

# **Role of Online Spreadsheets for the Development of IT Skills**

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## **Abstract**

This paper describes the role of web based spreadsheet applications from the point of view of development of IT skills of manpower of an organization. Traditionally spreadsheet application software such as Lotus 1-2-3 and MS Excel are being used as IT tools for the management of information in several organizations. But these applications are suitable for those organizations which work in the offline mode. However the work culture of most organizations has become online due to the popularity of the Internet.

Therefore the requirement of software to be used for management of data of an organization has also been changed. Due to this web based version of spreadsheet application has been developed. This scenario has impact on the IT skills of the manpower from several points of views. The present paper explores various aspects of development of IT skills from the point of view of use of online spreadsheets in an organization.

## **Introduction:**

An online spreadsheet is a SPREADSHEET Document edited through a web-based application that allow multiple persons to edit and share it with the world. With the advent of WEB 2.0 technologies such as AJAX, a new generation of online spreadsheets have begun to emerge. Equipped with a RICH INTERNET APPLICATION user experience, the best web based online spreadsheets have many of the features seen in desktop spreadsheet applications. Some of them have strong multi-user collaboration features. Some of them offer REAL TIME updates from remote sources such as STOCK PRICES and currency EXCHANGE RATES. Online applications are now becoming known as "Cloud Apps".

## **List of Free Online Spreadsheets**

- EditGrid
- Espresso Spreadsheet
- Google Spreadsheet
- Sheetster
- Smartsheet
- ZCubes – Calci
- Zoho Office Suite

### **List of open source Online Spreadsheets**

- Dhtmlx
- simple Spreadsheet
- wikicalc
- Gelsheet
- Ether Calc

### **List of paid commercial Online Spreadsheets**

- Microsoft office 365
- Resolver one
- Zoho office suite – business account
- Think office
- Espresso spreadsheet enterprise accounts
- Google docs enterprise edition

### **Benefits of online spreadsheet**

- i. Provides most of features of offline spreadsheet without the need to buy and install software.
- ii. Facility of multi-user collaboration.
- iii. Sharing of spreadsheet with several users.
- iv. Provides facility of online backup of data.
- v. Facility of importing data from various formats such as Microsoft Excel, Open document, CSV, Text file.
- vi. Free Web Space to store spreadsheet.
- vii. Customization of spreadsheet using interpreting languages such as Java Script and PHP.
- viii. Provides API (Application Programming Interface) for different languages.
- ix. Provides the facility to specify the visibility of spreadsheet.
- x. No need to send such spreadsheet through email because it can be shared using a hyperlink.

As we mentioned before, one of the advantages of online applications such as Google Spreadsheets is that they are designed to be collaborative—one of the key components of Web 2.0. With Google Docs, we can share our files with a selected group of people or with the entire world. We can do this without having to send copies via e-mail or wondering what version of the document is being used.

Currently Google Spreadsheets supports over 40 financial functions, such as effective annual interest rate, future value, internal rate of return (IRR) and net present value.

In order to enter a function into Google spreadsheet, click in the cell where we want the function embedded and then click the function button ( $\Sigma$ ) on the toolbar at the top of the worksheet. Google Spreadsheets also supports pivot tables, albeit via a third-party plug-in. Also, we can integrate macros into a Google Spreadsheet using Google Apps Scripts.

We can specify the visibility of a document—accessible by anyone on the Internet, only those with the Web link to the document, or only those people to whom we explicitly grant access. We can also specify whether or not other people can edit the document. Finally, we can also share the link to your document via social media services such as Facebook and Twitter.

If we want to discuss a spreadsheet with a group of people, we can do so using the chat function that is built into Google Spreadsheets.

Also, if we are working on a project with a group of people, we don't have to worry about multiple versions of a document floating around. Since our Google documents are stored on Google's servers, everyone viewing the document is seeing the latest version. However, we can also revert back to an earlier version of a document.

Printing Google Spreadsheets is not as user-friendly as it is with Excel. Most disappointing is the inability to “shrink to fit” a worksheet to a single page. We can specify printing to letter or legal sizes, and can choose between portrait and landscape orientation.

Overall, we were very pleased with the ease of use and performance of Google Spreadsheets. While it is undoubtedly not as powerful as Microsoft Excel, it allowed us to recreate the Simple Valuation Spreadsheet and use some functions to help automate the data retrieval process. The ability to easily integrate Google Finance data is especially nice for those looking to generate spreadsheets for financial analysis. The fact that Google Docs is free is also a key benefit.

Web-based spreadsheets like Google's are great for collaborating, but slow us down when it comes to clicking through cells quickly or creating really big spreadsheets. It doesn't even have a search function other than what your browser can do on its own (try finding a name in a list of 500). Desktop-based spreadsheets like Microsoft's Excel give us all the features and speed you want, but are not easy to share. The gap between online and offline is closing more each day, and working with your spreadsheets in a collaborative atmosphere is not a bad reason to try an online spreadsheet editing tool.

## **Conclusion**

In order to implement above mentioned benefits the web based version of spreadsheet application has been developed and due to this reason we should work on online spreadsheet because its impact on the IT skills of the manpower from different points of views. The present paper explores various aspects of development of IT skills from the point of view of use of online spreadsheets in an organization. Still the use of online spreadsheet is a skill which should be acquired by everyone.

### **Future scope**

Online Spreadsheet is not as mature as offline spreadsheet and so in future the features available in online spreadsheet will be increased as given in this future scope of this paper. Still total number of functions provided by online spreadsheet is very less as compared to offline spreadsheet. So, function should be increased. Printing of online spreadsheet is not user friendly as compared to excel. The facility to “shrink to fit” is not available. Large files cannot be easily handled with online spreadsheet. So, facility to handle large file should be implemented.

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