

# Google Applications and their usability for Business

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## **Abstract**

The article deals with the importance and possibilities of use of services, products and applications offered by Google. Points to the fact that the correct use of these applications may result in to more effective communication within the organization to better document management and an overall better accessibility to get information to the employees. After the introduction to the problems provides a comprehensive overview of the research problems and presents an image of the current situation within the Slovak companies.

**Key words** Google, applications, business

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Attracting new customers, properly targeting the right people at the right in today's world is not as difficult as a few decades ago. The cause of this fact is the development of information technology and internet penetration. Google company takes the important position within internet services, which in addition to services for common users, provides a portfolio of tools aimed at businesses. Cognition and use of these instruments may for firms not only simplifying their work, but also save time, money and last but not least, gain a competitive advantage.

### **1.1 Google 's Offer for Business**

In the past, if some company had an ambition to create and operate their own e-mail system, web pages, share data and information among users and ensure the normal communication between them, there were basically only two main options. In the first case, they built their own infrastructure with their own server, but this represented a high cost. The second option was to order a few types of services that were not integrated together and thus failed to effectively communicate together and work.

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A few years ago new possibilities came to an Internet market a new offer and the possibility of creating their own compact and well-functioning "online" office using Google Apps. These applications were designed and are still operated by Google company (Stross 2009). These applications, of course, since 2006, when it was first started testing these programs have gone through a long development and improvement occurred when their spread. Today's appearance is vastly different from the original and is able to completely satisfy even the most demanding clients (Hoelzle 2012).

With correct using Google applications for businesses, the companies can gain both time and cost savings, as these funds would otherwise have to invest to manage IT services. Google applications can take care of most of the difficulties and problems that are associated with the processing of e-mails, but also with eg the issue of data security. Google company currently employs more than 10,000 employees, of course, these applications within the company's management are also used. Author Conner (2008) in his publication expressed the view that if those applications comply with such a great company, it clearly shows that it must be sufficient also by using then in the smaller companies.

Applications for Business are nowadays available in two versions. For the basic version are all Google applications completely free and companies can use memory size of 6 gigabytes. Premier version offers all of the products that are available in the standard (basic) version plus offers some extra applications. Additional amenities unquestionably are a 25 gigabytes storage space inbox for a single account, integration and transfer e-mails from the current system, support synchronization with mobile phone customer support and control mechanism for companies. For this extended package user pays an amount of approximately 40 euros per year, which is not very high price for companies (Hoelzle 2012).

Official Google site inform us about these main advantages when companies using Google Apps for Business:

- **Security:** all information and data is automatically backed up and under treaties for the protection and safety of the owner of the data continue to remains the firm. Tools for Google Apps only assist in managing data and files.
- **Connection and accessibility:** as these are online applications with access to documents, calendars and other services that are stored in the cloud, each company employee the opportunity to get them from anywhere. By connecting over the Internet can stay connected with employees with they work with, no matter where they are or what device they using. It may be a tablet, mobile phone or computer. Mobility has nowadays more and more importance in business. If the mobile phone includes any operating system, after log in using the username and password all data are updated automatically.
- **Cooperation:** each employee has access to updated data automatically with only a few simple clicks. Not necessarily only employees, but the approach can also be authorized for some chosen business partners, for some customers or eg suppliers. Common editing of documents, spreadsheets or presentations with colleagues at the same time is also possible at a unrestricted distance.
- **Speed:** Google Applications are used by more than 5,000,000 companies and firm especially for their usefulness. Whereas all files and data are stored in the one place, its saving the time associated with installing various services or search for particular data. That means more time to deal with more important things. For this reason there is not required any special training for employees.

- **Simplicity IT:** update service runs through the Google server, so all corrections and updates are performed automatically each time the user is logged on, which representing an inconsiderable advantage for the IT department. All that is necessary for the use of this Google Apps is an Internet connection and a browser. Not required any installation or additional hardware or software (google.com).
- **Environmental protection:** there are build energy-efficient data centers that enable cloud computing. Except that the application is trying to help companies to be more productive, also reduces energy consumption, carbon emissions and pollution. Thus save on the money that would pay for electricity. According to the statistics firm that uses Google Apps instead of the server in the company premises, can save 65-85% energy. E.g. Gmail is 80x more energy economical (google.com).

## 1.2 Major Google Apps services

**Gmail:** this is the e-mail service that is completely free. It allows users to connect to their email inbox, or download a mail using mail clients. Google company has implemented algorithm based on user preferences, sorts incoming messages of importance to a particular user. The user can also mark the message itself as a priority, and accordingly are always on top of previous reports. This function is very convenient for users who attend large quantities of mail and they need to sort them according to their personal priorities. Search messages allows whisperer, as well as live preview phrase search (google.com).

**Gtalk:** this service implemented in Gmail application. Gtalk service is a kind of instant messenger conversations with archiving. It can provides not only online text messages, but also audio and video communication. In addition to the classic text communication, you can send files and make a calls, but only if both users have a desktop client version installed. Another function, sending voice messages, is not tied to the presence of the same interface on the other hand, because the message is sent as an email with the attached file. It also offers audio notification of incoming messages and group chat. After installing a special plug-in provides extra video chat (using webcam) and audiochat (google.com).

**Google Drive:** this service includes a text editor and spreadsheet, presentation tool, drawing tool and a program for creating forms. Any amendments are archived into a version with the possibility of returning to one of these conditions. It is also used to back up data and settings from other Google services. This concerns for example the backup bookmarks, settings, appearance, an extension for Google Chrome that syncs themselves using Google account, where such data is then stored in Google Docs (google.com).

**Google Calendar:** this service is an electronic diary for organizing and planning time and appointments and coordinates the employees cooperation. It is linked to Gmail. The user can create multiple calendars (for work and personal activities) and also determine the level of access, and so share with specific people, organizations or users in external entities (such as can be customers or business partners). Each user of these groups is then informed of the event details on time. Another great function is the warning of the impending events in various forms such as the pop-up window, e-mail or by SMS notification (google.com).

**Google Sites:** by correct using this tool every users can very fast and simple create their own websites and web business presentations without the need for HTML formatting (programming language). Code for the webpages is automatically creating by mentioned editor itself. This application is

especially used for the publication of information with a permanent character, is focused rather on fixed content. This application offers the possibility of sharing, public sites are visible for everyone other sites are accessible only for authorized person from the owner or across the organization (google.com).

**Google+:** social network in order to offer reunification services in one place. Supports the sharing and linking users to collaborate. The user has a profile, where personal contact information are stored. It helps to share ideas, to publish information about the life of the company, its products, promotions, etc. By search results, the company can find out what are the references to it and what they say about providing products or brand. By map sharing is found who shares and disseminates company contributions. Google Analytics measures the impact assessment for the visit and sharing contributions, the balance of views (Bavaria 2012).

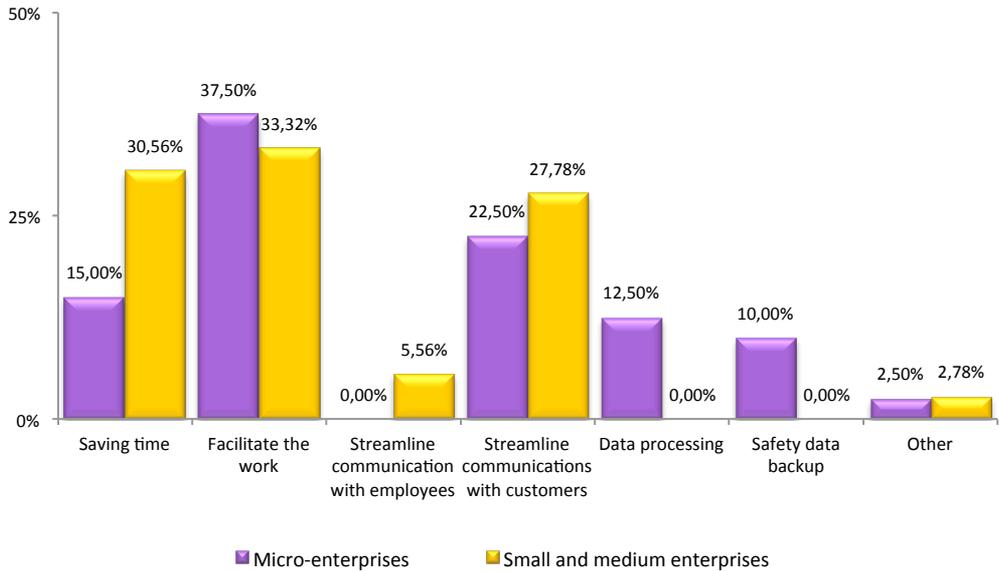
**Google Analytics:** is used to monitor website traffic, user activity, the time they spend on it and also to monitor the effectiveness of marketing and advertising campaigns. It is used in internet commerce, online marketing and advertising. It uses the information gathered as a basis for decision making and planning Using is very simple, the user can configure and adjust the display depending on which data he want to see, sohe can focus only on the content that is most important for him (Tonkin, Whitmore, Cutrona 2011).

**Google Adwords:** nowadays it is the world's largest PPC system which allows you to display advertisements and classifieds in the search results or on other sites and in an environment of other services that are provided by Google corporation (eg Gmail etc.). Advertiser who opens an account in Google Adwords decides himself which sites, in what form and at for what price will the ads be shown and placed, who will be the target group and also can determines the cost per click. There are also control payments and finance. Among the biggest benefits of this service include allowing successful targeting users, 80 % of the intervene and flexibility in administreting (Marshall, Todd 2007).

## 2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

The main object of this part of the article is to explain and compare the awareness of companies about Google applications as well as whether are those services used. For this purpose, a survey was conducted, in which we managed to get the data from 40 micro-enterprises and 36 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operating in the Slovak Republic. All necessary data were obtained on the basis of the questionnaires were subsequently decoded, graded and evaluated. To perform the necessary calculations as well as for producing graphic output was used Excel 2007 spreadsheet editor from Microsoft Office.

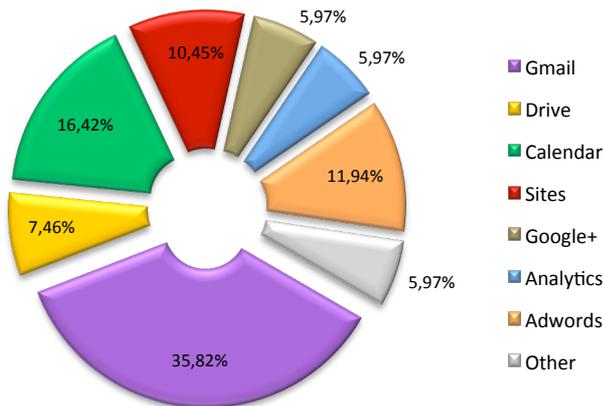
Since Google Apps mainly serve to simplifying daily agenda of companies, we investigated which area would micro-enterprises and SMEs like to improve. The results of this survey are presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Development of indices over time  
*Source: own processing*

From the graph we see that most of the micro-enterprises (37.50%) chose to prefer would like to „Facilitate the work“. In contrast to these small businesses did not agree on any answer. Almost equally represented responses were „Saving time“, „Facilitate the work“ and „Streamline communication with customers“. Frequency of these options was around the 30%.

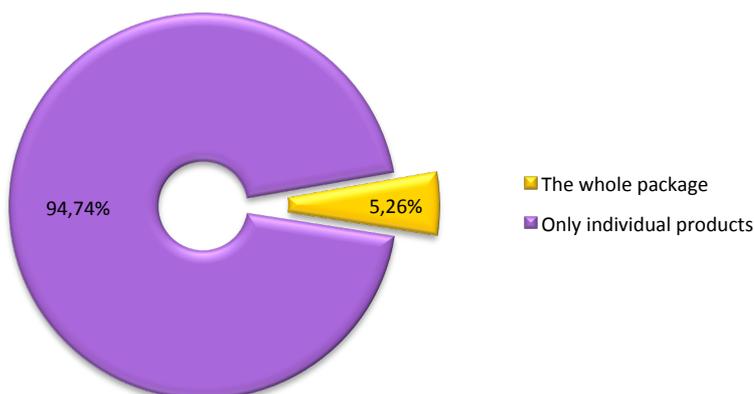
Consequently, we interested to which of the Google Apps are companies real use. After reading the results, we published the following distribution of responses.



**Figure 2** The most frequently used Google apps  
*Source: own processing*

The survey turned out that the most frequently used is Gmail (31.58%), at the second place is Google Calendar (14.47%) and in third place, Google Adwords (11.94%). The order of use of other applications can be read from the graph.

As primarily for the companies and businesses full package of services was by Google developed, which however is, as we have mentioned before, charged, in next question we interested in whether the company were willing to pay for its use, or whether they just use this products free of charge. The results are presented in Figure 3.



**Figure 3** Interest in versions of Google applications for companies  
*Source: own processing*

Of the 76 firms reported only 4 (5.26%) that would be interested and would be willing to buy a whole package of these applications. In contrast to the remaining 72 (94.74%) said that they prefer to use only the individual products. We are not consider this approach as the most effective and is not indicative of a long term approach to business firms. Investment in such a package would quickly returned.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Google Apps suite of tools is an interesting utility that manages companies can use to improve their operation and not least also provide cost savings. There are many examples to confirm this finding in the world. In our conditions, this trend is not yet widespread and thus there is a space in which the company that uses these services can vary significantly. Of course the use of these functions is conditioned by certain knowledge employees. But as computer skills in our country constantly increasing in the future it can be assumed that in this area there in our country to more often use.

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