

Work Smarter with the Gamonnet Method

Outlook, Notes, Google Enterprise, Mind Mapping, Office 365, Sharepoint

Why it is fundamental to use the potential of collaborative tools like Outlook



Unless they are not equipped with computers, **all companies now use collaborative work tools**, sometimes without knowing it.

From the simplest to the most complex, **these are fundamental tools for companies to manage their day-to-day business.**

Collaborative tools : what are they ?

In this digital era when the Internet is booming, every organization, whatever size or industry, uses collaborative tools. As true cornerstones serving organizational purposes, each has some degree of importance and complexity.



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First are the **basic tools, called collaborative work tools, which enable information to be shared.** They include mail, instant messaging (**Outlook**, Lotus Notes, GroupWise, Google Enterprise) and video conference for instance.

Then come **shared group work tools.** Word, with its "Track Changes" mode, must be the most widely known of them. Indeed, this software option allows team members to work together on the same document, be it to share comments or make amendments for instance.

As for "**Knowledge Management**" tools, they define information-based mediums specific to knowledge sharing. Databases, telephone directories, mailing lists and memos fit in this category.

Finally, the latest are "**Workflow**" tools, which have seen an upsurge in use over the last few years. **Shared calendars, task managers** and other synchronization tools are no longer the prerogative of big organizations and now involve the smaller ones as well.

The vital interest of collaborative tools

If collaborative work tools are fundamental to organizations, it is because they **considerably improve their performance** by facilitating communication as a whole, from access to information to knowledge sharing between team members, including the decision-making process.

They indeed allow for **considerable time-saving** and consequently for **cost reduction** for companies, be it through mutualization, the possibility of simultaneous work on the same document or the setting up of video conferences for instance. Moreover, with the Internet being accessible virtually anywhere, online collaborative tools are accessible at all times, on the computer as well as on tablets and smart phones.



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Finally, they can play a **role in team motivation and cohesion** by making members **grow in autonomy, responsibility**, or by allowing them to **take new initiatives**.

Collaborative work tools are thus vital for organizations to maintain, but also **increase, their productivity level**.

Are there cons to collaborative tools?

While they appear to be an essential way of working for companies, which would not want to live without this resource, collaborative tools must nevertheless be used with some precaution.

The main concern is obviously data securing, particularly for online collaborative tools. Suffice it to say that it is advisable to be protected against potential hacking. In addition, computer network failures and websites providing such tools are all the more problematic since they prevent the company from accessing its data as long as the failure lasts.

Also, communication tools must not lead to individual imprisonment. On the contrary, they must **be used with discrimination for oral interaction to live freely**. Nothing is more valuable than a timely interaction in person or a physical meeting between team members, in particular to clarify writings that may sometimes lead to false interpretation.

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