

The Dual of the Office Suites



**Hillingdon u3a
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INTRODUCTION

- **Office Suites**
 - E-mail and Browsers are the most used but then Office Suites are next most used in the consumer PC workspace.
- **Consist of multiple applications bundled together which include, at a minimum, a word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation software.**
- **Have a common look and feel across components.**
- **Used extensively by business but also in the home market.**



DEFINITIONS

- The terms Word, Excel and PowerPoint have become generic terms, like Hover
- These actually refer to a specific program or a common file format.
- For example; not all Word docs are created by MS Word, etc.



Products to be covered

- **Microsoft Office**
 - **Commonly installed on the local machine**
 - **Office on the Web (free) – Internet based**
 - **Microsoft 365 – online, subscription based**
- **Google Workspace**
- **Libre Office**
- **Open Office**



TIMELINE

- **1980's Word Processors - WordStar, Word Perfect & Star Office.**
- **1980's Spreadsheets – Visicalc, Lotus 1-2-3**
- **1980's Presentation – Bruno (HP-Draw), Harvard Graphics & Lotus Freelance**
- **Early 1990's – MS – start of MS Suites – Word 1.1, Excel 2.0, PowerPoint 2.0**
- **1991 MS Mail added**
- **1994 MS Access added**
- **1996 MS Publisher, Outlook, Automaps & Expedia Streets**
- **1999 MS Front Page & PhotoDraw**
- **2002 OpenOffice.org 1.0 released**
- **2005 Apple Pages released**
- **2006 – Initial launch of Google Apps. First cloud served office suite delivered via a browser. Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides**
- **2011 – MS Office 365 (now called Microsoft 365) subscription web based service begins – all the Office apps included (£3.75/month)**
- **2011 – Initial stable release of LibreOffice**
- **2014 – Initial stable OpenOffice release**
- **2015 – MS - Mobile and Cloud Focus – support for iPads and Androids**
- **2016 – Google Apps becomes G Suite, and later Google Workspace**



DEPLOYMENT DIFFERENCES

- **Local Desktop install**
 - MS Office is the traditional environment
 - Runs on Windows and Mac's
 - Apple Mac Office, supplied with MacOS
- **Web based Implementations**
 - Google Workspace
 - Office 365 / Microsoft 365
 - Runs using a browser, platform and OS version independent
- **Libre Office / Open Office**
 - Code based on original product – Star Office from Sun Computers
 - Local install (commercial version for web under development)
 - Multi-platform - Runs on Windows, Mac's, ChromeOS and Linux
 - Open-source product, not backed by major tech giant



Application Comparisons

Component	Microsoft	Google	Libre Office	Apple
App Launcher	File Explorer	Google Drive	Libre Office	Finder
Word Processor	Word	Docs	Writer	Pages
Spreadsheets	Excel	Sheets	Calc	Numbers
Presentations	PowerPoint	Slides	Impress	Keynote
Database	Access	N/A - AppSheets	Base	N/A
E-mail	Outlook (diff ver)	Gmail	Not included	Mail
Drawings	Visio (in some vers)	Draw	Draw	Preview
Note Taking	OneNote	Keep, Docs	Writer	Notes



MICROSOFT PRODUCTS

Microsoft Office on a device

- **Initially released in the 1990's, with new releases every 2-3 years**
- **Installs on a local device**
- **Current version = Office 2024 (Standard or Professional)**
- **Perpetual license, per machine basis**
- **Documents stored on local system or attached storage**
- **File formats were initially proprietary but over the years became more accessible**
- **Currently £120 one off purchase**



MICROSOFT PRODUCTS

- **Microsoft Office 365 apps for Free**
- **Initially released in the 2010**
- **Get Word, Excel, and PowerPoint**
- **Get 5GB cloud storage**
- **Requires a Microsoft account and that files to be saved and shared from OneDrive's Cloud storage**
- **Free offering**



MICROSOFT PRODUCTS

- **Microsoft Office 365, later renamed Microsoft 365**
- **Initially released in the 2011, focused toward corporate customers, not consumers**
- **Designed to combat competition from Google**
- **Introduced the concept of subscription pricing and continuous updating**
- **Future direction for Microsoft**
- **Subsequently, released as Personal, Family and Premium editions**
- **Currently £85 / £105 /£190 all per year**



GOOGLE WORKSPACE

- Initially released in 2006
- Designed for collaboration from the ground up as an internet-based product
- No product install necessary, browser-based implementation
- Therefore, accessible from any platform.
- Free version for home users has 15GB of storage, Gmail, Docs & Sheets.
- Common interface across different tools
- Requires a Google account



LIBRE OFFICE

- **Open-source product modelled after MS Office**
- **Free to use**
- **Frequently updated, attempts to keep up with recent MS Office versions**
- **Based on Star Office product from Sun Computers**
- **Installs on local machine**
- **Multi-platform –Win, Mac, Linux, etc.**
- **Can install from website or Ninite**



OPEN OFFICE

- Open source, same as Libre Office
- Open Office & Libre Office came from the same stables
- Development updates not as frequent (1 a year recently).
- Not as good support for current file formats
- Not as full featured as Libre Office
- Libre Office is easier to use
 - Pros : stability and familiarity with a long-standing interface
 - Cons : want latest features, active development, and a vibrant community then LibreOffice is better
- Both suites are capable alternatives to commercial office software



MARKET SHARE

- **Source: Google AI Overview**
 - Google Workspace 44-45%
 - Microsoft 365 29-30%
 - Remainder: small players
 - Zoho, Apple, LibreOffice. WPS Office
- **Trends:**
 - Market is shifting toward cloud-based, collaborative tools, driving growth.
 - MS 365 dominates large enterprise deals, while Google is popular in business and education.
 - Google has more users but MS 365 generates more revenue.
 - Libre Office is becoming more popular in the EU market



PRO'S AND CON'S – MICROSOFT OFFICE - One Time Purchase Licence

Pros

- **Comfortable environment, product has evolved over the years**
- **Internet connection not required**
- **Product installed on local machine**
- **Documents stored locally**

Cons

- **Single machine install**
- **More setups to understand**
- **Bloated with many seldom used features**
- **Need to purchase new version for new features.**
- **Support ends typically after 5-7 years.**



PRO'S AND CON'S – MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 Online Subscription Licence

Pros

- **Flagship product, future direction for all Microsoft development**
- **Web based but can also install on local device**
- **Personal and Family plans/options**
- **Large cloud storage space included 1TB/6TB**

Cons

- **Subscription pricing locks users into ongoing payments**
- **Internet Dependency**
- **Might get unwanted features such as AI**



PRO'S AND CON'S – MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 Apps for Free

Pros

- **Free**
- **Full Microsoft 365 apps**
- **Access to web and mobile versions of the apps including Outlook**
- **Access across platforms (browser, IOS 7 Android)**

Cons

- **Limited functionality**
- **Documents restricted to be held on OneDrive in the cloud**
- **Cloud storage – 5GB**
- **Unclear future**



PRO'S AND CON'S – GOOGLE WORKSPACE

Pros

- Cloud based by design, runs anywhere
- Designed for data sharing and collaboration
- Common, modern interface throughout
- A free account with 15GB storage allocation, with growth options of.....
- 30 GB £70/yr, 2TB £142/yr,

Cons

- Google products, not as advanced as MS Office apps
- Cloud based - Security
- Internet dependency
- Higher prices for upgrading



PRO'S AND CON'S – LIBRE OFFICE

Pros

- Open source
- Local install and local file storage
- Frequently updated to maintain compatibility with MS
- Multi platform –Win, Mac, Linux
- Free

Cons

- Local install and local file storage
- Open source, maintained by volunteers
- Defaults to ODF file formats
 - Can be changed in settings
 - Recommend changing to MS extensions for compatibility



WORTH A MENTION

- EU Office
- Based on OnlyOffice (called a fork)
- In development to provide a European sovereignty and provide an alternative to the hyperscalers of MS 365 & Google
- Data held in the EU
- Documents, Spreadsheets, Presentations & PDFs
- European tech giants like IONOS, Nextcloud, Eurostack, XWiki, OpenProject, Soverin, Abilian and BTactic are behind the initiative.
- Project began in March 2026



AS IN LIFE, THERE ARE TRADE-OFFS AND OPTIONS

If you prefer a local install:

- MS Office Traditional or Libre Office

If you prefer Free software;

- Google or Libre Office

If you prefer a Cloud based implementation:

- Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace

If you dislike large, corporate Tech companies:

- Libre Office

If you need to support multiple machines:
or platforms:

- MS 365, Google, or Libre Office

If you have a low powered PC

- Libre Office or Google Workspace



WHAT WILL THE FUTURE BRING

More emphasis on Cloud based solutions

- With so many new data centres to use
- Software developers may consider dropping support for local installs

AI is creeping into everything.

- Major push by Microsoft and Google
- Unclear if Co-Pilot hardware is necessary to make use of AI capability.
- With Co-pilot, how much processing is done on the desktop vs. the cloud
- AI datacentres are driving up the cost of PC memory

Unlikely that Libre Office will push AI.

- It does not have the financial backing to support it.
- Libre Office will likely remain viable due to its lack of AI and therefore modest hardware requirements



Slide Title

THE END



Slide Title

Product A

- Feature 1
- Feature 2
- Feature 3

Product B

- Feature 1
- Feature 2
- Feature 3