
8.	Apple iCloud	https://www.icloud.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to be as easy as possible to use, cutting down on the number of helpdesk tickets companies receive • Works for both Mac and Windows devices allow cross-platform collaboration • Easy sync settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers less free storage than most of its competitors • No Android app • Limited real-time collaboration features • File search could be improved
9.	FileCloud	https://www.getfilecloud.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built-in ransomware and virus protection is convenient for sysadmins • Has both on-premise and cloud-based versions for organizations that want more control • Highly customizable look at feel can make the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed specifically for larger organizations • Requires a minimum of five users per month at \$10 per month

			platform seem it was built for your business needs	
10.	WeTransfer	https://wetransfer.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very convenient for one-off file transfers • Excellent user interface with little to no training required • Free version works well for periodic files that are too big for email systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks team collaboration tools • The background on the free version can seem spammy and promotional • Not ideal for massive files such as backups



3 CASE STUDIES

3.1 Collaboration tools

Presentation of the environment

A car dealership with 3 salons in different locations (altogether 150 employees).

With new technologies and trends coming quickly to the market (car detailing, electric vehicles) everyone needs a fast update. So far information has been distributed during meetings organised in respective car shops. When the COVID 19 pandemics started, to reduce the risk of personal contact the Manager decided to run the meetings on Skype. The method worked for a while but soon it turned out that not everyone seemed to have all the information they needed to answer the clients' questions and the new solutions were not selling well.

What went on during the virtual meeting? The files that have worked well on overhead projector did not work via Skype; active participation of employees in virtual meetings diminished, since the changes that were suggested by them could not be introduced to the presented documents at the spot, so they got discouraged, and were doing other things with cameras switched off. But most importantly, later on they were not able to provide information to the clients since they simply did not have it. After each meeting the Manager was introducing the changes to the presented documents and then called up another meeting to check if the introduced changes were what the employees intended. Or she would send out the corrected files by intranet and waited for answers

Problem

The process described above became so tedious that the Manager asked you for help. She asked you to recommend a tool that would be best for the purposes she described (and you knew from your own experience) and... easy to master.

Task 1

You have been using Trello for your personal purposes for 6 months and you are convinced it will be adequate. You also feel comfortable explaining it to the boss. You are aware though, that she always likes to have a choice. Prepare recommendations of 2-3 comparable tools/platforms, making sure that you present Trello as the most suitable one.



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3.2 Designing virtual meetings and delivering presentations

Presentation of the environment

PRINTSERVICE.com is a small company employing 15 people. It provides printer rentals, leasing & sales of new and used copiers. At the beginning of 2020 as the majority of companies you had to switch to fully remote work. You had several good and bad experiences with digital tools for remote work. After a year of remote work you have decided that you could continue working with this model.

Problem

You have been using a variety of tools, with varied success rates. You have been working with Skype, Ms Teams, WeTransfer, Dropbox, Google Meet – so far you have no preferences but you realize that you cannot work like that forever since the free versions have limitations and you are worried about the security of data. Also employees always needed to announce by email or text message that they were sending documents via this or that channel which was unprofessional and introduced a lot of chaos.

Task 1

You are a CEO and a General Manager of that company. Prepare a storyboard of the remote work procedure. Looking at the processes decide where you need support of digital tools. Consider data sharing, instant communication, collaboration, group work, real time sharing of documents, project management. Prepare a list of tools/solutions that seem most appropriate for the processes/objectives. Check if there are tools that combine several functionalities. Decide on the tool/tools and write your selection criteria below in the comment area.



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4 PRACTICAL EXERCISES

4.1 Design group templates for collaboration tools

Learning unit:

- Digital Skills

Topic:

- Online tools for group work/collaboration tools

Goal:

- Know how to use collaboration tools

Competences:

- Knows how to prepare for remote brainstorm session

Instructions:

- Individual practice with feedback from colleagues or employees.

Duration:

- Designing templates – 90 min
- Evaluating designed templates with colleagues or employees - 45 minutes.

Performance criteria:

- 3 templates for brainstorm session are prepared
- All templates were evaluated

Recommended literature:

- PP presentation: Online collaboration tools
- Online resources: MURAL tutorials

Presentation of the environment/instructions

Using digital tools for online meetings requires not only knowledge of how to use a selected tool but also some online facilitation skills. In remote work most of the workshop templates should be prepared before running a remote meeting.

You are a manager of a small 5-employee team. Next week you will be conducting a virtual brainstorm session using MURAL App. There are several topics you would like to brainstorm and gather ideas from the team:

- What is hindering the sales?
- What could help with selling more products/services to existing customers?
- To what new groups of customers could we sell our products?

Your task is to:

- Download and instal MURAL App in your computer
- Prepare at least 3 templates for brainstorm sessions using MURAL
- Reviewed prepared templates with one/several of your colleagues



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4.2 Practice use of data sharing tools

Learning unit:

- Digital Skills

Topic:

- Online data sharing tools

Goal:

- Training to use data sharing tools properly/ editing reading rights

Competences:

- Prepare for using selected data sharing tools for remote work

Instructions:

- Individual practice

Duration:

- Uploading and installing data sharing tools – 2 days
- Testing online sharing tools – 1 week.

Performance criteria:

- Every data sharing tool listed in Lecture Notes tested

Recommended literature:

- Lecture notes: Data sharing tools
- Online resources: templates and tutorials

Presentation of the environment/instructions

Sharing documents and files is one of the main digital competencies necessary to work remotely. When we work at the same office we usually use Intranet or an internal server for sharing documents. Switching to remote work we usually lose that opportunity. Now is your chance to find another option to share important documents.

Your task is to:

- Set your expectations for a data sharing tool and test each of the data sharing tools listed in Lecture Notes according to the criteria.
- Select a document you would normally share and send it to selected people (or a different account of yours) to test the tool/platform.



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5 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Instruction: Quick assessment. Mark the correct answers.
Q1: <i>What factors, out of the ones mentioned below, should you take into consideration when choosing your first communication platform: (select all that apply)</i>
A1: The number of participants
A2: The speed of broadband connection
A3: Security mechanisms
A4: Hardware
A5: Screen sharing option
A6: Chat option
A7: Private rooms
Q2: <i>Looking at the list of communication tools, mark the ones that offer chat as an option.</i>
A1: ZOOM
A3: Teams
A4: SLACK
A5: DIALPAD
Q3: <i>Select all online web conferencing tools.</i>
A1: Skype
A2: ClickUp
A3: Team Viewer
A4: Slack
A5: Gather
Q4: <i>Online project management applications are best for:</i>
A1: Fast communication
A2: Assigning group and individual tasks

A3: File storage
A4: Instant communication
A4: Online collaboration
A5: Moving forward with tasks on a regular basis
A6: Monitoring progress
A7: Tracking delays and reacting promptly
Q5: On the basis of your experience and the information from the 2 communication chapters, mark the sentences that carry the true message:
A1: Virtual collaboration does not require contacts between a manager and employees on a regular basis
A2: Virtual collaboration can be as effective as face to face one if conducted properly
A3: Virtual communication demands less preparation from the manager
A4: Virtual communication is better for dealing with employee's personal problems
A5: Virtual communication does require that much empathy on the part of the leader as a face to face one
A6: Virtual communication saves time
Q6: Which of the mentioned platforms would you use for online sharing of large files:
A1: Wetransfer
A2: Trello
A3: Teams
A4: iCloud
A5: Skype