

Web Ministry: Document Sharing



In his best-selling book *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, noted author, artist and teacher Robert Fulghum says, "Share everything. Don't take things that aren't yours. Put things back where you found them." His is an excellent axiom for discovering and using basic document-sharing tools online to enhance communication, increase efficiency and develop exciting Web ministry experiences.

Many of us remember when collaborating on the minutes of a meeting or building an agenda took hours of editing and revising, not to mention sifting through pages of hand-scribbled notes. Working together in the good old B.C. (before computers) days meant a lot of work for many people. Now, with computers and the Internet, all that is changing.

How it works.

Forget about typing a document and sending it as an e-mail attachment to get feedback. Online document sharing lets you upload the document to a Web site where everyone can edit the same file instead of creating multiple versions that still must be combined into one final version. Online document sharing is not restricted to Word documents. You can share Excel and PowerPoint files, too. It is easy and free. Here's how to get started:

1. Select a free online document sharing site such as [Google Docs](#) or [Zoho Docs](#).
2. Create a username and password to set up your free account.
3. Upload a document from your computer (Word, Excel or PowerPoint) or create a new document in the easy-to-use text editor.
4. Share your document by entering the email addresses of those with whom you wish to collaborate.
5. When you have reached consensus on your collaborative document, save the final version and distribute or share it by inviting others to view the document online.

Ways to use online document sharing for Web ministry.

Using online document sharing to enhance your church's communications and Web ministry efforts is practical and timesaving. It is free, efficient and convenient. You will not waste paper or postage by mailing things to people. If they want a printed copy, they can print it from the online document-sharing site or download a copy to their computers. Right off the bat, you will save money and give people what they want and need in a more timely fashion. Using online document sharing to collaborate and distribute committee minutes and agendas is a fast, effective way to communicate in today's digital age.

Another way to use online document sharing to enhance church communications and Web ministry efforts is to work more efficiently among staff members and church leaders around specific programs or ministries. For example, you can use the online document-sharing site for the pastor, music director, worship committee and organist to contribute all components of the worship bulletin. Again, rather than each person sharing his or her contribution separately via paper or email with the person creating the worship bulletin, each contributor can go to the same document online and add his or her portion to one document in one place. After final review, the bulletin is ready to print for worship. The same process would work for building PowerPoint presentations or worship slides.

You also can use online document sharing to share an Excel database or to review financial reports in a safe and secure location. Remember, only those people who have been invited to access the documents will have permission to view them,

and you can set the documents to “read only” which means others cannot change them but can view them.

The possibilities are only limited by your readiness and imagination. Start small with a simple project such as building an agenda for an upcoming meeting. Before you know it, you will be using online document sharing to collaborate on many projects and wondering what to do with all the time and money you are saving.

Learn more:

- [Google Docs in Plain English \(Video\)](#)
- [Google Docs](#)
- [Google Notebook](#)
- [ajaxWrite](#)
- [Writeboard](#)
- [Zoho Docs](#)