Google Apps Guide

Written to:
NPOs Affiliated with HandsOn Tech Pittsburgh

Written by:
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About the author:

Franco N. Colaizzi is a Skill-Based Volunteer, originally from Pittsburgh, PA, but currently located in San Francisco, California. He is transitioning careers from a Pittsburgh Public Schools high school Mathematics teacher to a web/software developer in Silicon Valley. Franco has an adoration of all things Mathematics (including the ever growing technology world) and thoroughly enjoys helping others learn and master these topics. Franco can be found all over the Internet and can be reached via Email, can be followed on Twitter, or connected with on LinkedIn. He shares his experiences on Tumblr and his GitHub contains all of his current projects and open-source contributions. His portfolio can be seen here.

Contents:

Gmail

Background And Information:
- Gmail is one of the most popular email clients available
- Gmail for Business works the same way that Gmail for personal use does
- Can be used with Mozilla Thunderbird, Microsoft Outlook, and Apple Mail desktop applications

Key Features:
Gmail offers some key features aimed towards improving productivity and overall organization in an inbox that can quickly become overwhelming. These are some of the more important key features, with more found in the **Extra Resources**, in the Gmail Labs, and through random Google searches.

❖ Emails are *Starred* to represent a conversation that needs to be saved and noticeable. The *Starred* attribute can be applied to any email and is useful for making the occasional email stand out. Also, *Starred* emails can be found in the **Starred** folder.

❖ The yellow pentagon on its side (pointing toward the sender of an email in the Email List) marks an email as *Important*. The *Important* attribute is similar to *Starred* but emails can be marked *Important* automatically based on how often there is a conversation with any given sender or the frequency with which emails are responded in a single given conversation topic.

❖ Using the checkboxes found on the left of the **Email List**, it is possible to perform bulk operations on emails such as deletion or reassignment of labels.

❖ Gmail employs a unique email management system called *Labels* that act as folders for organizing emails.
- ➢ *Labels* are created and managed in the **Folder Plane**
- ➢ *Labels* can be assigned by dragging emails into a specific spot in the **Folder Pane**
  - ▪ This action will remove the emails from the main inbox and **Email List** but it will not delete them
- ➢ It is also possible to keep emails in the main inbox **Email List** but append multiple labels to provide a more visual organization to emails

> ➢ The **Email List** will change to reflect whichever folder/label selected

Icon Breakdown:

Settings
- Used to customize graphical layout, find deeper settings, and provide feedback and get help
- Do not be afraid to venture into this menu and customize the look of the Gmail Application → If the terminology used to describe the setting do not make sense, do not change or alter that setting.
- Provides access to Gmail Labs

Search Bar
- This *is* Google's key technology
- Easily search through *all* mail (from inbox to trash and any label in between)
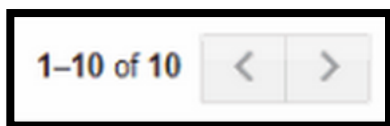- Can search through contacts as well
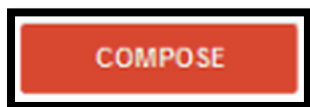
Compose Button
- Used to initiate a new blank email
- Doubles as the "Create" button for Contacts as well

Refresh
- Button refreshes the contents of the inbox and other folders
- Not to be confused with the browser's refresh button
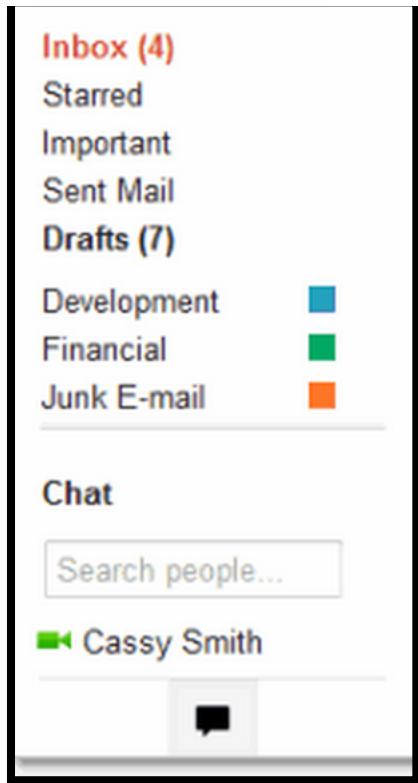

Pages
- Controls which page (of the current folder) is currently displayed
- The numbers describe the email count
 $[range\ of\ numbers]\ of\ [total]$

Logo
- Company logo
- Doubles as a link to primary inbox

Folder Pane

- List of email folders
- Provides quick access to folders (labels) including: *Sent, Drafts, Starred (emails marked as important), and User Created Folders (denoted with optional colors for visual clarity)*
- Access to built in Google Chat (renamed as Hangouts) → An instant message and video message service, tightly integrated with Gmail. Similar to Skype.
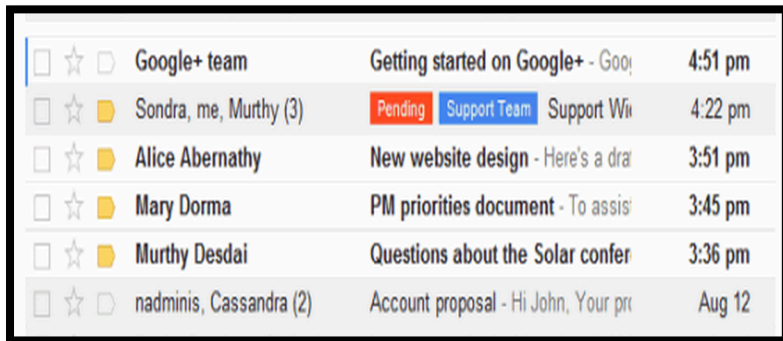
Email List

- Each email in the list contains the following: *From, Subject, Time Stamp, Star, Label, a Checkbox*
- Emails are clicked to open them and show a paperclip if files are attached

Extra Resources:

- Google Apps - Gmail
- Gmail Tutorial - YouTube (12 part series)

Calendar

Background Information:
- Google Calendar is a powerful, web-based calendar organizer
- Calendar data can be imported to a variety of desktop applications (like Gmail) including Microsoft Outlook and Apple iCal
- There is tight integration with Gmail and Calendar

Key Features:

Calendar is a smart, powerful web app that helps juggle the most complicated of work schedules. Calendar offers behind-the-scenes help to try and predict what conflicts COULD emerge and offer suggestions to preemptively remove said conflicts. Calendar's tight integration with Gmail makes sharing of events and invitations seamless.

❖ Most of the icons (and buttons in the same location) between Gmail and Calendar behave identically.

❖ It is advised to set a default view (using the settings icon → same as Gmail icon) to optimize productivity with Calendar.

Icon Breakdown:
➢ Many of the icons from Gmail carry over to Calendar. For the sake of brevity these will not be repeated because the functionality does not change, except for where expected (i.e. – the business logo in Calendar takes the user to the main calendar page, just like the logo on Gmail returns the user to the main inbox)
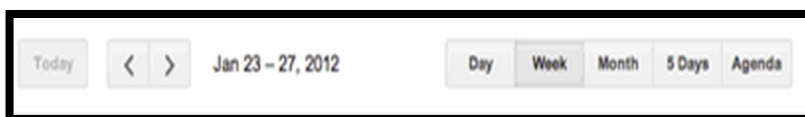

Create Button
- Used to create a new appointment in which attendees can be added and conflicting schedules can be avoided (Calendar suggests times that work for every invited guest if applicable)

Quick Views
- Buttons provide a quick way to change views of the calendar
- Provides way to page through current view (i.e. – page by day,

week, month, etc...)

Mini Month View

- Provides means to quickly jump to any day in the current month
- Bold dates represent dates with appointments
- Greyed out dates represent previous and following months
- Drop-down arrow next to month allows collapsing of month
- Left-Right arrows allow paging through months

Calendars View

- Allow control of which calendar is being displayed (default is current user's calendar)
- If calendars are shared between users, their calendars are selected for view (and can be color coordinated) under "Other calendars"
- Both options are able to be collapsed by using the drop-down arrow in the grey box on the right
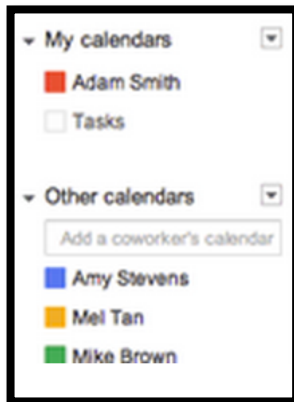
Calendar

- Main calendar view synonymous with the main email view
- Appointments are interactive such that you can click on each event to edit events
- Events from another calendar is represented with a faint stripe pattern (and the assigned color)
- The view is completely customizable
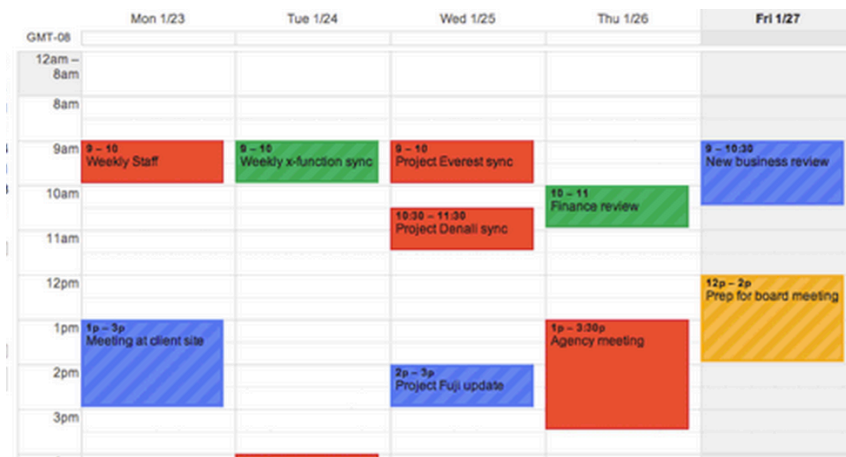
Additional Resources:

- Google Apps - Calendar
- Calendar Tutorial - YouTube (5 part series)

Drive

Background Information:

- Drive is Google's cloud-storage platform
- Google drive is heavily integrated with Gmail and with Docs, Sheets, and Slides
- Attachments sent through Gmail can be saved directly to Drive (therefore accessible anywhere, removing the need to locally store attachments)
- Combining services through Google expands the available space on Drive
- Drive includes a download available that adds Google Drive as a folder on the local machine (in the same folder as My Documents) allowing files to easily be saved to Drive from desktop applications (like MS Paint) and moved in a file explorer.

Key Features:

Google Drive is a very fast, efficient file storage system that successfully mirrors the experience had in Windows Explorer or Mac OS X Finder. The tight integration with Gmail makes handling attachments a pleasant experience.

❖ Any repeated icon or button is not a coincidence and in fact perform the same operations (like the gear denoting settings)

❖ Downloading and installing the desktop software associated with Drive is the easiest way to utilize its immense power
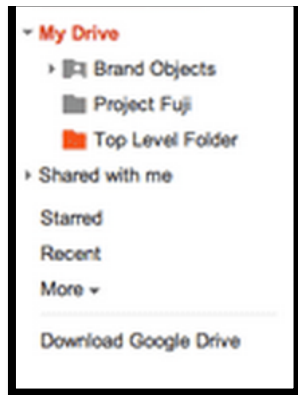
Icon Breakdown:

Create Button

- This button provides an easy way to create new Drive documents
- A drop-down menu will appear asking if the user wants to create a new Folder, Doc, Slide, or Sheet
- The other button provides an easy way to upload files from the local machine to Drive

New Folder Button

- Button used to instantly create a new folder

My Drive
- Brand Objects
- Project Fuji
- Top Level Folder

Shared with me

Starred

Recent

More ▾

Download Google Drive

	TITLE	OWNER	LAST MODIFIED
☆	Brand Objects Shared	me	12/14/10 me
☆	Project Fuji	me	10:48 am me
☆	Top Level Folder	me	12/14/10 me
☆	Board Prep Deck - DRAFT Shared	me	11/13/11 me
☆	Creative Review Meeting Notes Shared	me	11/13/11 me
☆	Market Research for Board Meeting Shared	me	11/13/11 me
☆	Product Review - 2012 plan Shared	me	11/13/11 me
☆	Project Everest Board Presentation	me	12/5/11 me
☆	Project Everest Finance Plan Shared	me	Feb 1 me

Folder Tree
- The list of user's folders through which the user can navigate through folders and sub-folders
- This behaves the same way as the file explorer on desktops
- If files are shared with other users they are found in "Shared with me"
- The "Download Google Drive" link will launch the download for the desktop application to integrate into desktop file explorer

Drive Files
- The list of files associated with a Drive account
- Folders can be clicked on and will expand in the same window

Additional Resources:
- Google Apps - Drive
- Drive Tutorial - YouTube (6 part series)

Docs/Sheets/Slides
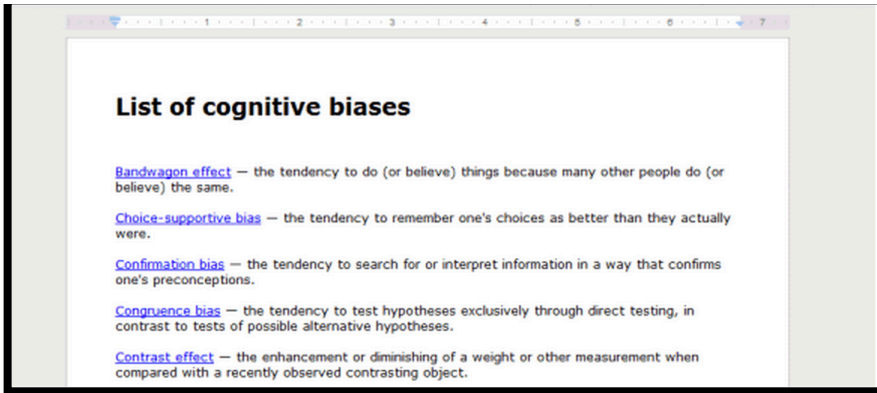
(Hereafter referred to as Docs)

Background Information:
- Docs, Sheets, and Slides are the online counterpart of Word (Docs), Excel (Sheets), and PowerPoint (Slides)
- Docs is heavily integrated with Drive, so much so that from Drive it is possible (by use of the **Create Button**) to jump right in to a brand new Doc or Sheet.
- Many common keyboard short-cuts from desktop applications carry over to Docs
  - CTRL + C → Copy
  - CTRL + V → Paste
  - etc…
- Docs is written in a powerful web language called JavaScript which allows new features to be constantly rolled out to consumer/business builds. While Docs does not have the same powerful formatting tools or fonts available as MS Office, new features can be rolled out daily and the platform experiences improves constantly.
- With the announcement of Add-ons, the power of Docs has exponentially advanced. Docs can now include specialized tools published by third-party developers that increase functionality in ways that Office cannot.

Key Features:

Docs has become a serious competitor to Microsoft Office over the past few years and is a competent replacement. Docs includes an equation editor (CTRL + = on Windows) useful for writing in MathML.

❖ Docs can be used to open and manipulate (although spacing and formatting may not persist perfectly) common document files such as .doc, .docx (MS Word), .xls, .xlsx (MS Excel), and .ppt, .pptx (MS PowerPoint) → It is possible to save work in these popular formats as well

❖ Docs is heavily integrated to Drive and the two are actually rolled into one product

Icon Breakdown:

List of cognitive biases ☆

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Table Collaborate Help   Saved seconds ago

File Edit View Insert Slide Format Arrange Table Help   All changes saved

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Table Add-ons Help

🌐 Share

File Name
- Every app has the current file name displayed in the top-left most corner of the view
- A new file will have "Unnamed File" or another ambiguous phrase to denote that it is not saved

File Menu
- The file menu is the same as found on desktop applications and provides a complete set of tools available for any document including saving, undoing/redoing, and sharing
- The very end of the menu displays the current status of connection with Google's servers and will show when the document was last saved
- Add-ons are community developed optional additions to Docs that can allow for more specialized functionality (Docs)

Share Button
- The button provides an easy way to share the current document

Formatting Tools
- Standard formatting tools for text-alignment, bold/italics/underline, font, etc… (Docs)
- Standard formatting tools for creating slides, adding shapes, and text (Slides)
- Standard formatting tools for mass editing cells, quickly calculating formulas, and generating graphs (Sheets)

- This area of the screen is devoted to the working space of the current document
- Sheets (like Excel) has multiple sheets per working document and contains a formula bar for quick manipulations of data
- Slides centers on the current slide and contains a scrolling list on the left of all of the slides in a current presentation
- This view takes up most of the interface
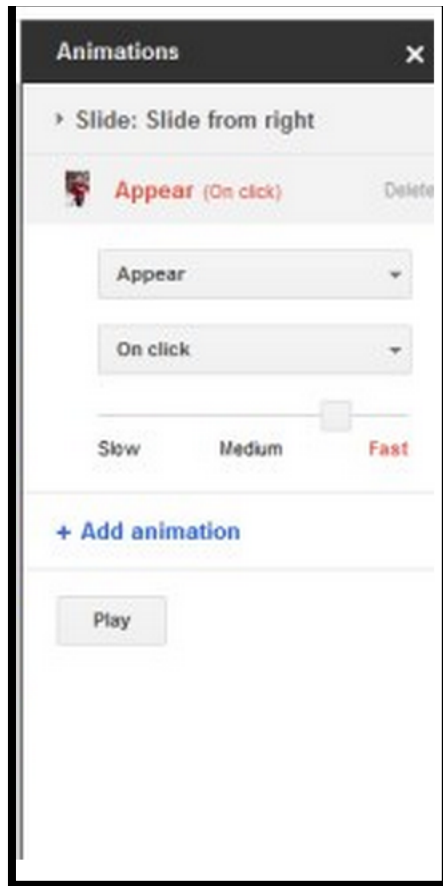
Animations Pane (Slides)
- A pane occupying the right side of the working space containing tools to control the animations used for slide transitions

Additional Resources:
- [Google Apps - Docs](#)
- [Google Docs (& Drive) - YouTube (16 part series)](#)