

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Committee details</i>	Page 2
<i>OPEN News</i>	Pages 3-6
<i>Office Online versus Google Apps: Facts and FUD</i>	Pages 7-13
<i>Should I Rally Join Facebook??</i>	Pags 1-15

JULY MEETINGS

OPEN's monthly meeting for July will be held on Wednesday the 2nd at 1:00 pm
New members of the club are invited to attend as we are always looking for new ideas and feedback on how the club is performing.

The next Launceston Computer Group (LCG) meeting will be at 7:15 pm on Wednesday August 6th.

Newstream Articles

Deadline : 10 Days before Meeting

Editors Contacts:

Address: 8 Cadorna Street Mowbray Heights 7248 Phone 6326 5824

email address editor@lcg.org.au

Correspondence

Address all Correspondence to: Launceston Computer Group Inc PO Box 548
Launceston 7250

Membership

Single \$20, Family \$30 (Includes Email edition Newstream)

Printed & Posted Newsletter \$20 extra

Disclaimer: The articles in this newsletter may be reprinted as long as credit is given to the original author. Opinions expressed are those of the author & not necessarily the views of the Editor or the Group. Unless otherwise noted material is copyright 2011 for the Launceston Computer Group Inc.

LCG Committee 2014/15

President: Janet Headlam

Vice President: Ivan Turmine

Secretary: Iris Meek

Treasurer: Dennis Murray

Ass. Treasurer: Laraine Rist

PC Librarian: Vacant

Mac Librarian: Vacant

Newstream Editor: Ron Baker

<<mailto:editor@lcg.org.au>>

Public Officer: Judy Hall

Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen

<<mailto:webmaster@lcg.org.au>>

Auditor: Ron Baker

Publicity Officer: Iris Meek

"V.I.C.T.O.R." Co-Ordinator: Robert Tierney

LCG Committee: Glenn Gilpin, Reinhard von Samorzewski, Eleanor Horder, Bruce

Dineen

OPEN Committee 2014/15

O.P.E.N. Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney.

Responsible for the smooth running of the Centre on a daily basis

O.P.E.N. Chairperson: Laraine Rist.

Chair all meetings of OPEN and ensure that they run smoothly

O.P.E.N. Vice Chairperson: Robert Tierney.

Chair meeting when the Chairperson is unavailable.

O.P.E.N. Minute Secretary: Heather Loffel.

Handles all incoming and outgoing communications

Responsible for the documentation and distribution of all meeting minutes

Treasurer: Dennis Murray.

Responsible for all monies and banking

Assistant Treasurer: Laraine Rist.

Help the Treasurer where necessary.

Newsletter Editor: Dennis Murray.

Publicity Officer: Iris Meek.

Responsible for all advertising

Membership Co-ordinator: Eleanor Horder.

Keep Membership database up to date.

Co-ordinator O-learn: Eleanor Horder

Tutor Co-ordinator: Laraine Rist, Robert Tierney & Dennis Murray.

Keep regular contact with Tutors to bring ideas and concerns to meetings

Maintenance Co-ordinators: Dennis Murray.

Responsible for the maintenance and repairs to all computer equipment

"V.I.C.T.O.R." Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney.

Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen. <<mailto:webmaster@lcg.org.au>>

OPEN Committee: Janet Headlam, Karia Wicks, Sandra Viney, Kay Dawson.

OPEN NEWSLETTER – JULY 2014

“NOVAK DJOKOVIC”

You may have heard that name before?

No, he isn't a new member at OPEN, he's actually a bloke who plays a bit of tennis from time to time.

And while Novak had to settle for the runner-up prize at the recent French Open it would be foolhardy to assume that he's not much of a tennis player.

Similarly it would be foolhardy to think that all computer scammers are a bunch of dills based on an isolated encounter where one scammer was 'runner-up' to an exceptionally skilled computer user.

The story goes like this ...

Unknowingly the scammer happened to ring a computer professional who was able to quickly set up a 'virtual machine' in order to have a bit of fun with the scammer.

Now I'll hazard a guess that most of you won't know what a virtual machine is? Put simply it isn't a physical computer as such, but a virtual or 'pretend' computer that runs as a sophisticated program on a real computer. Virtual machines are very useful for testing untried software because no lasting damage can be done to the 'real' computer.

So our scammer was trying to show the intended victim all the alleged problems that were on the victim's computer, totally unaware that he wasn't dealing with a real computer at all.

Although the scammers lost this particular battle the war goes on ... sadly many computer users will still be duped by the very convincing 'spiel' that scammers use when they call to inform you that your computer is about to crash.

And in recent months scammers have become more forceful in their attempts to lure you into their web of deceit. Just a few hours before I wrote this article one of our members was contacted three times on the premise that her computer was causing interference to other users.

Dennis Murray

SAFE DOWNLOADS

Many of you will know that I use and recommend a lot of free software.

In the past my primary source of free software has been the CDs and DVDs that have been supplied the computer magazines that I purchase. However, in recent years one of my favourite magazines has become focused on 'lifestyle' issues, while others are reviewing whether they will continue to provide free software on CDs or DVDs.

So that leaves me, and maybe you, with the dilemma of how to obtain free software. While it may still be available from the various magazine websites there may be a 'cost' involved even if it is only in terms of the Megabytes of your Internet allowance that will be swallowed up when you download the software.

While magazine-based software is usually tested and approved before being supplied to subscribers the same cannot be said for all the free software that can be downloaded from the Internet at large.

Take a recent case when a usually-safe media program was installed on one of OPEN's computers. Along with the desired program came three spyware and browser hijacker programs.

How does this happen? Although I wasn't there at the time I'll take a few guesses (1) that the 'installer' just Google-d Free ABC (*for instance*) and didn't pay any attention to whether the download website belonged to FreeABC.com, (2) that the program was installed directly from the Internet rather than being saved to Downloads folder on the computer, and (3) that attention was not paid to any tick-boxes that may have already been selected.

One of the points I have tried to push for many years is that the Software section of our Server computer contains a wealth of tried and true free software that can be accessed through our network or copied to a USB drive. Don't become 'download happy' when there are safer alternatives.

Dennis

JULY MEETINGS

OPEN's monthly meeting for July will be held on Wednesday the 2nd at 1:00 pm

New members of the club are invited to attend as we are always looking for new ideas and feedback on how the club is performing.

The next Launceston Computer Group (LCG) meeting will be at 7:15 pm on Wednesday August 6th.

VENUE TELEPHONE NUMBER

The club telephone is available during class hours.

******* 6343 4928 *******

Members and tutors can be contacted at the clubrooms **during class hours** by telephoning the number shown above.

Monday to Friday 10am – 3pm

Tuesday evenings 7pm–9 pm

SPECIAL EVENTS JUNE 2014

Friday, June 27th from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

"Australia's Biggest Morning Tea"

In aid of the Cancer Council

**Brings a plate of goodies to share,
Make a gold coin donation and be in the running
for some great lucky door prizes.**

★ **VICTOR PHONE NUMBER 0408 174 235**
★ **Contact the Coordinator Rob Tierney for**
★ **assistance with computer problems at home**
★ **(Bookings are subject to availability of tutors.)**

BRUCE DINEEN OFFERS SOME ADVICE ON FIREFOX

I was having trouble with a hijacker in Firefox. I had un-installed the offending program but it did not fix Firefox.

So I RESET Firefox. It preserved my bookmarks, cookies etc. but returned Firefox to its original DL state. I am using the latest version.

Reset Firefox to its default state

- 1 Click the menu button and then click help
- 2 From the Help menu choose Troubleshooting Information. If you are unable to access the Help menu type **about:help** in your Address bar to bring up the Troubleshooting Information page.
- 3 Click the Reset Firefox... button in the upper-right corner of the Troubleshooting Information page.
- 4 To continue, click Reset Firefox in the confirmation window that opens. Firefox will close and be reset. When it's done, a window will list the information that was imported.
- 5 Click Finish and Firefox will open.

Bruce

OPEN NEWSLETTER – JULY 2014

ANDROID TRAINING SESSION

Wednesday July 30th 1:00 to 3:00 pm

With Bruce Dineen

This session will include a re-cap of the session conducted on June 4th and will also provide details of how to access the new Brother 9140 printer from your Android tablet or smart-phone.

The subject of Home Networking will also be covered. Many internet service providers (ISPs) now give (*or sell*) you a wireless modem-router as part of your internet deal so this enables your tablet to become part of a home network.

INTERNET SECURITY

Wednesday July 16

10:00 am to 12:00 noon

Robert Tierney will conduct another session to advise you of the procedures you need to follow to stay safe when using the Internet.

POWERPOINT SESSION 3

Wednesday July 16

1:00 to 3:00

This class will be a follow-on session for the PowerPoint techniques learned in the first two classes earlier in the year.

Participants must have completed the first two sessions to be eligible to participate in Session 3.

Tutor : Robert Tierney

LEVEL 2 & 3 GRAPHICS

With Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8

Wednesday July 9th

10:00 am to 12:00 noon

ADVANCED GRAPHICS

With Paint Shop Pro XI

Beginners

Wednesday July 23rd

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

iTunes SESSION

Wednesday July 30th

10:00 am to 12:00 noon

Tutor : Robert Tierney

FAMILY HISTORY 2014

Wednesday July 9th

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Wednesday July 23rd

10:00 am to 12:00 noon

New information is being added to our resources on an on-going basis to help you trace your family's origins. Contact the club for more information.

Classes limited to 8 people.

Join Judy, Margaret G and Sandra V tutors for these informative sessions.

OPEN Session Times

At Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton

Standard Sessions \$6.00

[Some special tutorial materials may incur additional charges]

Monday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	Basics and Beyond
	3:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Beginners Class
Tuesday	10 am –12	O-Learn & Beginners [all day]
	1 pm – 3 pm	Mac [all day]
	7 pm–9 pm	Basics (Night Class)
Wednesday		Special sessions or Meetings
		As for mornings (see rosters)
Thursday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	General & Beginners
Friday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	Beginners Class

OPEN NEWSLETTER – JULY 2014

SPECIAL WEDNESDAY SESSIONS

Please register on the sheets – numbers may be limited

Date			
July 2	10 am–12 noon		
	1 pm onwards	OPEN Monthly Meeting	Presentation of Financial Reports and General Business.
July 9	10 am–12 noon	Level 2 and 3 Graphics Class	Graphics using Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8
	1 pm–3.00 pm	Family History	Judy, Margaret G and the team will help you trace your ancestors.
July 16	10 am–12 noon	Internet Security	Tutor Robert Tierney
	1 pm–3.00 pm	Microsoft PowerPoint	Session 3—participants must have completed the first two lessons.
July 23	10 am–12 noon	Family History	Use our extensive range of resources or use Ancestry.com on-line to research your Family History.
	1 pm–3.00 pm	Advanced Graphics PSP XI	This course enable users at all levels to learn Graphics skills.
July 30	10 am–12 noon	iTunes Workshop	Tutor Robert Tierney
	1 pm–3.00 pm	Android Training Session	Bruce Dineen will conduct a re-cap on the June session and show how to use the Brother printer

OPEN NEWSLETTER – JULY 2014

NEW NETWORK PRINTER

In mid-June a new network printer was purchased to replace the Toshiba 282 (*known as Goliath*) that had been on loan to the club.

Some of you may have experienced the frustration of frequent paper jams on the Toshiba so the decision was made to look for a replacement.

The new printer is a **Brother 9140 CDN** and it is capable of colour printing as well as plain black. However it is suggested that for photo-quality printing members should continue to use one of the two Canon IP4850 printers.

It is currently located on the front desk near the Admin area so members won't have as far to walk when collecting their print-outs.

Operating Instructions for the Brother 9140 CDN

Only standard thickness A4 paper (80 gsm) should be used in the bottom paper drawer.

For thicker papers, such as 'card paper', there is a manual feed slot just above the bottom paper drawer and it is accessible by pulling down a cover.

Copying can be done by placing single documents face-down on the 'scanner glass', while multiple documents can be copied by using the auto sheet-feeder.

Please ask for assistance from one of the experienced tutors until you become familiar with the operations of the new Brother printer.

Members who print from their own laptops while at the club will need to remove the Toshiba 282 from their printers list and have the Brother 9140 installed.

Android and iPad users will be pleased to learn that the new printer can be accessed from their tablets after an appropriate 'app' is downloaded.

As was the case with the Toshiba, members are asked to make a contribution to the running costs of the Brother printer by paying for any documents that are printed. The fee will be 20-cents per page for black printing and 50-cents per page for colour printing.

Dennis

BACKING UP YOUR EMAIL

Those members who perform regular back-ups of their computer information will routinely include their Documents, Pictures, Music and Videos, but how many of you consider other types of information that you may need to recover in the event of a computer failure?

The other information could include your Internet Favourites, your Contacts list, and most importantly, your e-mail messages.

In the **Windows Live Mail** program that is used in Windows 7 and Windows 8 you can **export your e-mail** to a folder that can then be copied to an external hard drive or USB flash-drive depending on the how many messages you have.

First you must create a 'destination' folder where the exported information will be sent. You then open up Windows Live Mail, go to the File menu, select the Import/Export option and follow the prompts.

Your saved messages can then be accessed from those folders. Initially you may be confused by the curious names given to the individual messages but double-clicking them will enable them to be opened up and viewed.

Apart from the obvious benefit of preserving your e-mail in case of a possible computer failure at some point in the future there are a couple of other benefits.

1. You can take your e-mail with you if you need to access it while you are away from your own computer, and the messages can then be opened on any computer that has Windows Live Mail installed.
2. You can 'archive' all your old e-mail messages prior to cleaning out your Inbox, Sent Items and Deleted e-mails. This could be beneficial if you need to access some 'ancient' e-mails.

Dennis

OFFICE 365

A NEW WAY TO OBTAIN SOFTWARE

Don't fancy paying over \$500 for the 'all-singing, all-dancing' version of Microsoft Office? Have you considered on-line subscription as an option?

The concept of online installation rather than buying a package with a CD or DVD enclosed is available with the new version of Office—Office 2013 or Office 365 as it is sometimes called.

That option has proved to be most suitable for OPEN and may be something that an individual or family may care to consider.

For around \$100 per year you can obtain a licence to install the latest version of Office on **5 separate devices** i.e. PCs, Windows tablets and Apple Macs. The major requirement is that Windows devices must be running a 'full' version of Windows 7 or Windows 8—not a Starter or RT version of the operating system.

On PCs and laptops you will have Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Outlook, Access and Publisher. On tablets you won't be able to run Access and Publisher.

While there may be some initial resistance to 'renting' rather than outright purchasing of software take a moment to consider what you are getting for your \$20 per device per year.

Compare the \$20 annual cost per device to the cost of the all-inclusive Office 2013 which will set you back around \$540 for a one-user licence. Even the Home and Student version is now a one-user licence that costs around \$130 for just Word, Excel and Powerpoint.

In addition to the requirements mentioned earlier in this column you will need to sign up for a Microsoft ID and you will need to have an Internet connection to download and install the software.

Office Online versus Google Apps: Facts and FUD

By Woody Leonhard

Microsoft and Google are locked in battle over free-for-personal-use productivity applications. Each is fighting for your attention.

At this time, there's no one best online suite; both are quite capable and both have some important limitations.

The state of the art in online productivity Microsoft, Google, and Apple all offer online productivity suites that are free for personal use. And unlike past "free" suites (yes, I mean you, Microsoft Works and MS Office Web Apps!), these latest online suites are all surprisingly capable — and getting better almost weekly. In this discussion, I compare Office Online and Google Apps: two suites experienced Windows and Office users are most likely to use. Apple's iWork for iCloud I'll save for another day. It represents an elegant evolution of the Office genre, but there's a significant learning curve for dyed-in-the-wool Office "Officionados."

In short, Office Online and Google Apps are both so good you might not need to buy a standalone version of Office or subscribe to Office 365. Really! Microsoft and Google have their own reasons for dangling freebies at Windows users — more about that later. But whatever their motivations, using online suites could mean more money in your pocket.

But before I get into the details, let's clarify some confusing terminology.

Four months ago, "Office Web Apps" was a backwater website

that seemed to be a weak adjunct to the desktop version of Office. Then Microsoft launched Office Online and kicked the old website into the bit bucket.

For this article, I'll review Word Online, Excel Online, and PowerPoint Online — the most popular parts of the various Office Online components

(see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Office Online's homepage offers all the productivity apps someone might need for personal use.

Google's terminology is, if anything, even more convoluted than Microsoft's. (And you didn't think that was possible.) Officially, the suite I discuss in this article is known as Google Drive, though few people call it that. Google has, of course, a cloud-storage service known as "Google Drive" — it competes with

(Continued on page 8)

Microsoft's OneDrive.

For reasons that defy logic, the productivity tools once known as Google Apps — Document, Spreadsheet, and Presentation — now live under the cloud-storage, Google Drive site (see Figure 2).

In common parlance, "Google Docs" might refer to just the word processor — or it might refer to all three productivity apps. And "Google Drive" might — or might not — include the cloud-storage component.

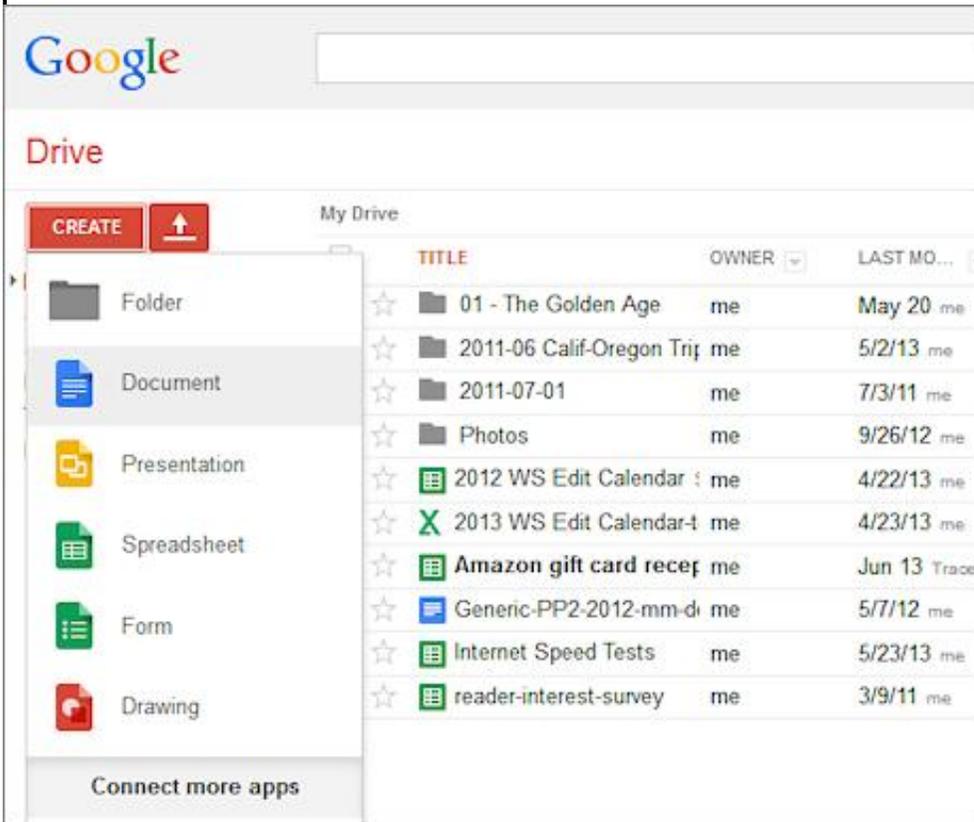


Figure 2. The homepage for the various Google productivity apps is Google Drive.

For some semblance of clarity, I'll split the difference and call the three apps "Google Apps," a term that might not precisely match up with Google's documentation.

Both Microsoft's and Google's online productivity apps run only in Web browsers. You don't install anything; simply fire up your browser, go to the appropriate site (office.com for Office Online and drive.google.com for Google Apps), sign in — and you're ready to rock and roll. You will, of course, need a Microsoft account for Office Online and a Google account for Google Drive. Both accounts are free.

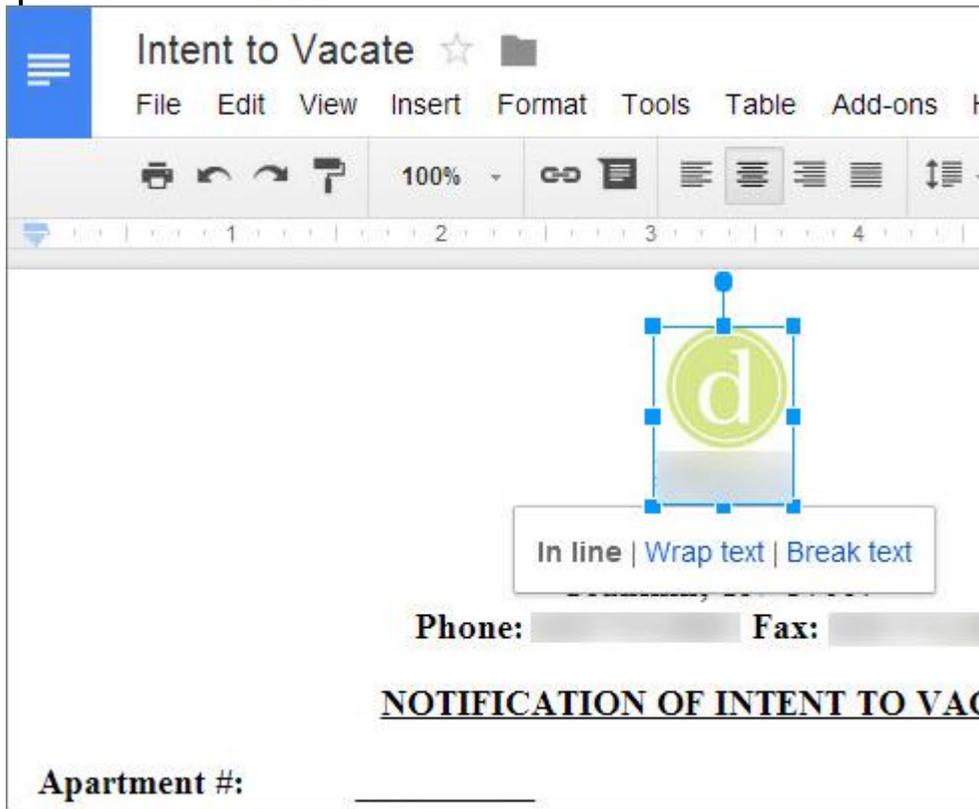
Based on my extensive testing, there's almost no difference in running any of the apps in Chrome, Firefox, or Internet Explorer — or on a wide variety of platforms that included Win7, Win8, OS X, iOS, and Android.

Office Online is free for personal use and for some organizations (Office 365 for Nonprofits). For businesses, it starts at U.S. \$60 per year/per person (Office 365 Small Business) and goes up from there (more info).

Google Apps/Drive is also free for personal use. The cost for organizations ranges from free (nonprofit and educational) to \$50 per year/per person for Google Apps for Business (more info).

Both Office Online and Google Apps have familiar productivity-suite interfaces that aren't amenable to touch-based tablet/small-screen use. In fact, Google Apps looks a lot like Office 2003 (see Figure 3).

(Continued from page 8)



Here's how the two suites compare, broken down by word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation app.

Creating text: Word Online vs. Google Documents You would expect that Word Online could open any Word file (.doc or .docx) — no matter how complex — let you make changes, and then save it unsullied. And you'd be wrong. Although it typically does a good job of maintaining the fidelity of the original document, I found several, in-the-wild documents that don't appear (or render) correctly in Word Online — or that don't survive the round trip back to standard Office.

Google's Document (commonly shortened to Google Docs), on the other hand, frequently refused to open complex .doc or .docx files. There were also occasions when Google Docs opened a .docx file and then scrambled it on export back to the DOCX format. But that occurred mostly with documents containing extensive formatting.

Microsoft illustrated the problem in a YouTube promo video . A nicely formatted .docx file gets gutted by Google. Although everything in the video is quite accurate, there are — as far as I could tell — some nuances that real people might or might not encounter.

For example, the video's test document wasn't created in Word Online, and several of its features, such as a table of contents and formatted headers, aren't supported in Word Online. So the sample file must have originated with Word for Windows or Mac.

In any case, if you tried to edit the document in the video, you'd be frustrated to learn that Word Online won't let you crop figures

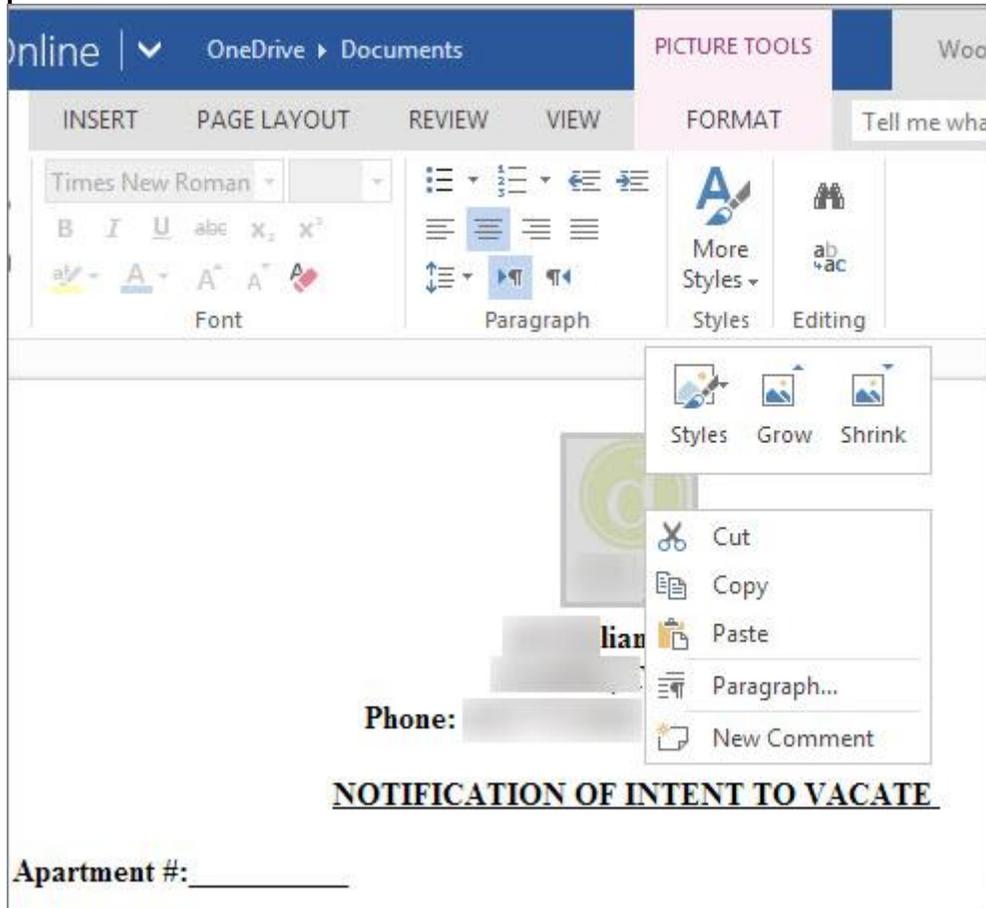
Figure 3. The look of Google Apps strongly resembles that of Office 2003.

Office Online takes the Office 2013 Ribbon approach, but its Ribbon looks rather toothless — it doesn't have the depth of features found in Office 2013 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. As this view of Word Online shows, Office Online resembles Office 2013 — with some missing pieces.

or drag-and-drop them. But as you can see in Figure 3, cropping, rotating, or dragging-and-dropping figures in Google Docs works just like Word for the desktop.

As Figure 4 shows, Word Online will let you only shrink or expand the graphic — in pre-defined increments.



At the end of the video, Microsoft shows real-time collaboration, a feature new to Word Online but part of Google Docs for years. Microsoft also "borrowed" automatic saving from Google Apps. It would take a book to compare and contrast the features in Word Online and Google Docs — and the feature list is changing constantly. But here's a quick look at the features you're likely to use most.

Word Online won't let you create or change styles. You can't add text boxes, shapes, or SmartArt to a document — although you can delete an entire shape if it was put into the document with a desktop version of Word. As noted, pictures can't be cropped or dragged-and-dropped, although they can be scaled up or down in fixed increments.

Word Online offers no Track Changes settings, though — again — you can see tracked changes that were inserted into a desktop version of Word. Also, if "Track Changes" was turned on in the original document, changes made to the document while in Word Online appear marked up when the document is opened in desktop Word. Word Online doesn't support macros, and autocorrect is turned on — you can't turn it off.

On the positive side, Word Online can maintain DOC/DOCX file fidelity if the document is not overly complex. It's also easy to apply styles — as long as you can live with the predefined versions — and create headers, footers, tables, page numbers, and footnotes.

Google Docs' offerings are significantly more robust. You can add or edit text boxes, shapes, drawings, and equations; there's

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

an on-screen ruler and format painting plus tools for image manipulation. And it supports Google's own macro language. Using Google Docs, I've had few fidelity problems with common DOC and DOCX files, but unusual formatting can throw the app for a loop. And because there's no desktop version of Google Docs (at least, not yet), there's no way to create custom styles, as you do in desktop Word. Moreover, formatting tables is difficult, and there's no change-tracking function — although, as with Word Online, you can insert comments. Neither Word Online nor Google Docs supports file-based password protection (although, oddly enough, Apple's iWork does).

Bottom line: Both Word Online and Google Docs work just fine if you're creating relatively common documents. You won't design an advertising campaign with either, and you'd be hard-pressed to write a book that has anything more than text and a few illustrations. But for everyday tasks, it's hard to justify spending money to get what's now available free.

Balancing the books: Excel Online vs. Spreadsheet For years, it was said that Google Spreadsheet (or Sheets) was useless because it wouldn't automatically display long text in one cell across adjoining blank cells. That's changed — along with about a million other first-generation limitations.

Both Excel Online and Google Spreadsheet support an astonishing array of spreadsheet features. Unless you have a crying need for pivot charts and tables — available only with Excel Online — the list of features supported by one app and not

the other will be important only to those who have some specific spreadsheet requirements.

For example, Google Sheets offers some conditional formatting; however, you won't find any in Excel Online. Sheets also gives you "Paste transpose." On the other hand, Excel Online has Freeze Panes; autocomplete; and drop-down, data-entry controls (lists). Google Sheets doesn't. Text box contents can, in some cases, be edited in Google Sheets but not in Excel Online, as best I can tell.

Google Sheets will open XLS and XLSX files with embedded macros; Excel Online refuses to edit spreadsheets with embedded macros. That, to my way of thinking, is a big plus in Google's favor.

Both apps can make charts till the cows come home, run autofill, include hyperlinks, and provide formatting of every conceivable type. The list goes on and on.

Working with both spreadsheet apps on real-world files, I found another significant difference. If you have a heavily formatted XLS or XLSX generated by a desktop version of Excel, the formatting might get zapped by Google Sheets. But then again, Sheets supports macros and Excel Online doesn't.

Talking points: PowerPoint Online vs. Slides Microsoft's and Google's online word processors and spreadsheet apps might run neck-and-neck, but when it comes to creating presentations, there's a clear winner. Google Slides does an excellent job of duplicating PowerPoint on the desktop. Microsoft's own PowerPoint Online doesn't come close.

(Continued on page 12)

In fact, I think it's fair to say that PowerPoint Online is virtually useless for any task beyond creating extremely simple slideshows with minimal transitions. PowerPoint Online has no Slide Sorter view or Outline view; it has no Presenter view, so any embedded notes are useless. And though you can insert pictures into new slides, you can't do so with slides you've created previously — either in the desktop PowerPoint or PowerPoint Online.

Tales of woe abound when trying to work with any sort of media. For example, inserting a music clip or video into a presentation using PowerPoint Online seems to have a 50-50 chance of crashing the program. And once you add media, you must have Microsoft's Silverlight installed to see them.

Google Presentation, by contrast, has full support for pictures — including cutouts, drawing, and canvases. There's a fully functional slide sorter, speaker notes, and gobs of transitions and animations. You get lots of formatting capabilities, and inserting media onto a slide doesn't immediately crash the program.

At best, PowerPoint Online is useful for making minor edits to presentations created in the desktop version of the app.

Otherwise, if you have any reason to create or edit a presentation online, do it with Google Presentation.

Summing up the important considerations Most users should not find it difficult to work with either productivity suite. As noted, Office Online looks similar to Office 2013, and Google Apps will seem familiar to Office 2003 users. But neither is well suited for use on touch screens, tablets, or other small-screen digital devices.

Many Office Online users will still access it primarily as an adjunct to their desktop versions of the suite. And for that application, it's relatively good at maintaining the fidelity of the original file. But it's far from perfect. It's also fine for individuals who want to create relatively simple documents. That said, Office Online lacks some features that a typical Office user might need frequently. And PowerPoint Online can't do much at all.

Google Apps, on the other hand, also does a good job maintaining the content and formatting of simple desktop-Office generated docs — probably better than you would expect. And Google Apps offers many more tools if you're working exclusively within the Google environment.

Perhaps most important for advanced users, Google Apps supports macros — a capability that might make all the other feature comparisons moot. Microsoft promises it will deliver programmability to Office Online — someday.

In either case, if you need to work with complex documents and want to keep them whole, you have no choice but to stick with the full Windows or OS X versions of Office.

Keep in mind that both Google and Microsoft are trying to steer you to their online-storage systems. Both offer 15 GB free for personal use. Microsoft has an ulterior motive: OneDrive makes moving files between Office Online and desktop Office very easy. The 'Softies undoubtedly hope that, by locking you into OneDrive, you'll eventually pay for Office.

But Google has an ulterior motive, too — though a very different one. If you have a free Google account, Google can and

probably will scan everything — absolutely everything — associated with your account to serve up targeted ads. There's nothing you can do about it. (On the other hand, Google does not scan data associated with paid accounts. Nor does it scan email from or to academic Gmail accounts.)

For some people, Google's penchant for scanning accounts is an unconscionable invasion of privacy. For others, it's just creepy. Fortunately, there are no soulless drones poking through your files to see whether you're cheating the IRS (isn't that the NSA's job?) or criticizing Obamacare.

Still, you need to be ever cognizant that Google might be rummaging through everything you post, all to deliver ads you'll click — and click again.

Also consider that these suites are changing continuously. Any conclusion you draw today might change next month or even next week. That's good news, actually, because with each passing week, you have fewer and fewer reasons to spend money on an office suite.



Should I Really Join Facebook?

Read it all the way through! It's a good laugh! AND really quite true!

A good laugh for people in the over 60 group!

When I bought my Blackberry, I thought about the 30-year business I ran with 1800 employees, all without a cell phone that plays music, takes videos, pictures and communicates with Facebook and Twitter. I signed up under duress for Twitter and Facebook, so my seven kids, their spouses, my 13 grand kids and 2 great grand kids could communicate with me in the modern way. I figured I could handle something as simple as Twitter with only 140 characters of space.

My phone was beeping every three minutes with the Details of everything except the bowel movements of the entire next generation. I am not ready to live like this. I keep my cell phone in the garage in my golf bag.

The kids bought me a GPS for my last birthday because they say I get lost every now and then going over to the grocery store or library. I keep that in a box under my tool bench with the Blue tooth [it's red] phone I am supposed to use when I drive. I wore it once and was standing in line at Barnes and Noble talking to my wife and everyone in the nearest 50 yards was glaring at me. I had to take my hearing aid out to use it, and I got a little loud.

I mean the GPS looked pretty smart on my dash board, but the lady inside that gadget was the most annoying, rudest person I had run into in a long time. Every 10 minutes, she would sarcastically say, "Re-calc-u-lating." You would think that she could be nicer. It was like she could barely tolerate me. She would let go with a deep sigh and then tell me to make a U-turn at the next light. Then if I made a right turn instead. Well, it was not a good relationship...

When I get really lost now, I call my wife and tell Her the name of the cross streets and while she is starting to develop the same tone as Gypsy, the GPS lady, at least she loves me.

To be perfectly frank, I am still trying to learn how To use the cordless phones in our house. We have had them for 4 years, but I still haven't figured out how I lose three phones all at once and have to run around digging under chair cushions, checking bathrooms, and the dirty laundry baskets when the phone rings.

The world is just getting too complex for me. They even mess me up every time I go to the grocery store. You would think they could settle on something themselves but this sudden "Paper or Plastic?" every time I check out just knocks me for a loop. I bought some of those cloth reusable bags to avoid looking confused, but I never remember to take them with me.

(Continued on page 15)

