Google Apps and Microsoft Office 365

Cloud computing has transformed the delivery of web based services across the education sector and it has the potential to improve the quality of education services for all students. It is set to fundamentally change how every school, college and university will manage their technology and their ICT service delivery models. Improvements in cloud based services are enabling educational establishments to offer a richer and broader range of web based services to their students. The cloud based platforms that enable students to access day-to-day applications will change the business model for many education institutions and will throw into question how they finance and manage their ICT services and more importantly how they perceive the role, function, and purpose of their ICT paradigms. Overall trends show that schools, colleges and universities are gradually moving away from managing and hosting their own stand-alone services. To that end, we will see a growing momentum towards cloud based services that will enable an overall improvement in the way students access web based services. (Extract from 'In the Cloud' by Aftab Hussain)

With this in mind here is a brief summary of the cloud service offer from Microsoft (Office 365) and Google (Google Apps) for the education sector.

I hope to update this document shortly with a more detailed account of each service.

Office Web Apps

Microsoft Office 365

Microsoft announced its education pricing structure for Office 365 in June 2012.

A full description of Office 365 can be found on Microsoft's Office 365 education website. Click here to view the site.

If you want a quick summary of Office 365, Microsoft has produced a short document for the education sector. Click here for the data sheet.

Office 365 for education includes:

- Outlook
- Calendar
- Sky Drive
- Office Web Apps
- Lync
- Sharepoint
- Office Professional Plus

Google Apps

A full description of Google Apps can be found on Google's education website. Click here to view the site.

Google Apps for Education includes:

- Google Mail (Gmail)
- Google Calendar
- Google Drive
- Google Docs
- Google Groups
- Google Sites
- Apps Marketplace

Google Apps

Google Apps and Microsoft Office 365

Comparison Table

Here is a brief comparison between Google Apps and Microsoft Office 365 for the education sector. The features that have been highlighted were accurate at the time of authoring this document on the 3rd of July 2012.

Features	Google Apps	Microsoft Office 365	Comments
Overview	**Google Apps for Education includes:** • Google Mail (Gmail) • Google Calendar • Google Drive • Google Docs • Google Groups • Google Sites • Apps Marketplace	**Office 365 for education includes:** • Outlook • Calendar • Sky Drive • Office Web Apps • Lync • Sharepoint • Office Professional Plus	Google and Microsoft provide like for like services for the education sector. Document co-authoring is an enhanced feature in Google Apps. Lync is an enhanced feature in Office 365.
Email	Gmail: unlimited mailbox per user	Outlook: 25Gb mailbox per user, unlimited with option A2	Users do not have to use Outlook as a calendar or as an email client with Office 365, users can utilise other tools. Conversely, users can connect Outlook to Google.
Calendar	Google Calendar	Outlook	
Productivity Software	Google Doc Online	Online Office Web Apps, Office Desktop (Office Professional Plus 2010) with option A2	Office Web Apps are reduced versions of their desktop counterparts. Nevertheless, Office 365 Web Apps are more feature rich than like for like applications on Google Apps.
IM, Video Chat, Presence and Conferencing	Google Chat	Lync	Lync Online is integrated into all Office 365 applications.
Mobile Sync	Google Sync (Exchange Active Sync) for Gmail, Contacts, Calendar	E-mail, contacts, calendars via Exchange	
Mobile Productivity	Docs in mobile browser, Doc for android 2.1+, IOS 3 +	Office Web Apps in mobile browser, Office Mobile on Windows mobile phones	

Features	Google Apps	Microsoft Office 365	Comments
Document Collaboration	Google Docs, Cloud Connect for Office	In Office via Sharepoint and Lync.	Document collaboration is an enhanced and intuitive feature in Google Apps. In Office 365 the user has to check docs in and out. Lync is not a true document collaboration tool, but it enables users to share a desktop and edit documents. With Office 365 multiple users are effectively working on one device. Google Apps enables multiple users to simultaneously edit the same document.
Website building, Intranet	Google Sites, Groups	Sharepoint	
Storage	Google Drive. Free 5Gb per user. £2.50 per month per month/user for 20Gb. Up to 16TB for each user (paid subscription)	Sky Drive. Free 25Gb per user.	

Features	Google Apps	Microsoft Office 365	Comments
Education Pricing	Google Apps is free to the education sector.	**A2** is Free for Academic Institutions. It includes: • Cloud-based email, calendar and contacts • Use your own domain name • Instant messaging, voice and video chat • Online conferencing with desktop sharing • Web-based viewing and editing of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote files **A3**: Students: £1.98 per user/month Faculty and staff: £3.50 per user/month (prices do not include VAT). The package includes: • Everything in A2 plus the following: • Office Professional Plus 2010 desktop version subscription (for up to 5 devices per user) or Mac Office 2011 • Unlimited email storage • Archiving • eDiscovery tools to support your compliance needs • Hosted voicemail support A4: Students: £2.38 per user/month Faculty and staff: £4.75 per user/month. (Prices do not include VAT). The package includes: • Enterprise voice capabilities • Replace or enhance a PBX with Lync Server on premises	

Features	Google Apps	Microsoft Office 365	Comments
Support	**Google Apps features the following support:** • 99.9% availability on SLA package • 24 x 7 customer phone support for issues that pertain to unusable services. • Priority email support for education Google App customers	**All A plans also include:** • Financially-backed 99.9% availability • Live 24 x 7 customer phone support for advanced IT issues • Single sign on using latest federation technology • Configurable anti-spam filtering • Free Active Directory synchronization	

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