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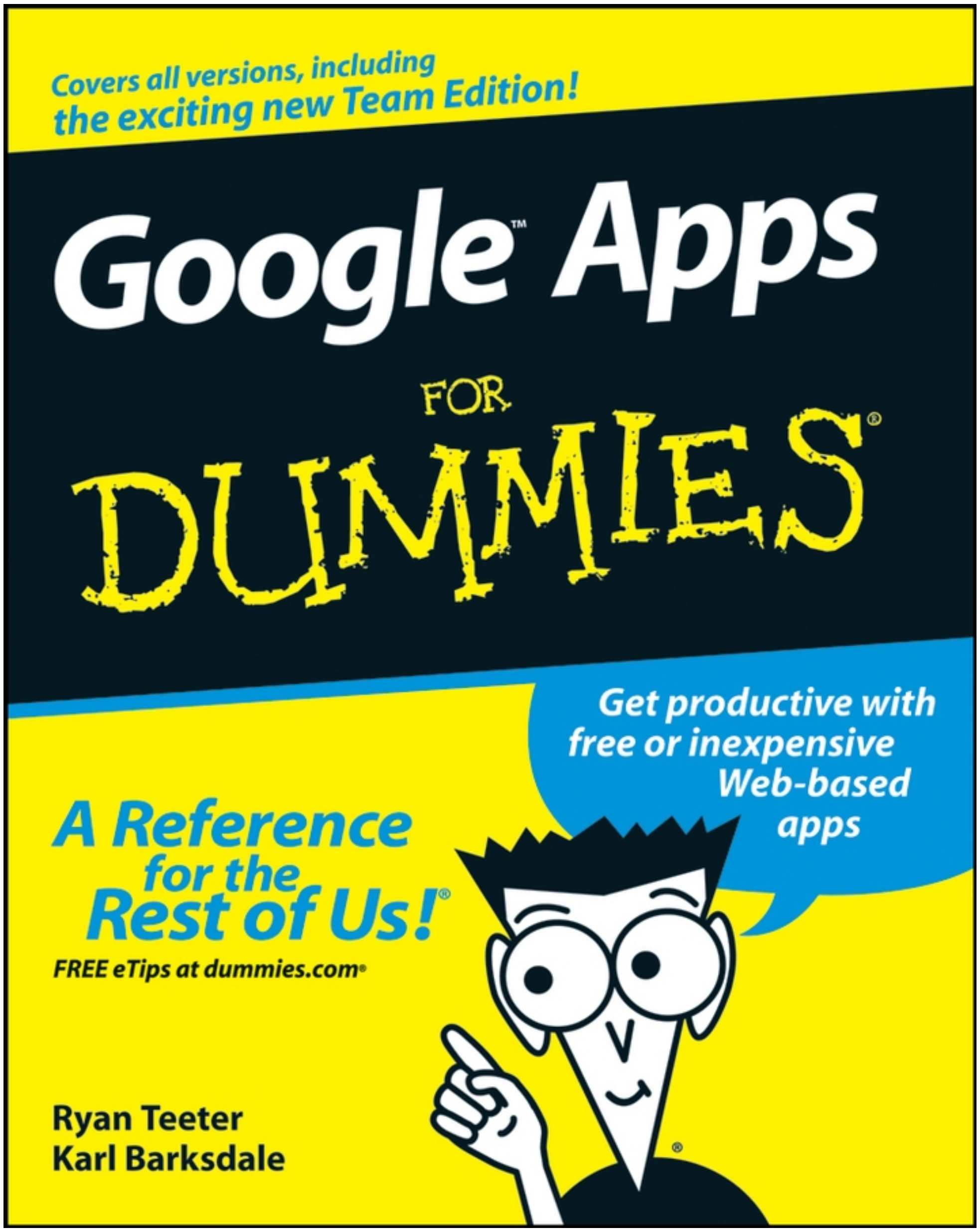

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Karl Barksdale was a former Development Manager for the Training and Certification team at WordPerfect Corporation and a Marketing Manager in the Consumer Products division. He was also the External Training Manager for Google’s Online Sales and Operations division. He’s best known for authoring and co-authoring 59 business and computer education textbooks. Albeit, the job he enjoys most is teaching at the Utah County Academy of Sciences, an early college high school on the Utah Valley University campus. (www.karlbarksdale.com)

Dedication

Ryan Teeter

This book is dedicated to my parents and my friends, for whom this book was originally intended.

Karl Barksdale

For Hilary, Cory, and Mari, who make it all worthwhile.

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: Further Reading

Introduction

When most people hear *Google,* they think of the powerful search tool with its squeaky-clean search box, colorful logo, and reliable search results. A few may know about its advertising tools, AdWords and AdSense, which generate Google's astounding profits quarter after quarter. Google recently became even more indispensable to teams and useful to organizations when it released *Google Apps,* a suite of online applications that enables you to create, share, and publish documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and more from any computer with an Internet connection.

If you think it may be time for your team, business, school, or organization to move out of costly, time-consuming information technology boondoggles and start using these powerful online Google applications, then *Google Apps For Dummies* is for you. If you're on the fence, turn to Chapter 1, where we discuss all the advantages and disadvantages of complementing your work or academic life with Google Apps. We hope that Google Apps has piqued your interest, even if it's only because you can save a lot of money and reduce your computing hassles.

If you want to use Google Apps for just yourself (not as part of a business or school), you can. Go to www.google.com and click the iGoogle link in the upper-right corner of the screen. You are given a customizable Start Page that will work like a springboard to the Internet and your Google Apps. From this page, you can set up your gadgets and create a user experience similar to what Google Apps users enjoy. Look for the tips throughout this book directed to iGoogle users.

About This Book

We realize that before you can make any software solution effective within an organization, you have to meet the needs of two audiences, so we address each audience in specific parts of this book to keep your training neat and tidy:

- ✓ **General users:** Chapters 3 through 13 show you how to use the parts of Google Apps you'll want to use the most: The Start Page, Gmail, Chat (or Talk), Calendar, Docs, Spreadsheets, and Presentations. If you're using the apps with a normal Google account, the information in Chapters 3 through 13 will work for you, too.
- ✓ **Information technology (IT) administrators:** Chapter 2 shows you how to set up Google Apps, and Part IV is your step-by-step guide to administering Google Apps. (Of course, you're free to read the rest of the book to make sure you can help users with any of the apps.)

This book is an enterprise-wide training solution for users at every level, but it can also help small businesses, groups, families, and even individual users.

We guide the IT team while they set up Google Apps. We bring users up to speed and show them tips and tricks to get the most out of Google Apps. Why? Because we know how frustrating IT administrators can find setting up a new software system and then having staffers or students fail to make good use of the new tools.

How This Book Is Organized

We divided this book into parts and chapters, organizing the chapters into five parts (which we describe in the following sections).

Part I: Up and Going with Google Apps

Part I is the obvious place to start if you’re brand new to Google Apps. Chapter 1 provides a general overview; we kept it short because we realize that if you have the great wisdom to pick up this book in the first place, you’re probably anxious to get started. For Team Edition users and administrators, Chapter 2 runs through the process of setting up Google Apps for your team, business, school, agency, or nonprofit organization. For general users, Chapter 3 introduces your organization’s personalized Start Page and shows you how easily you can access all your Google Apps from one place.

Part II: Keeping in Touch and on Time: Gmail, Talk, and Calendar

Chapters 4 through 6 take you through the Gmail and Contacts List so that you can become proficient with Google's communications tools. Chapter 7 takes you into Gmail Chat and Google Talk to satisfy your instant-messaging needs. Chapters 8 and 9 show you how to set up and use your Google Calendars personal calendar to keep track of your own activities and how to share that information with other people quickly.

Part III: Getting to Work: Documents, Spreadsheets, and Presentations

Chapter 10 introduces you to the Google Docs Home and discusses how to create and organize your documents, spreadsheets, and presentations. Chapter 11 covers documents, and it has you creating and formatting documents by using Google Docs, as well as accessing documents in Google Docs that you created by using a different word processor. Chapter 12 introduces Google Spreadsheets and has you calculating, writing formulas, creating imaginative charts, and sharing your spreadsheets in the blink of an eye. Chapter 13 takes you through Google Presentations and helps you create professional Web presentations — you can even show off a bit by using Google's highly visual and shareable Presentations app.

Part IV: Popping the Hood: Google Apps Administration

The chapters in this part are aimed at administrators. Chapter 14 delves into the Dashboard and helps you set up users and adjust basic domain settings. Chapter 15 walks you, step by step, through the process of setting up the Start Page — customizing it to your business, school, or organization, complete with your own logo, domain name, and look and feel. In Chapter 16, we show you the Page Creator and go through the basics of creating a simple, professional-looking Web page. Finally, Chapter 17 helps you tweak your apps even more and add controls for your users.

Part V: The Part of Tens

This part begins by giving you ten solutions to common problems in Chapter 18. Chapter 19 suggests more Google Apps and services that you may want to explore. (This final chapter is one of our favorites.)

Conventions Used in This Book

To make using this book as easy and convenient as possible, we’ve set up a few conventions:

- When we throw a new term at you, we place it in *italics* and define it.
- We place text that you actually type in **bold**.
- Web site addresses and file names appear in a monospace font, like this: www.dummies.com. When part of a file name or Web site address varies (depending on what your own Web site address is), we use italics to indicate a placeholder. For example, when you see http://start.yourdomain.com, you type the address with your own domain name in place of yourdomain.com.
- When you need to use a menu to select a command, we use the command arrow (⇒). For example, File⇒Rename simply means that you should click the File menu and then select the Rename command.

- When we show keyboard shortcuts, we place the plus sign (+) between keys. For example, to use the Cut command, press Ctrl+X. This means to press the Ctrl key and the X key at the same time.

Icons Used in This Book

Everyone gets distracted, starts to daydream, gets a little hungry, and quits paying attention to the lovely prose that they’re reading. In an attempt to regain your attention from that long-overdue Snickers bar, we place icons throughout this book. Each has its own sleep-preventative powers.

We mark paragraphs that we think you’ll find very useful with this icon. Tips show you shortcuts, time-savers, or something that’s otherwise worth noting. So, wake up and pay attention!

When you see this icon, beware. From experience, we know when you can easily make a mistake that may cause irreparable harm or damage to the Internet or national security. Well, maybe the Warning icon doesn’t point out something that dire, but you should still pay attention or risk losing data, time, and possibly hair (because you’re pulling it out in frustration).

Rather than repeat ourselves (because maybe you didn’t pay attention the first time), we pop this icon in place. Commit the information to memory, and it can help you later.

Okay, we don't use this icon unless we have to. When you see this icon, we're flagging some information that's more technical and nerdy than the rest of the text. You might find the information really cool and very interesting, despite being technical, so read it at your discretion.

When you see this icon, we show you how to use Google's powerful search features to help you find e-mail messages, calendar events, and so on by using the Search text box at the top of each Google Apps window.

Where to Go from Here

Hey, users! If you're somewhat timid with software or your computer skills, start with Chapter 3 and read through Chapter 13 to get up to speed with each app. Don't be afraid to challenge yourself and try some of the advanced instructions, as well. Trust us — you'll find any time spent in those chapters well worth it.

We don't want to insult your intelligence and go over basic computing skills, such as highlighting text or using a drop-down list. Instead, we focus on showing you how to use the apps to do your work.

Hey, administrators! Looking for the technical step-by-step details of setting up and running Google Apps for your organization? A little concerned about leaving your old tried-and-traditional software solutions and jumping into Web 2.0? Start by looking over Part I, then immediately jump to the technical stuff in Part IV. General users want to avoid this information like a self-replicating malevolent32 virus. You, on the other hand, should find it as comfortable as a walk along the beach — which is where you can vacation by using the bonus you receive because everyone’s so pleased with how well Google Apps is working.

One final thought: All you IT administrators may want to scan quickly through Parts II and III of this book. A quick skim can let you know exactly where you can send staffers, employees, or students when they have questions that you may not have time to answer on the spot.

Part I

Up and Going with Google Apps

The 5th Wave
By Rich Tennant
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"The funny thing is he's spent 9 hours organizing his Start Page."