

Google™ Apps FOR ***DUMMIES®***

by Ryan Teeter and Karl Barksdale



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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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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



"The funny thing is he's spent 9 hours organizing his Start Page."

In this part . . .

Take a moment to get to know Google Apps, the perfect complement to your business, group, family, or organization. In this part, we take you on a quick tour of the Google Apps editions, and then we help you register a new domain or point your existing one to Google's awesome services.

If your group or organization is using Google Apps already, or if you're a casual Gmail user, we recommend that you skip ahead and start with Chapter 3.

Chapter 1

Introducing Google Apps

In This Chapter

- ▶ Getting acquainted with Google Apps
 - ▶ Choosing the version of Google Apps that's right for you
 - ▶ Discovering the pros and cons of using Google Apps
-

The Internet has evolved, and Google is leading the way. Google began as a small Internet search engine experiment, but when the folks at Google found they had a hit on their hands, they didn't stop there. Today, you can keep track of everything, from e-mail to stock portfolios to photos, by using free services created by the ingenious *Googlers* (the bright engineers at Google who work behind the scenes to make the Internet cool and easy for everyone). Google is pushing forward into new territory with the innovative Google Apps and taking key functions, such as calendaring and word processing, into the Internet realm.

This chapter gives you a better understanding of how Google Apps works and helps you choose the version that's best for your organization. You can also find out more about Google Apps by visiting www.google.com/a. If you're interested in Google Apps for school or work teams, go to www.google.com/apps instead.

Meeting the Google Apps

With little fanfare, the Mountain View, California, behemoth known as Google has been building, buying, and beta-testing scores of online applications. And Google has been releasing them in a flurry, one right after another, to an unsuspecting world. The first 30 or 40 apps seemed random. It appeared that any cool idea any Googler could think of was turned into an app and tossed onto the Internet just for the fun of it. It was a blur. If you blinked, you missed something. It didn't seem to have a pattern or a purpose.

With the creation of the Google Apps initiative, the strategy behind the software releases came into sharp focus: Google is building a radically different way of working that can shatter the primacy of the current methods and reduce the need for all the tired, old office productivity software on your hard drive. Oh, and Google provides most of the apps for free or at a fraction of the cost of traditional software.

Google Apps is a powerful set of tools that Google has bundled together to meet the needs of businesses, schools, government agencies, and other organizations of any size. You can use Google Apps as a powerful digital communications infrastructure for your business or school that Google maintains for you. (Very sweet.) The key Google Apps are

- ✓ **Gmail:** An e-mail app based on Google's popular Gmail platform. This version lets you use your organization's domain, such as *user@yourdomain.com*.
- ✓ **Calendar:** A calendar and scheduling app that allows easy collaboration.
- ✓ **Talk:** Instant messaging, available directly from within Gmail or as a standalone software application. Talk also allows voice calls, voice mail, and file sharing.
- ✓ **Docs:** A simple, yet powerful, set of word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation apps.
- ✓ **The Start Page:** An app that you can personalize by adding gadgets to access any or all of the other Google Apps, as well as news, weather reports, entertainment information, and more from one place.

In addition to the apps themselves, Google provides some powerful tools for administrators in the Google Apps Dashboard. Features for administrators include

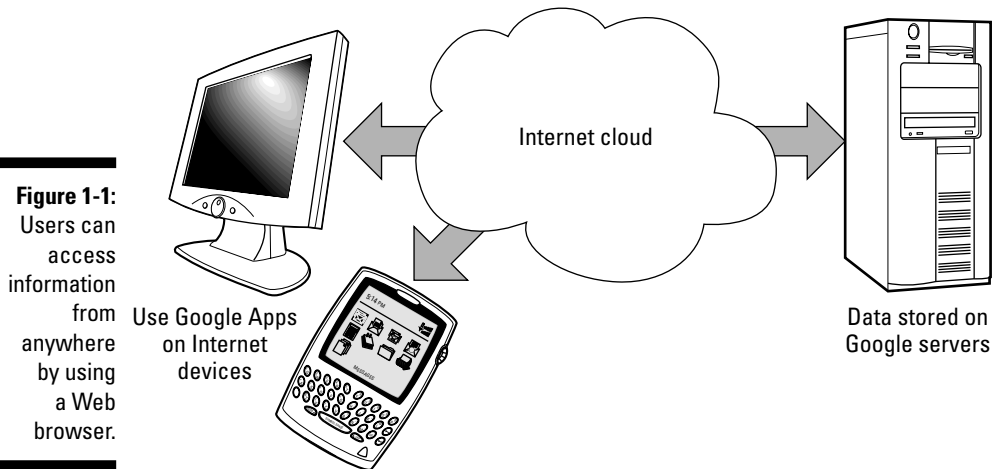
- ✓ Web page creation tools
- ✓ Domain settings
- ✓ Advanced tools, including administrative support and migration tools
- ✓ Individual apps settings
- ✓ Custom Web addresses for your Google Apps
- ✓ Phone-based support tools

Welcome to the New Internet

Google believes that you want to spend more time doing things with your organization, family, group, or school in an online environment.

Called *cloud computing*, the premise is that users can create, edit, and store massive amounts of information through the Internet (or “cloud”) with any device that has a Web browser (such as a computer or cellphone) and Internet access. The Web applications (or apps, for short), as well as the files themselves, are stored securely on powerful servers in data centers throughout the world, as illustrated in Figure 1-1.

Users can share their information with others, including friends and co-workers, and collaborate in real time on important projects. Because the files are already online, a user simply sends a message to his or her friends that contains a link to a file, and those friends can click the link to see and contribute to the sender’s great work. Using Google Apps, you don’t need to send attachments back and forth or keep track of different file versions.



Google Apps brings cloud computing to the masses. And it helps alleviate some of the issues of traditional computing:

- ✓ **Cost:** Computer hardware and software is expensive. For schools and businesses alike, buying PCs and servers, and all the software that goes with them, is making less and less financial sense — especially when it all becomes obsolete before anyone figures out how to use the new stuff. These organizations want solutions that can provide a better return on investment.
- ✓ **Maintenance:** Maintaining all those PCs and the network software is a pain. Information technology costs even more money and uses a lot of resources — especially when organizations grow and someone needs to maintain all those new users.

✓ **Hassle:** People are tired of installing new software, downloading and installing updates, backing up files, scanning for viruses, maintaining firewalls — it's all a bit much. Most people just want to get their work done, and most companies want to focus on their real business, not on information technology. (Unless, of course, their business *is* information technology. Those companies love all the hassle.)

So, why not go with Google and leave all the tedious technical stuff to the people not savvy enough to jump on the Google bandwagon? If you keep your information in their Internet cloud, you don't need to buy any servers, load any software, scan for any viruses, or back anything up. No more rebooting the server or your PC when the system crashes, again. Everything just works with a lot less cost, maintenance, and hassle because it's coming to you directly from Google.

To put it all into perspective, here's an analogy for you: Would you rather hide your life savings under your mattress and risk it being stolen or lost in a fire, or store it in a bank where you have access to it anytime, anywhere, from an ATM machine?

In this new, Web-enabled world, your Web browser becomes your ATM, and Google becomes your bank. You can use your own domain name, company logo, and all that branded identity stuff to personalize your Google Apps. You can preserve your corporate, school, or organizational identity and slash your costs in a dramatic way.

Choosing the Right Google Apps Edition

As we mention in the “Meeting the Google Apps” section, earlier in this chapter, Google Apps consists of four main programs: Gmail, Calendar, Docs, and Talk. Anyone can use these services without signing up for Google Apps, but to help organizations replace or complement their existing systems, Google has some powerful administrative and collaborative tools for those ready to take the plunge.

You can choose from four Google Apps editions: Team, Standard, Premier, and Education. Each edition has been customized to meet the needs of different types of organizations, large and small:

✓ **Team Edition:** This is the easiest way to start using the collaborative tools available with Google Apps with your school or work team. You don't have to change your e-mail address or worry about any administration tools. Sign up for free with your existing e-mail address (see Chapter 2 on how to do this) and you can start connecting with other people in your domain right away. Gmail is not included in this edition.