

Google Workspace Announces Innovations to Enhance Collaboration Equity in Hybrid Future of Work

New innovations optimize flexibility and equitable access to information, enabling onsite and remote workers to better focus their time and attention and build deeper connections with each other, regardless of location

Sunnyvale, Calif., March 1, 2021 – Google Workspace today launched new tools and features to help users make the most of their time, collaborate equally, and deliver more impact—wherever they are.

According to Gartner, 90% of survey respondents plan to allow employees to work remotely at least part of the time, even after the COVID-19 vaccine is widely adopted. The future of work has many organizations implementing a hybrid work model, or a mix of both at-home and in-office environments, which introduces a new set of productivity challenges. As a result of work no longer being tied to just a physical place, time and attention are more precious, and building human connection is more crucial than ever. Google Workspace's latest innovations support flexibility in when and how employees work, enable better management of time and attention, and strengthen participation and collaboration equity, that is, the ability for everyone to contribute equally, regardless of location.

"As much of the world adopts a more hybrid workplace, the long-term success of this new dynamic will ultimately depend on the tools businesses have in place to both support their people and promote an inclusive culture," said Javier Soltero, VP and GM of Google Workspace. "From the very start, Google's focus on productivity and collaboration has been rooted in the flexibility and mobility today's employees demand. We're now optimizing Google Workspace for the level of collaboration equity, time management and human connection needed for the sustainable and healthy hybrid workplace of the future."

Today's new additions to Google Workspace will further empower all the ways work happens in an ever-changing world. These updates include a frontline worker solution, a set of features to help people find more time and focus, and powerful tools for strengthening collaboration.

"Organizations need technology that bridges gaps between both the old and new ways of working, as well as between remote and in-office workers," according to Wayne Kurtzman, IDC Research Director of Social & Collaboration solutions. "The hybrid workplace relies on new ways to communicate, collaborate and streamline work across all devices to enable people to deliver greater impact. An integrated workspace, like Google Workspace, delivers less application switching with greater ease of use."

Enabling collaboration on the frontlines

To address the challenges of frontline workers using personal devices and apps to get the information they need, Google Workspace will be launching Google Workspace Frontline, a new offering built specifically for frontline employees—from retail associates and nurses, to restaurant and construction workers—in the coming weeks. Workspace Frontline is a custom solution that includes communication and collaboration apps like Gmail, Chat, Docs, Drive, and more, as well as business-grade support and security features like advanced endpoint management that help keep a company's data secure.

Google Workspace has also made it easier for business teams to build custom AppSheet apps directly from Google Sheets and Drive, so that frontline workers can collect data in the field, report safety risks, or manage customer requests, streamlining their work.

Managing time and attention

As employee working hours, workflows and schedules continue to change and evolve from the traditional workday, teams require calendars that reflect their hybrid realities and tools to help them maximize their time. Google Workspace will be releasing new features to address these needs, including:

- Google Workspace with Google Assistant allows users to use their voice to ask Google what's next on their calendar and quickly join a meeting or send a message. Google Assistant is currently available for Google Workspace on any mobile device and is in beta for smart speakers and Smart Displays, like Nest Hub. Google Workspace customers can learn how to enable this feature for their users [here](#).
- Segmentable working hours will help users specify multiple work blocks in working hour settings to signal to teammates when they're online and available for meetings.

- Recurring out-of-office events will help users schedule regular, recurring out-of-office blocks, automatically declining invites during that time.
- Location indicators across Google Workspace allow users to share which days they will be working from home and which days they will be in the office.
- Focus Time lets people minimize distractions by limiting notifications during specified times.
- Time insights will be delivered to Google Workspace users (visible to the employee only, not their manager), so that employees can assess how they're spending their time against their own priorities.

Strengthening collaboration for all

New updates to Google Workspace makes collaboration seamless, more accessible and equitable.

- Second-screen experiences in Google Meet allows users to host their meetings across a mix of devices, like Google Meet hardware in conference rooms or Nest Hub Max at home. With new second-screen capabilities, people will be able to present and fully participate in the Google Meet experience, including with chats, polls, and Q&As, from any device, no matter where they are.
- Updates to Meet on mobile devices makes it easier to have a bigger impact on a smaller screen. Mobile tile view allows users to see more people at once, while split-screen and picture-in-picture support on Meet mobile will help users seamlessly chat or browse Gmail without missing the visual thread of a meeting. Additionally, mobile support for background replace, Q&A, and polls will also help users stay productive and connected on the go.
- Livestream enhancements, including Q&A, polls, and live captions (in English, Spanish, German, Portuguese, and French) in Google Meet will enable more powerful and inclusive meetings. Meet is also enabling live streaming across multiple Google Workspace domains within the same organization.
- Chat, Jamboard, and Calendar are being added to Workspace Essentials to give teams even more ways to connect and collaborate.

Google Workspace is also announcing [new security tools with Assured Controls and expanded Data Regions coverage](#)

Assured Controls will allow customers to make decisions about how to control provider access, while expanded Data Regions coverage helps customers choose where their data is geographically located at rest.

Deepening human connection

From global organizations to small and medium local businesses, Google Workspace has been at the center of many organizations' evolving work plans, helping to forge human connection during a time of change. Here are a few examples from customers who inspire us:

- *"ATB was built to help Albertans and we lean on Google Workspace to help create remarkable experiences for our clients and team members every day. We need digital productivity and collaboration tools that encourage team members to think and work differently. It's not just about the tools--it's about getting people excited about what they can do."* -- Barry Hensch, SVP and Head of Technology Enablement, ATB Financial
- *"We're empowering our employees to build more flexibility into their work days as we head into a hybrid workplace model in many parts of the company. Google Workspace is the connective tissue in all of that, keeping us in sync, agile, and productive—regardless of whether people choose being in the office or being at home."* -- Mark Purcell, CIO, Rentokil Initial
- *"Connecting and empowering are two of our core values at Standard. Workspace has played a vital role in facilitating necessary collaboration across our operating companies. Whether it's a new product training for hundreds of customers on Google Meet, or internal team brainstorming sessions in Rooms, Workspace has been a foundational component of our collaboration strategy."* -- Rich Robinson, Chief Technology Officer, Standard Industries
- *"As a cloud-first and collaboration-centric organization, Google Workspace has been at the heart of our business for well over 10 years now. Over the course of 2020, as we shifted from a distribution between our 48 offices and those of our clients, to working from 8,000+ locations across the globe, we leaned heavily on Google Workspace to keep us all connected. As we continuously evolve our working patterns, Google Workspace will play a key role in helping us respond to the challenges of the future. ThoughtWorkers feel liberated by our use of Google Workspace and it would be impossible to go back to the old ways of working."* -- Andy Yates, Head of Strategy, TechOps at ThoughtWorks
- *"Innovation and collaboration is at the heart of Wayfair's culture, across every type of work environment. Long before the pandemic, incorporating Google Workspace tools into our approach allowed us to maintain agility and transparency across a rapidly growing global workforce. Since Workspace was already ingrained as a key component of our digital productivity formula, we have been able to maintain high levels of collaboration even with much of our team working remotely. As before, Google Workspace will continue to help Wayfair team members innovate together, no matter where we are."* -- Kristin Geyer, Global Head of Internal Communications, Wayfair

Ready to continue evolving your organization's work journey?

- Take a [two-minute assessment](#) and receive the *Future of Work* guide to help you plan your next step.

Interested in learning more about Google Workspace?

- Check out the [Google Workspace](#) website
- Stay up to date on product news with the [Google Workspace blog](#)

About Google Cloud

Google Cloud provides organizations with leading infrastructure, platform capabilities and industry solutions. We deliver enterprise-grade cloud solutions that leverage Google's cutting-edge technology to help companies operate more efficiently and adapt to changing needs, giving customers a foundation for the future. Customers in more than 150 countries turn to Google Cloud as their trusted partner to solve their most critical business problems.

<https://www.googlecloudpresscorner.com/2021-03-01-Google-Workspace-Announces-Innovations-to-Enhance-Collaboration-Equity-in-Hybrid-Future-of-Work>