

# SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS FOR BUSINESS

Assignment 1: Contemporary Software Applications for Business

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CertHE Computing Skills for Workplace

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2025

ACCA4026\_LON

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## TASK 1

e-Commerce Website builders/software solutions (Approx. 500 words) Describe two contemporary e-Commerce website builders/software solutions (approx. 2/3 sources).

Businesses and individuals can use various tools and platforms when setting up an e-commerce website, which helps simplify the process and optimize the management of online shops. The most common choices are Shopify, WooCommerce, BigCommerce, Wix eCommerce, and Presta Shop.[1] While every platform offers several advantages, many personalities exist among the options. Let me explain two of the most popular Website builders/software solutions in detail.

### Shopify — Simple and Scalable

Shopify has become the go-to platform for new business owners looking to sell online. Its aim to deliver an all-in-one experience makes it popular for its simplicity and reliability.

#### Key Features:

- **Readily available User Interface:** Shopify's user-friendly drag-and-drop editor is easy to use, even without technical skills. You don't need to be a web wizard to set up an attractive and easy-to-use online store.
- **Vast App Marketplace:** Has hundreds of applications that allow businesses to improve their stores with functions like email marketing, inventory management, and analysis.
- **Mobile-Optimized Themes:** Offers a range of professional themes, ensuring an attractive look for the store on any device, especially mobile, which is essential in today's mobile-centric world.
- **Payment Gateway and Security:** It comes with SSL certification and supports various payment gateways, assuring customers of a secure payment process.

### Advantages:

- **Scalability:** Shopify will adapt as your business grows, catering to small start-ups and larger businesses with high-volume transactions.
- **24/7 Customer Support:** Offering assistance always on a chat or a call can be beneficial, especially when you encounter technical issues.
- **Built-in Hosting:** With Shopify, you never have to worry about hosting — they handle all hosting in-house, keeping your site fast and secure without additional hosting management.

### Disadvantages:

- **Transaction Fees:** If you don't use Shopify Payments, then you will incur additional transaction fees on each sale, which may be an issue for cost-conscious businesses.
- **Lack of Customization:** Although Shopify offers some customization, more advanced customisations generally require coding skills or paid apps.
- **Cost:** Shopify's monthly subscription fees can add up, which is a barrier for small companies with small budgets that might need additional features. Shopify is suggested for those who are hunting for clear, minimal, reliable, and extensible e-commerce. However, its cost and lack of advanced flexibility could be a barrier for businesses that want more customisation[2].

### WooCommerce — Flexible and Open-Source

Another good option is WooCommerce, the open-source e-commerce plugin for WordPress. Unlike Shopify, WooCommerce offers high flexibility and control, making it an ideal option for anyone who wants to customise their online store extensively.

### Key Features:

- **Customisation:** WooCommerce allows complete control over the look and feel of your store. Using many WordPress themes and plugins enables you to build a store while ensuring it matches your brand well.
- **Product Management:** Good supporting an unlimited number of products, physical, digital or affiliate items, with a vast inventory range. – **Integrated Blogging** WooCommerce takes advantage of WordPress's powerful blog features that can help you with your SEO marketing campaigns and content marketing tactics.
- **Community Support:** A vast pool of users and developers worldwide is available to provide solutions, tips, and resources.

### Advantages:

- **Cost-Effective:** The core WooCommerce plugin is free, proving a compelling choice for businesses looking to minimize upfront investment.
- **Flexibility:** WooCommerce can meet the most specific business requirements by allowing the implementation of custom features via extensions or coding.
- **Control:** As self-hosted software, WooCommerce gives you full ownership of your data and total control over your website's hosting and maintenance.

### Disadvantages:

- **Some Technical Knowledge Needed:** Setting up and managing WooCommerce would require technical skills, particularly with more complex customizations or the assistance of a developer.
- **Security and Maintenance:** Users must set up their security measures and keep their WordPress site and plugins updated for security reasons.
- **Cost of Hosting:** While the plugin is free, hosting, premium themes, and extensions add to the cost. For those who value flexibility and control over their e-commerce platform, WooCommerce is an excellent solution[3].

### Which Is the Best Option?

So, if we want an all-in-one, easy solution and, in exchange for that ease, don't mind paying a little extra, Shopify is an excellent option. On the other hand, WooCommerce is more appropriate for users who prioritise flexibility, control, and affordability, as long as they are okay with spending time learning or hiring technical help. Each platform has its positives, and a basic understanding of its features and pros—and cons—can help us make an informed decision for business[4].

## TASK 2

Mind map of contemporary software applications (Approx. 500 words).

a. Describe mind mapping and explain the benefits of using mind mapping in business operations (approx. 2/3 sources).

Mind mapping is a visual brainstorming and organisational technique for capturing, structuring, and analysing ideas, concepts, or information. By starting with a central theme and branching out into related subtopics, mind maps offer a dynamic and intuitive way to explore complex ideas. Each branch connects related elements, often incorporating keywords, symbols, or visuals to make the map easy to understand and engaging [5].

### **Benefits of Using Mind Mapping in Business Operations:**

- **Improved Creativity and Brainstorming:**
  - Mind mapping helps visualise how thoughts connect to one another open-mindedly to discover new solutions or ideas for the team or an individual.
  - It's especially helpful in brainstorming to spur creativity.
- **Better Organization and Clarity:**
  - Mind maps can help break down complex projects or tasks into simpler, manageable chunks.
  - They encapsulate goals, roles, and connections among tasks, maintaining a synergistic and orderly workflow.
- **Effective Decision-Making:**
  - Mind mapping allows you to see all your options and their repercussions at once.
  - By visualizing risks, benefits, and dependencies, businesses can make decisions with much more confidence.

- **Enhanced Collaboration:**

- Unlike traditional whiteboards, where members contribute one at a time and need to be present in the same room, digital mind mapping allows real-time collaboration.

- **Increased Productivity:**

- Mind maps condense information into one visual format, reducing time spent on notetaking [6].
- This allows team members to grasp key concepts, thus increasing overall efficacy quickly.

- **Improved Problem-Solving:**

- Mind maps emphasise relationships between various problem components.
- This streamlines the process of identifying root causes and designing practical solutions.

Mind Meister, XMind, and Miro are examples of mind-mapping tools. These tools offer customisable templates, cloud storage, and collaborative features to enhance business operations [7].

b. Create a mind map of contemporary software applications used to support day-to-day business/ Organisation operations.

This mind map was created with Mind Meister and overviews software applications used in day-to-day business processes. The branches classify these tools according to their purpose. This high-level mind map visualises key software tools that allow businesses to maximise their potential streamlined processes, improve communication, and remain competitive in a technology-driven marketplace[8], [9], [10].

Link to mind map: <https://mm.tt/app/map/3556685967?t=XCHR3oRFMx>





## TASK 3

Office Applications are used to create, store, present, and analyse information/data (Approx. 2000 words).

a. Explain four office software solutions for business operations (MS Word, MS PowerPoint, MS Excel, and MS Access), highlighting their significant features, benefits, and limitations (if there are any). You can use some images in addition to text (approx. 4/5 sources).

### Microsoft Office Tools for Business Operations

The Microsoft Office Suite includes various applications vital for effective business operations. These tools assist organisations in optimising workflows, overseeing data, and improving teamwork. Below is a summary of four essential Microsoft Office applications: Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Access, along with their notable features, advantages, and drawbacks.

#### 1. Microsoft Word

Microsoft Word is a popular word-processing program for creating, formatting, and modifying documents[11].

##### Significant Features:

- **Document Creation & Editing:** Provides tools for developing professional reports, letters, and contracts.
- **Templates:** Includes pre-designed resumes, business letters, and reports templates.
- **Collaboration:** Enables real-time co-authoring and commenting for team collaboration on documents.
- **Advanced Formatting:** Offers styles, tables, and design options for organised documents.
- **Integration:** Functions smoothly with other Microsoft Office applications such as Excel and Outlook.

**Benefits:**

- **User-Friendly:** Facilitates the creation of both simple and more complex documents.
- **Enhanced Collaboration:** Supports cloud integration with OneDrive for team projects.
- **File Compatibility:** Accommodates various file formats, including PDF.

**Limitations:**

- **Design Constraints:** Lacks the advanced design capabilities found in publishing software.
- **Learning Curve:** Some advanced functionalities may require training for novice users.

## **2. Microsoft PowerPoint**

PowerPoint is a software tool businesses use to develop slideshows and visual presentations. [12].

**Significant Features:**

- **Slide Design:** Allows customisation using text, images, videos, and animations.
- **Templates:** Provides a broad selection of professional templates tailored for business presentations.
- **Transitions & Animations:** Enhances presentations through visual effects.
- **Presenter Tools:** Features such as speaker notes and presenter view assist in delivering compelling presentations.
- **Collaboration:** Teams can collaborate on slides via OneDrive or SharePoint.

**Benefits:**

- **User-Friendly:** Highly intuitive and straightforward to operate.
- **Engaging Presentations:** Utilizes multimedia and animations to increase engagement.
- **Versatility:** Suitable for both in-person and virtual presentations.

**Limitations:**

- **Overuse of Features:** Excessive animations may render presentations unprofessional.
- **Design Skills Required:** Creating visually attractive slides without templates necessitates design proficiency.

**3. Microsoft Excel**

Excel is a robust spreadsheet application for data analysis, financial calculations, and database management [13].

**Significant Features:**

- **Data Management:** Organizing, sorting, and filtering substantial datasets.
- **Formulas & Functions:** Offers built-in functions for financial, logical, and statistical analysis.
- **Charts & Graphs:** Visualizes data through various chart options.
- **PivotTables:** Effectively summarises and analyses data.
- **Macros:** Automates repetitive tasks with VBA scripting.

**Benefits:**

- **Data Analysis:** Excellent for accounting, forecasting, and data visualization.
- **Versatility:** Applicable across numerous industries.
- **Integration:** Integrates seamlessly with other Microsoft Office applications and external data sources.

**Limitations:**

- **Learning Curve:** Advanced features like macros require considerable training.
- **Error-Prone:** Manual entry and formula errors may result in inaccuracies.

#### **4. Microsoft Access**

Microsoft Access is a database management system that stores and manages large data sets [14].

##### **Significant Features:**

- **Database Creation:** Facilitates the development of custom databases with tables, queries, and forms.
- **Integration:** Easily connects with other Microsoft tools such as Excel and Word.
- **Query Tools:** Provides advanced tools for extracting meaningful insights from data.
- **Templates:** Includes templates for common database structures, such as inventory or project management.
- **Reports:** Generates comprehensive reports for informed decision-making.

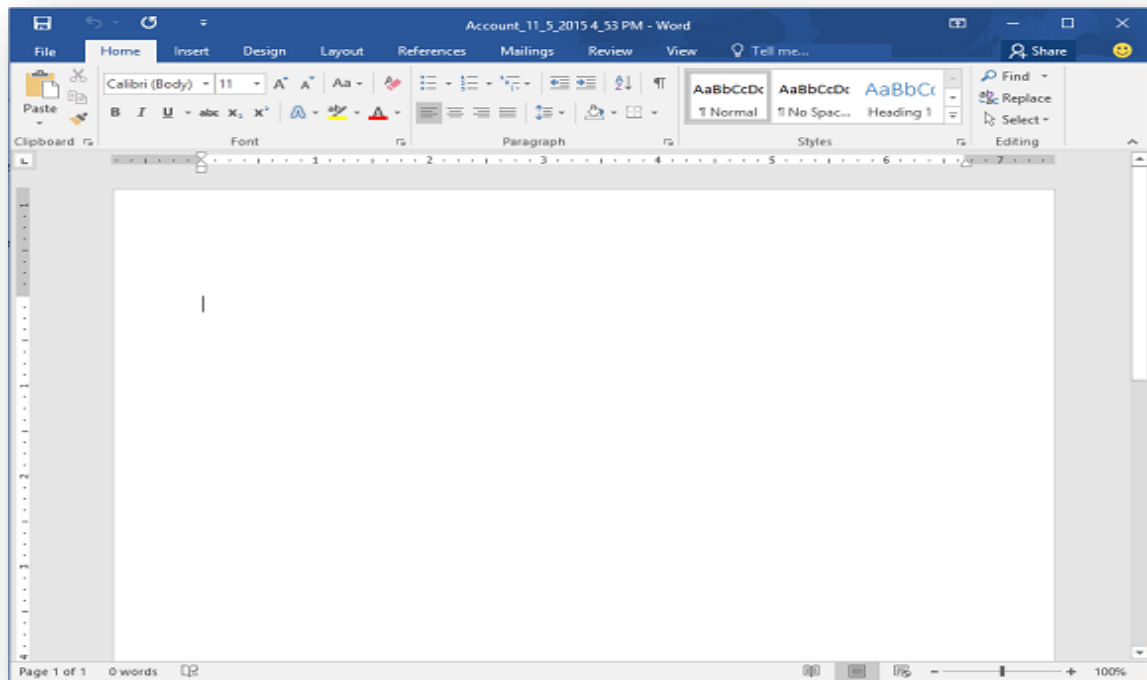
##### **Benefits:**

- **Cost-Effective:** More affordable compared to enterprise-level database software.
- **Customizable:** Adaptable to meet specific business requirements.
- **Scalability:** Ideal for small to medium-sized businesses.

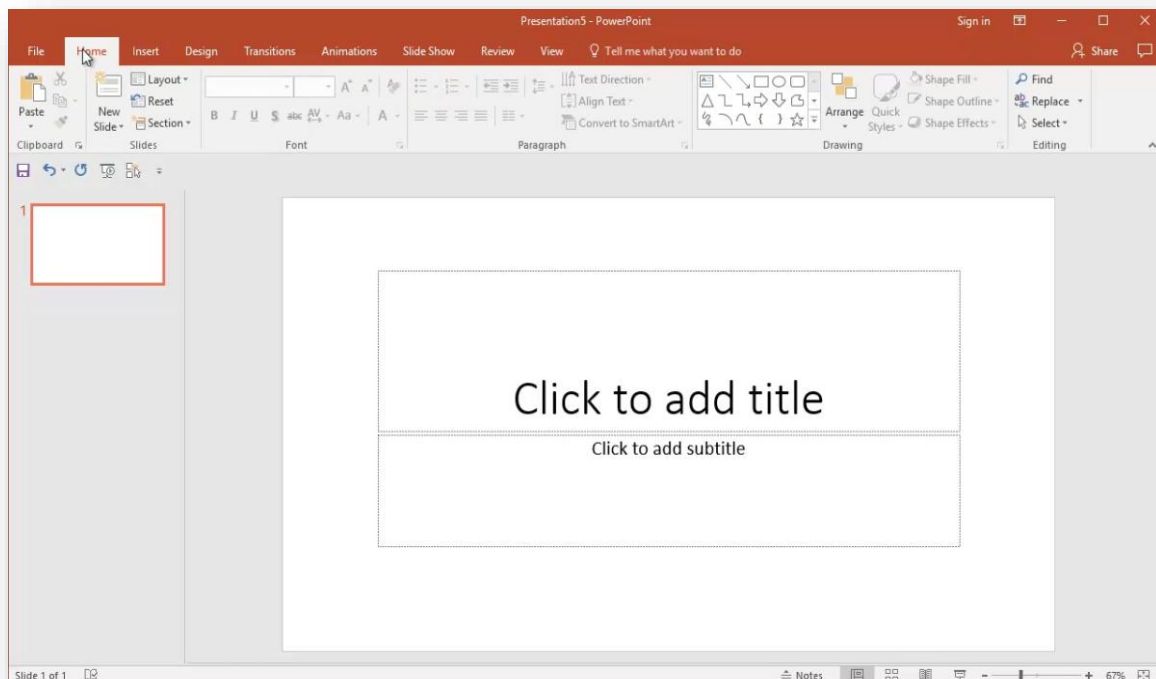
##### **Limitations:**

- **Limited Scalability:** This may not be suitable for managing very large datasets compared to SQL-based solutions.
- **Technical Knowledge Required:** Effective use demands expertise in database design.

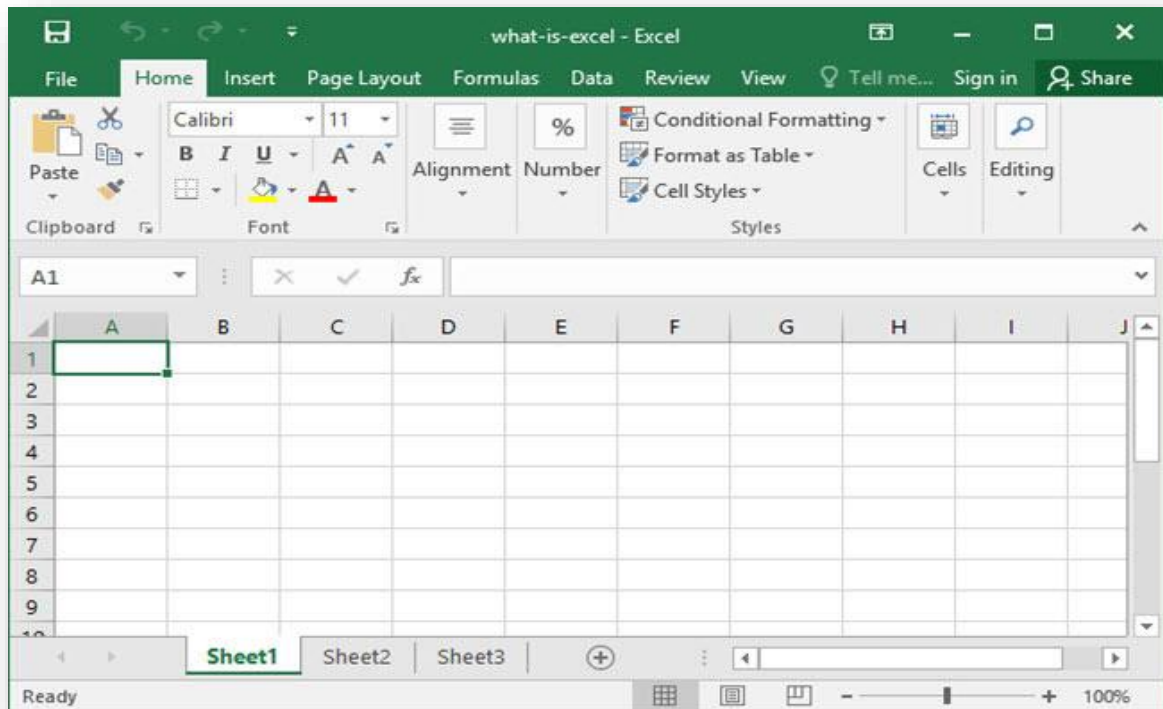
## Microsoft Word Screenshot



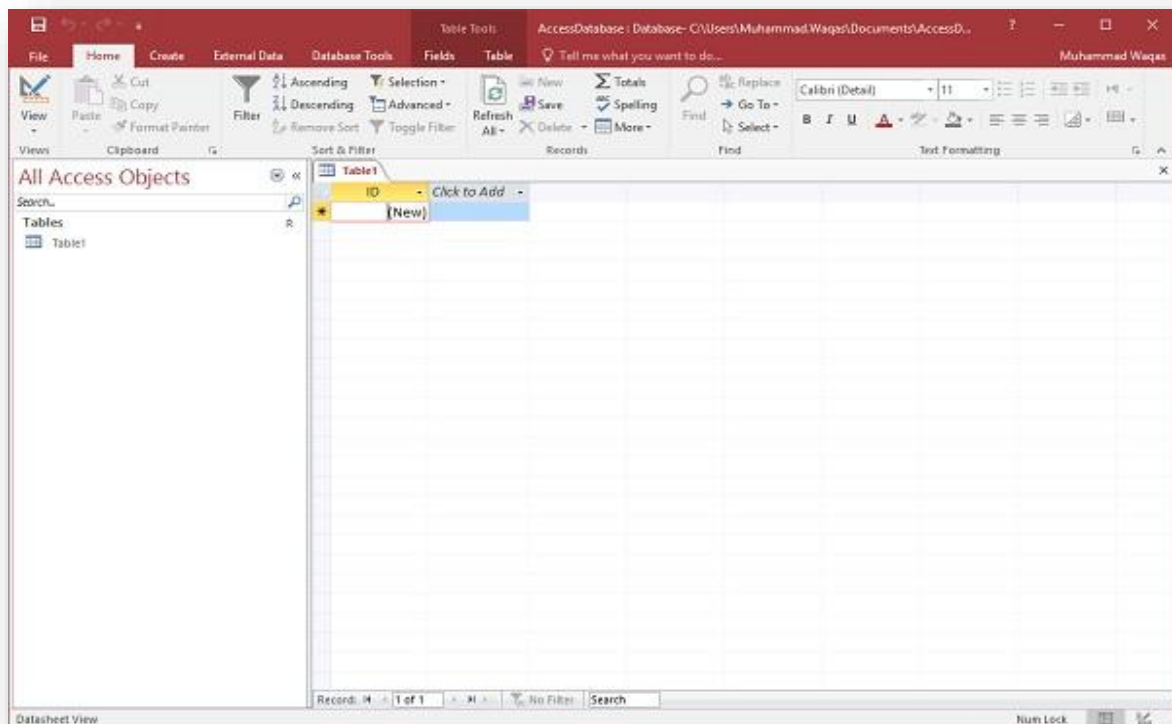
## Microsoft PowerPoint Screenshot



## Microsoft Excel Screenshot



## Microsoft Access Screenshot



b. Test any two features from the Mail merge, IF Function, VLOOKUP, Pivot Table, and Goal Seek in MS Excel, and document screenshots with accompanying descriptions to provide evidence of practical use. Note: This task is based on your practical activities.

## IF FUNCTION

The IF function in Excel is a tool for performing logical operations, enabling users to return different values based on whether a specific condition is satisfied (TRUE) or not (FALSE).

Below is a detailed guide on how to utilise this function:

The fundamental syntax of the IF function is as follows:

**=IF(logical\_test, "value\_if\_true", "value\_if\_false")**

- **logical\_test**: The condition that you wish to evaluate.
- **value\_if\_true**: The result or action if the condition evaluates to TRUE.
- **value\_if\_false**: The result or action if the condition evaluates to FALSE.

In this activity, we intend to apply a 10% discount to students who have already paid the course fees.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
2								
3				<b>Student Payment Sheet</b>				
4						<b>IF Paid Full? Discount 10% otherwise no Discount</b>		
5	<b>Student No</b>	<b>Name</b>		<b>Course Fees</b>	<b>Paid Amount</b>	<b>Discount</b>	<b>Balance</b>	
5	ST001	Jaspreet		£9,000.00	£4,500.00		£4,500.00	
7	ST002	Mohammed		£9,000.00	£6,500.00		£2,500.00	
3	ST003	Juel		£9,000.00	£7,500.00		£1,500.00	
3	ST004	Harleen		£9,000.00	£4,000.00		£5,000.00	
0	ST005	Sandeep		£9,000.00	£5,500.00		£3,500.00	
1	ST006	Kamaljit		£9,000.00	£8,000.00		£1,000.00	
2	ST007	Anmolpreet		£9,000.00	£9,000.00		£8,100.00	
3	ST008	Jaspreet Jaur		£9,000.00	£9,000.00		£8,100.00	
4	ST009	Hityshi		£9,000.00	£3,500.00		£5,500.00	
5	ST010	Fahim		£9,000.00	£5,000.00		£4,000.00	
6	ST011	Imran		£4,500.00	£2,000.00		£2,500.00	
7	ST012	Islam		£4,500.00	£1,500.00		£3,000.00	
8	ST013	Veenu		£4,500.00	£3,500.00		£1,000.00	
9	ST014	MD Al Amin		£4,500.00	£4,000.00		£500.00	
0	ST015	Jaskaran		£4,500.00	£4,500.00		£4,050.00	
1				<b>Total Paid</b>	<b>£78,000.00</b>			
2				<b>Average Paid</b>	<b>£5,200.00</b>			
3				<b>Minimum Paid</b>	<b>£1,500.00</b>			
4				<b>Maximum Paid</b>	<b>£9,000.00</b>			
5				<b>Count</b>	<b>15</b>			
6								
7								

if (Paid amount value = course fee) IS TRUE =10% discount

if (Paid amount value no= course fee) IS FALSE =No discount

## GUIDE STEP-BY-STEP

1. Start by typing =IF( to initiate the formula in the cell where we want the result.

Student Payment Sheet					
IF Paid Full? Discount 10% otherwise no Discount					
Student No	Name	Course Fees	Paid Amount	Discount	Balance
ST001	Jaspreet	£9,000.00	£4,500.00	=IF(	£4,500.00
ST002	Mohammed	£9,000.00	£6,500.00	IF(logical_test, [value_if_true], [value_if_false])	
ST003	Juel	£9,000.00	£7,500.00		£1,500.00
ST004	Harleen	£9,000.00	£4,000.00		£5,000.00
ST005	Sandeep	£9,000.00	£5,500.00		£3,500.00
ST006	Kamaljot	£9,000.00	£8,000.00		£1,000.00
ST007	Anmolpreet	£9,000.00	£9,000.00		£8,100.00
ST008	Jaspreet Jaur	£9,000.00	£9,000.00		£8,100.00
ST009	Hityshi	£9,000.00	£3,500.00		£5,500.00
ST010	Fahim	£9,000.00	£5,000.00		£4,000.00
ST011	Imran	£4,500.00	£2,000.00		£2,500.00
ST012	Islam	£4,500.00	£1,500.00		£3,000.00
ST013	Veenu	£4,500.00	£3,500.00		£1,000.00
ST014	MD Al Amin	£4,500.00	£4,000.00		£500.00
ST015	Jaskaran	£4,500.00	£4,500.00		£4,050.00
Total Paid			£78,000.00		
Average Paid			£5,200.00		
Minimum Paid			£1,500.00		
Maximum Paid			£9,000.00		
Count			15		



## 2. Enter the logical test: =IF (E6=D6

Student Payment Sheet					
Student No	Name	Course Fees	Paid Amount	IF Paid Full? Discount 10% otherwise no Discount	
				Discount	Balance
001	Jaspreet	£9,000.00	£4,500.00	=IF(E6=D6	£4,500.00
002	Mohammed	£9,000.00	£6,500.00	IF(logical_test, [value_if_true], [value_if_false])	
003	Juel	£9,000.00	£7,500.00		£1,500.00
004	Harleen	£9,000.00	£4,000.00		£5,000.00
005	Sandeep	£9,000.00	£5,500.00		£3,500.00
006	Kamaljit	£9,000.00	£8,000.00		£1,000.00
007	Anmolpreet	£9,000.00	£9,000.00		£8,100.00
008	Jaspreet Jaur	£9,000.00	£9,000.00		£8,100.00
009	Hityshi	£9,000.00	£3,500.00		£5,500.00
010	Fahim	£9,000.00	£5,000.00		£4,000.00
011	Imran	£4,500.00	£2,000.00		£2,500.00
012	Islam	£4,500.00	£1,500.00		£3,000.00
013	Veenu	£4,500.00	£3,500.00		£1,000.00
014	MD Al Amin	£4,500.00	£4,000.00		£500.00
015	Jaskaran	£4,500.00	£4,500.00		£4,050.00
		Total Paid	£78,000.00		
		Average Paid	£5,200.00		
		Minimum Paid	£1,500.00		
		Maximum Paid	£9,000.00		
		Count	15		

## 3. Then, specify the value for the TRUE condition. For instance, to show "10% DISCOUNT", write: =IF(E6=D6, " Discount 10%"

Student Payment Sheet					
Student No	Name	Course Fees	Paid Amount	IF Paid Full? Discount 10% otherwise no Discount	
				Discount	Balance
ST001	Jaspreet	£9,000.00	£4,500.00	=IF(E6=D6, " Discount 10%"	
ST002	Mohammed	£9,000.00	£6,500.00		£2,500.00
ST003	Juel	£9,000.00	£7,500.00		£1,500.00
ST004	Harleen	£9,000.00	£4,000.00		£5,000.00
ST005	Sandeep	£9,000.00	£5,500.00		£3,500.00
ST006	Kamaljit	£9,000.00	£8,000.00		£1,000.00
ST007	Anmolpreet	£9,000.00	£9,000.00		£8,100.00
ST008	Jaspreet Jaur	£9,000.00	£9,000.00		£8,100.00
ST009	Hityshi	£9,000.00	£3,500.00		£5,500.00
ST010	Fahim	£9,000.00	£5,000.00		£4,000.00
ST011	Imran	£4,500.00	£2,000.00		£2,500.00
ST012	Islam	£4,500.00	£1,500.00		£3,000.00
ST013	Veenu	£4,500.00	£3,500.00		£1,000.00
ST014	MD Al Amin	£4,500.00	£4,000.00		£500.00
ST015	Jaskaran	£4,500.00	£4,500.00		£4,050.00
		Total Paid	£78,000.00		
		Average Paid	£5,200.00		
		Minimum Paid	£1,500.00		
		Maximum Paid	£9,000.00		
		Count	15		

- Finally, define the value for the FALSE condition. For example, to indicate "No", complete the formula as follows: **=IF (E6=D6, " Discount 10%", "no Discount")**

Student Payment Sheet					
Student No	Name	Course Fees	Paid Amount	Discount	Balance
1	Jaspreet	£9,000.00	£4,500.00		
2	Mohammed	£9,000.00	£6,500.00		
3	Juel	£9,000.00	£7,500.00		
4	Harleen	£9,000.00	£4,000.00		
5	Sandeep	£9,000.00	£5,500.00		
6	Kamaljit	£9,000.00	£8,000.00		
7	Anmolpreet	£9,000.00	£9,000.00		
8	Jaspreet Jaur	£9,000.00	£9,000.00		
9	Hityshi	£9,000.00	£3,500.00		
10	Fahim	£9,000.00	£5,000.00		
11	Imran	£4,500.00	£2,000.00		
12	Islam	£4,500.00	£1,500.00		
13	Veenu	£4,500.00	£3,500.00		
14	MD Al Amin	£4,500.00	£4,000.00		
15	Jaskaran	£4,500.00	£4,500.00		
		<b>Total Paid</b>	<b>£78,000.00</b>		
		<b>Average Paid</b>	<b>£5,200.00</b>		
		<b>Minimum Paid</b>	<b>£1,500.00</b>		
		<b>Maximum Paid</b>	<b>£9,000.00</b>		
		<b>Count</b>	<b>15</b>		

- Confirm Entry. Once you have entered the formula, press Enter. The cell will now reflect:  
 "10% Discount " if the value in E6 is equal to D6.  
 "No discount " if the value in D6 is less than E6

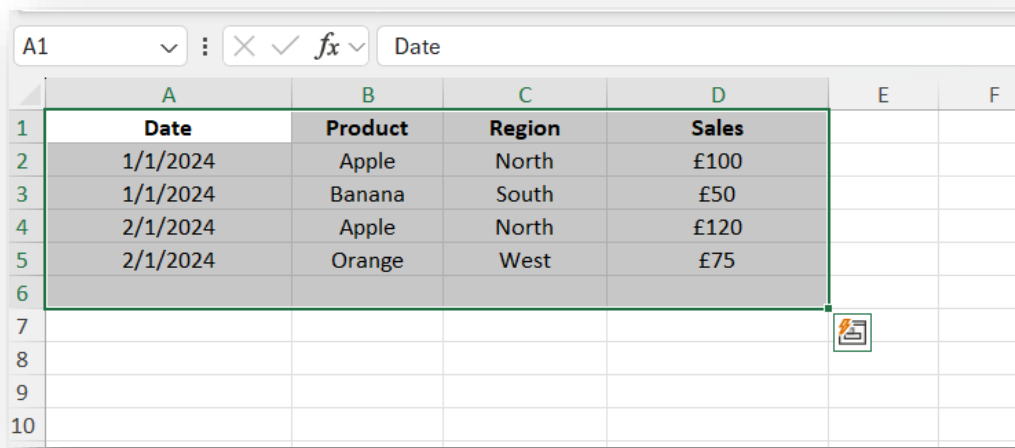
Student Payment Sheet					
Student No	Name	Course Fees	Paid Amount	Discount	Balance
ST001	Jaspreet	£9,000.00	£4,500.00	no Discount	£4,500.00
ST002	Mohammed	£9,000.00	£6,500.00	no Discount	£2,500.00
ST003	Juel	£9,000.00	£7,500.00	no Discount	£1,500.00
ST004	Harleen	£9,000.00	£4,000.00	no Discount	£5,000.00
ST005	Sandeep	£9,000.00	£5,500.00	no Discount	£3,500.00
ST006	Kamaljit	£9,000.00	£8,000.00	no Discount	£1,000.00
ST007	Anmolpreet	£9,000.00	£9,000.00	Discount 10%	£8,100.00
ST008	Jaspreet Jaur	£9,000.00	£9,000.00	Discount 10%	£8,100.00
ST009	Hityshi	£9,000.00	£3,500.00	no Discount	£5,500.00
ST010	Fahim	£9,000.00	£5,000.00	no Discount	£4,000.00
ST011	Imran	£4,500.00	£2,000.00	no Discount	£2,500.00
ST012	Islam	£4,500.00	£1,500.00	no Discount	£3,000.00
ST013	Veenu	£4,500.00	£3,500.00	no Discount	£1,000.00
ST014	MD Al Amin	£4,500.00	£4,000.00	no Discount	£500.00
ST015	Jaskaran	£4,500.00	£4,500.00	Discount 10%	£4,050.00
		<b>Total Paid</b>	<b>£78,000.00</b>		
		<b>Average Paid</b>	<b>£5,200.00</b>		
		<b>Minimum Paid</b>	<b>£1,500.00</b>		
		<b>Maximum Paid</b>	<b>£9,000.00</b>		
		<b>Count</b>	<b>15</b>		

## PIVOT TABLE

A Pivot Table is a powerful tool for calculating, summarizing, and analysing data. It allows you to see comparisons, patterns, and trends in your data and quickly rearrange (or "pivot") the data to view it from different perspectives.[15].

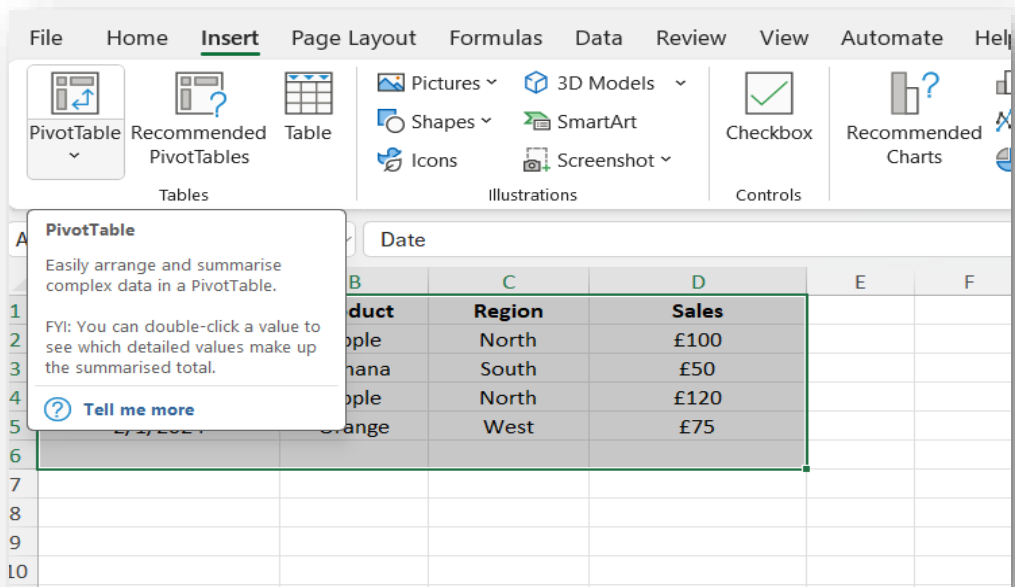
### GUIDE STEP-BY-STEP

1. Highlight the entire dataset.

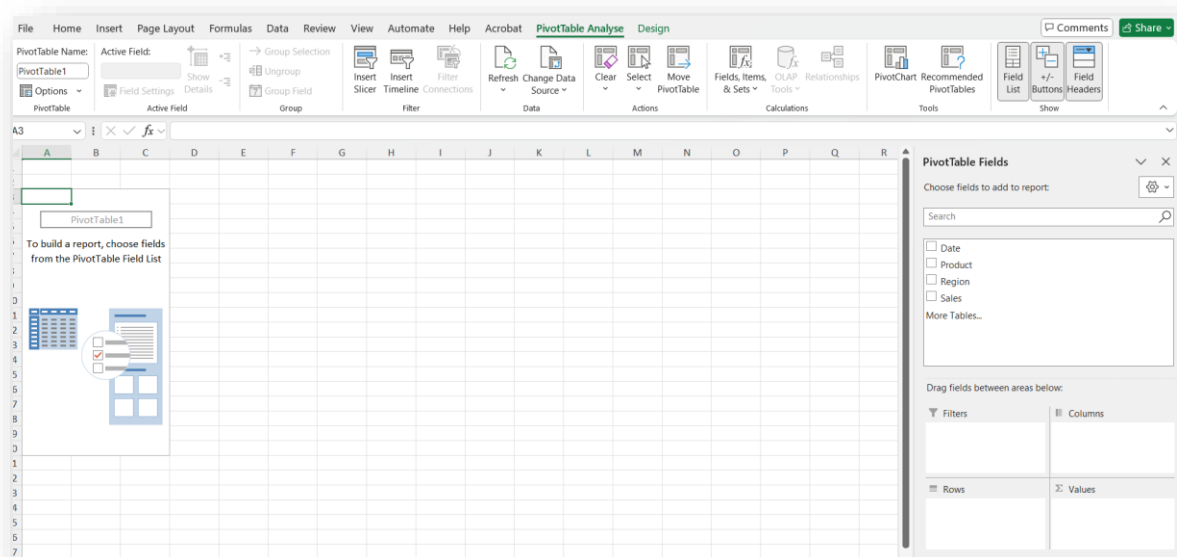
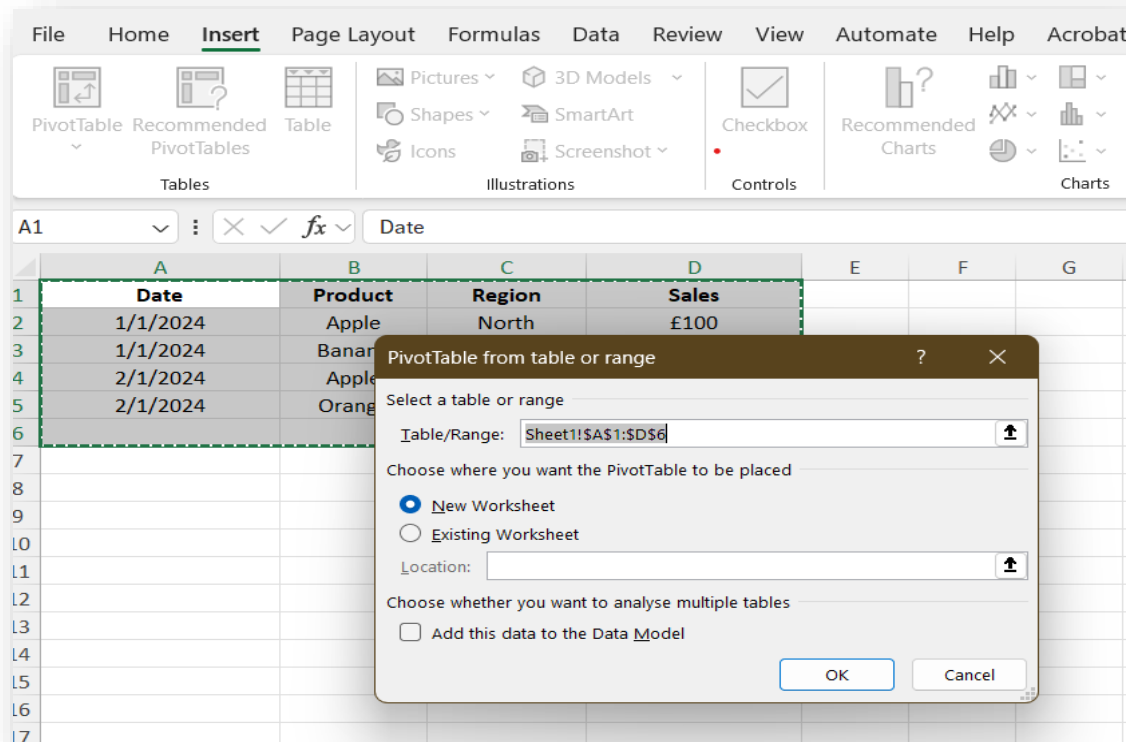


	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	<b>Date</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Sales</b>		
2	1/1/2024	Apple	North	£100		
3	1/1/2024	Banana	South	£50		
4	2/1/2024	Apple	North	£120		
5	2/1/2024	Orange	West	£75		
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

2. Go to the insert tab on the ribbon and click pivot table on the tables group



- Ensure your selected data range is correct in the Create PivotTable dialogue box and choose where you want the Pivot Table (New Worksheet, Existing Worksheet) and click ok



4. You will see a blank Pivot Table on the selected worksheet and the PivotTable Fields pane on the right.

- Drag and drop fields from your dataset into the following areas:
- Rows: Add fields to group your data by rows. Example: Drag Product to Rows to list products.
- Columns: Add fields to group your data by columns. Example: Drag Region to Columns to create regional categories.
- Values: Add fields to calculate or summarize. Example: Drag Sales to Values to calculate the total sales.
- Filters: Add fields to filter the entire table. Example: Drag Date to Filters to view data for specific dates.

The screenshot shows an Excel worksheet with a PivotTable and the PivotTable Fields task pane. The PivotTable is titled 'Count of Sales' and has the following data:

Row Labels	South	West	(blank)	Grand Total
Apple	2			2
Banana		1		1
Orange			1	1
(blank)				
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>

The PivotTable Fields task pane on the right shows the following configuration:

- Choose fields to add to report:** Date, Product, Region, Sales (all checked).
- Drag fields between areas below:**
  - Filters:** Date
  - Columns:** Region
  - Rows:** Product
  - Values:** Count of Sales

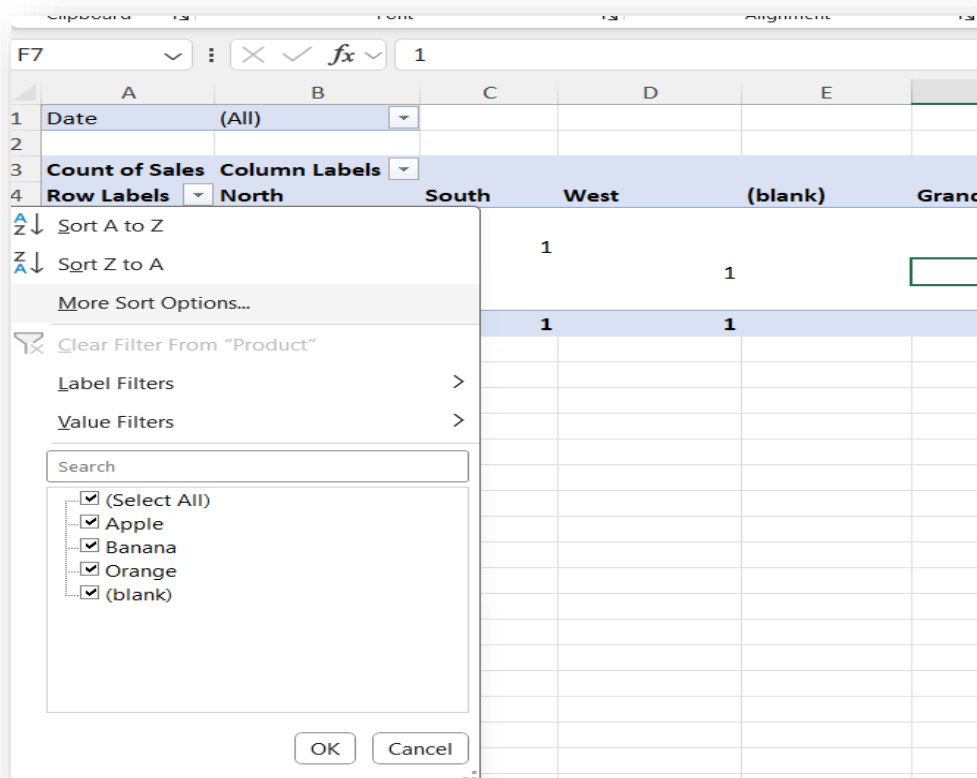
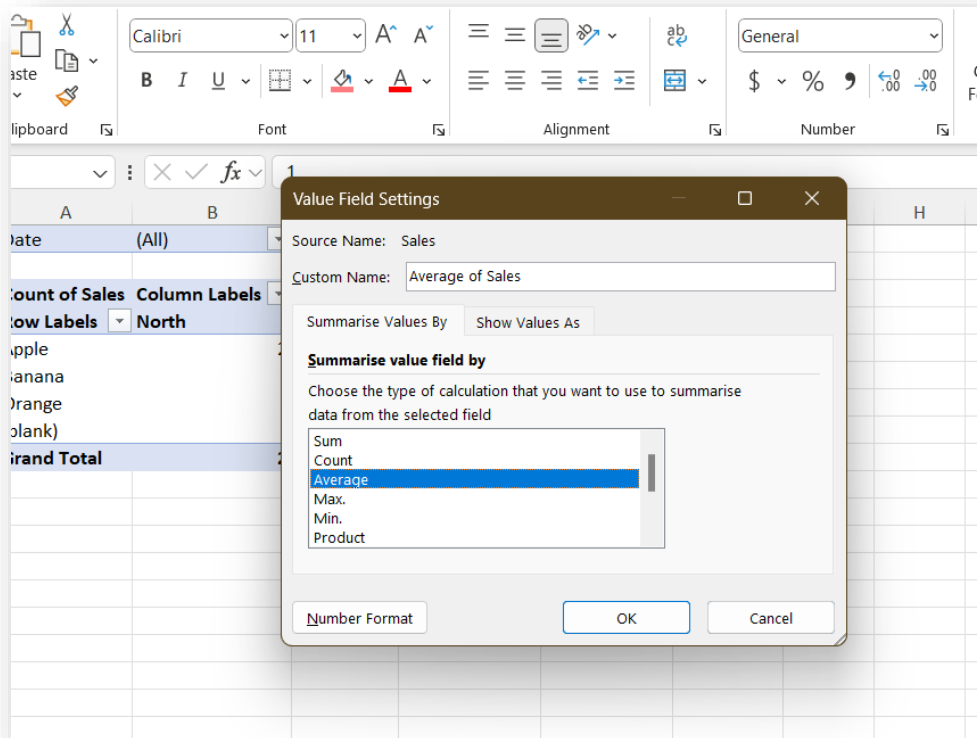
5. Customize Pivot Table:

Summarize Values:

- By default, numerical values are summarized using SUM
- To change this, click on the dropdown in the Values section > Value Field Settings
- Select Average, Count, Max, etc.

Sort & Filter:

- Click on any row or column label to sort or filter the data.
- Use the filters at the top of the Pivot Table to narrow down results



## Task 4.

Communication and Collaboration applications (Approx. 1000 words).

a. Analyse one contemporary Communication (Email and others) and one Online Collaboration (SharePoint, MS Teams, etc.) applications/tools used frequently in the modern business world and document a summary of their key features using written text with some images and relevant citations. (approx. 2/3 sources)

Today's business world relies heavily on digital tools to facilitate communication and collaboration. These tools can be classified into two main groupings: communication platforms and online collaboration tools. In this document, Email is defined as a communication medium, while Microsoft Teams is defined as a collaboration platform.

### **Email: The Communication Tool of Our Times**

#### **Key Features**

##### **Global Communication**

Emails have made it possible for people worldwide to communicate and for companies to reach clients almost instantaneously. When it doesn't require a call, this email communication allows recipients to respond when they can, which is especially helpful when working in international companies or between countries.

##### **File Attachments**

Emails provide a quick way of sharing essential files, documents, images, and presentations. Services such as Gmail and Outlook can handle attachments up to 25MB, with cloud-based sharing available for larger files.

##### **Organisational Features**

Email platform provides many tools to help keep your inbox organised, including folders, labels, and filters. These features help prioritise tasks, archive essential messages, and auto-sort incoming emails.

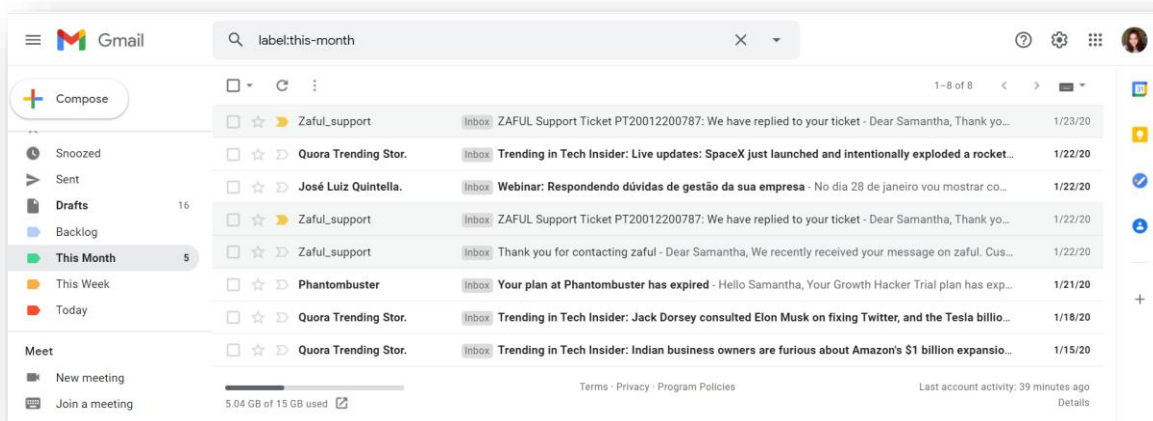
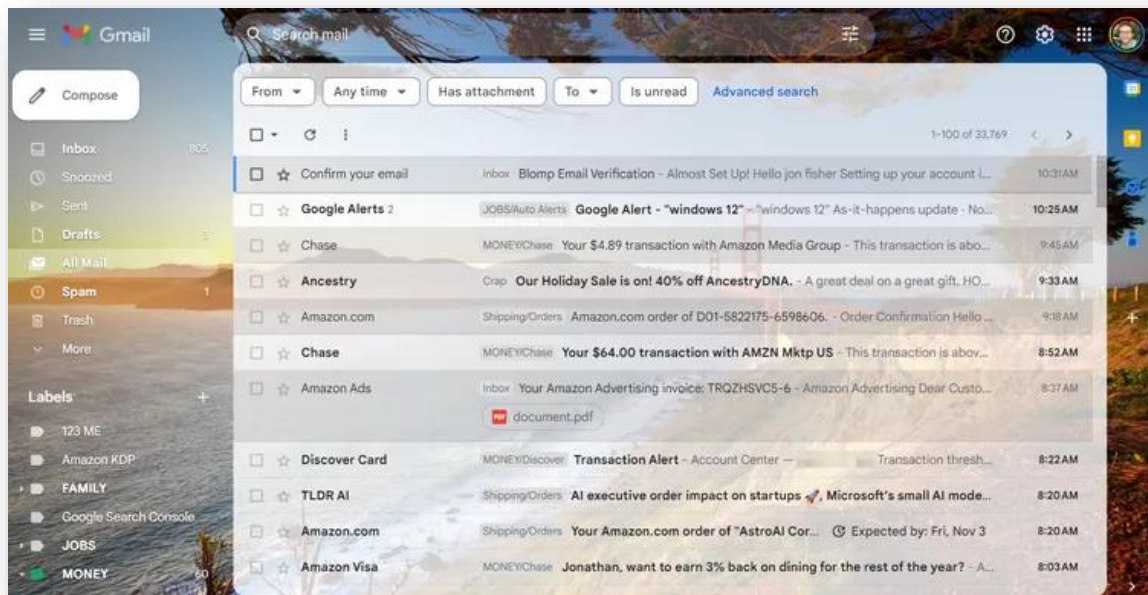
**Integration with Productivity Tools** Modern email services work with calendars, task management applications and cloud storage systems. Gmail works with Google Workspace, and Microsoft Outlook integrates with Microsoft 365 so users can easily manage tasks and schedules.

## Security Features

Email platforms offer features to secure sensitive business data, including encryption, spam filtering, and multi-factor authentication (MFA). Additionally, advanced phishing detection methods further secure email communications.

## Use in Business

Beyond this, it is worth noting that email remains an essential mode of workplace communication. It is used widely for formal communication, distributing official documents, and arranging meetings. For instance, Microsoft Outlook increased productivity with full calendar integration, task management, and a focus mode to manage a large volume of emails[16], [17].





## **Microsoft Teams: Online Collaboration Tool**

### **Key Features**

#### **Real-Time Communication**

Because Microsoft Teams is designed for instant messaging, video, and voice calls and allows for real-time communication, its “Meet Now” feature lets teams start impromptu meetings in real-time.

#### **Document Collaboration**

Teams allow for concurrent real-time document editing thanks to its integrations with SharePoint and OneDrive. This feature ensures everyone uses the latest version, preventing errors and enhancing productivity.

#### **Channels, Team organisation**

Teams organizes communication into “Channels,” subject- and project-specific containers. Every channel is a central location for discussions, file sharing, and updates.

#### **Task and Workflow Management**

You can integrate Microsoft Teams with tools such as Planner and To-Do so that users can delegate tasks, track progress, and monitor deadlines. Integrating automated workflows via Power Automate simplifies operations by managing repetitive tasks.

#### **Accessibility Across Multiple Platforms**

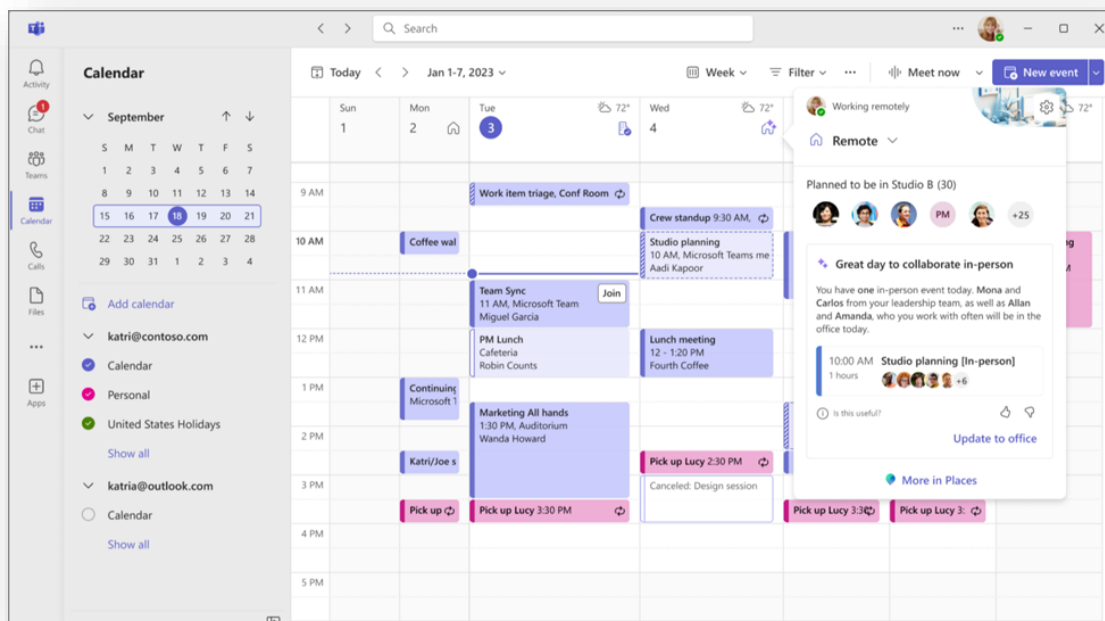
Microsoft Teams can be used as a desktop, mobile, or web application, ensuring that users can access it from various devices and making it an adaptive solution for remote and hybrid work environments.

#### **Third-party integration**

Teams support integrations with popular productivity apps like Trello, Zoom, Salesforce, and GitHub. These integrations add functionality and enable it to meet various business needs.

#### **Use in Business**

So, Microsoft Teams fosters collaboration by creating a common workspace for communication and project management. For example, a marketing team might use Teams to discuss a virtual meeting, brainstorm a campaign, and share analytic reports, all in one interface [18], [19].



b. Test one feature of a freely available Communication and one feature of a Collaboration application and document several screenshots with brief accompanying descriptions to provide evidence of practical use.

## 1. Communication Application: Microsoft Teams

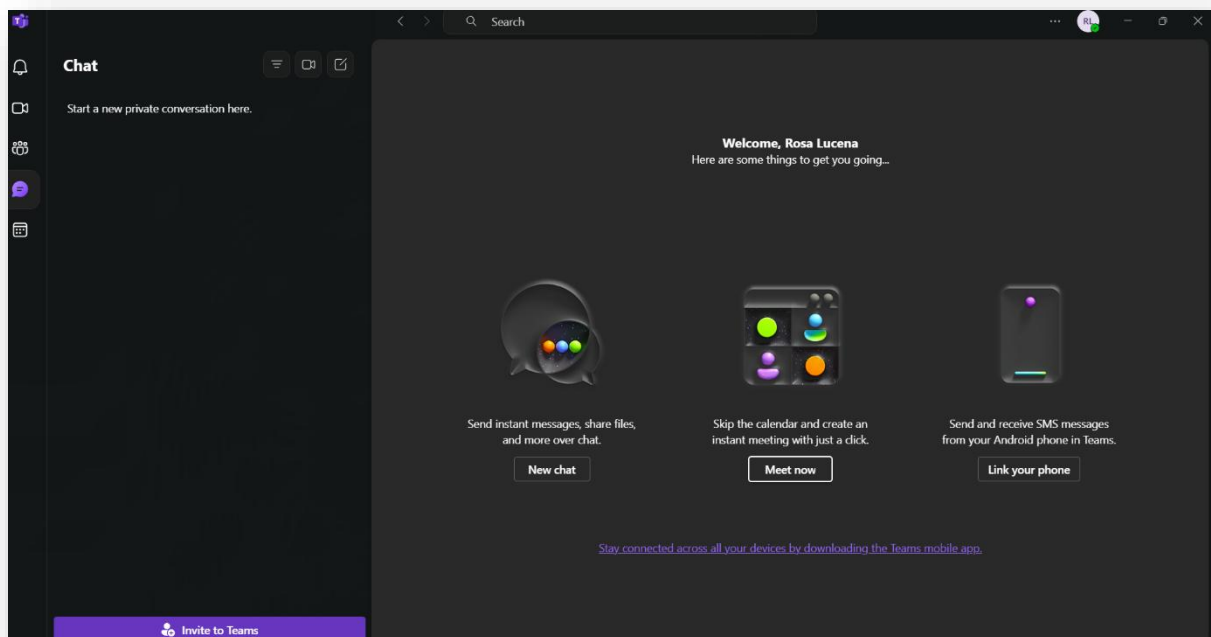
Feature to Test: Video Call with Screen Sharing

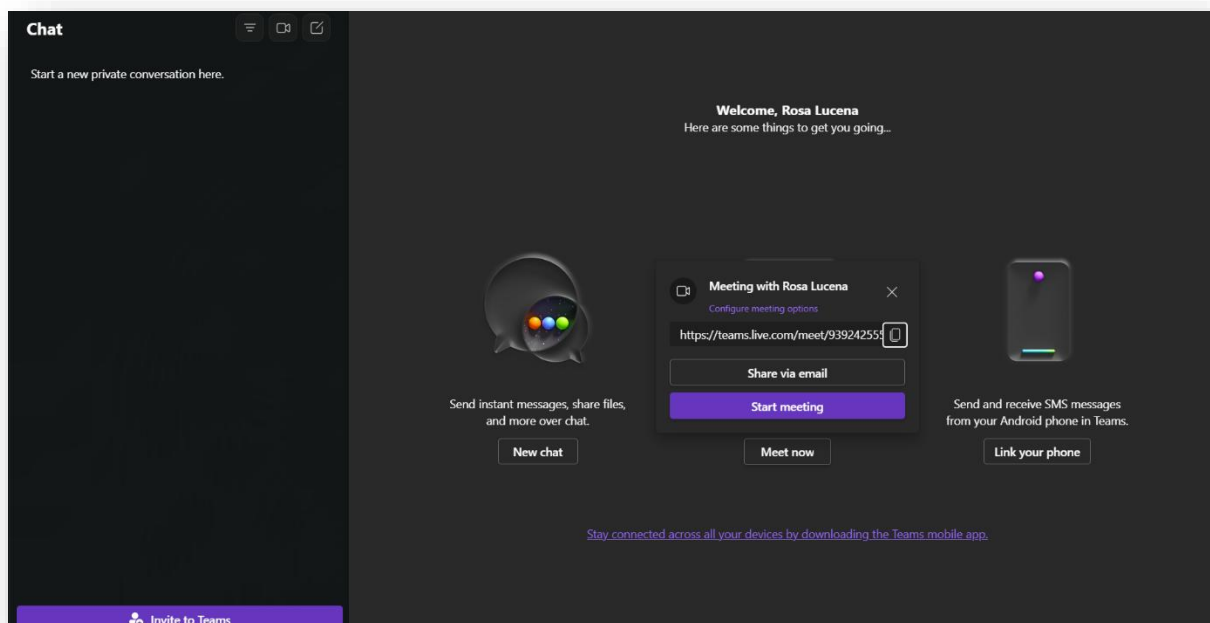
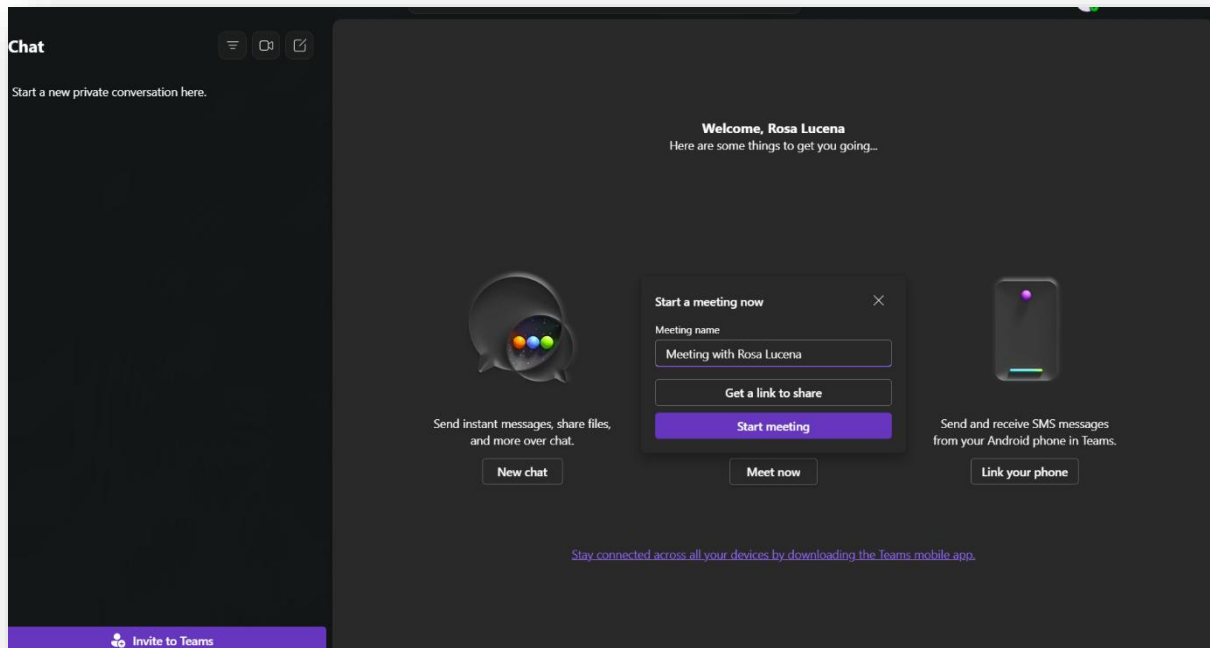
Steps:

1. Launch Microsoft Teams and sign in.
2. Initiate a video call with a colleague or friend.
3. To share the screen, click the "Share" button and choose either a specific window or your entire desktop.

### Screenshots:

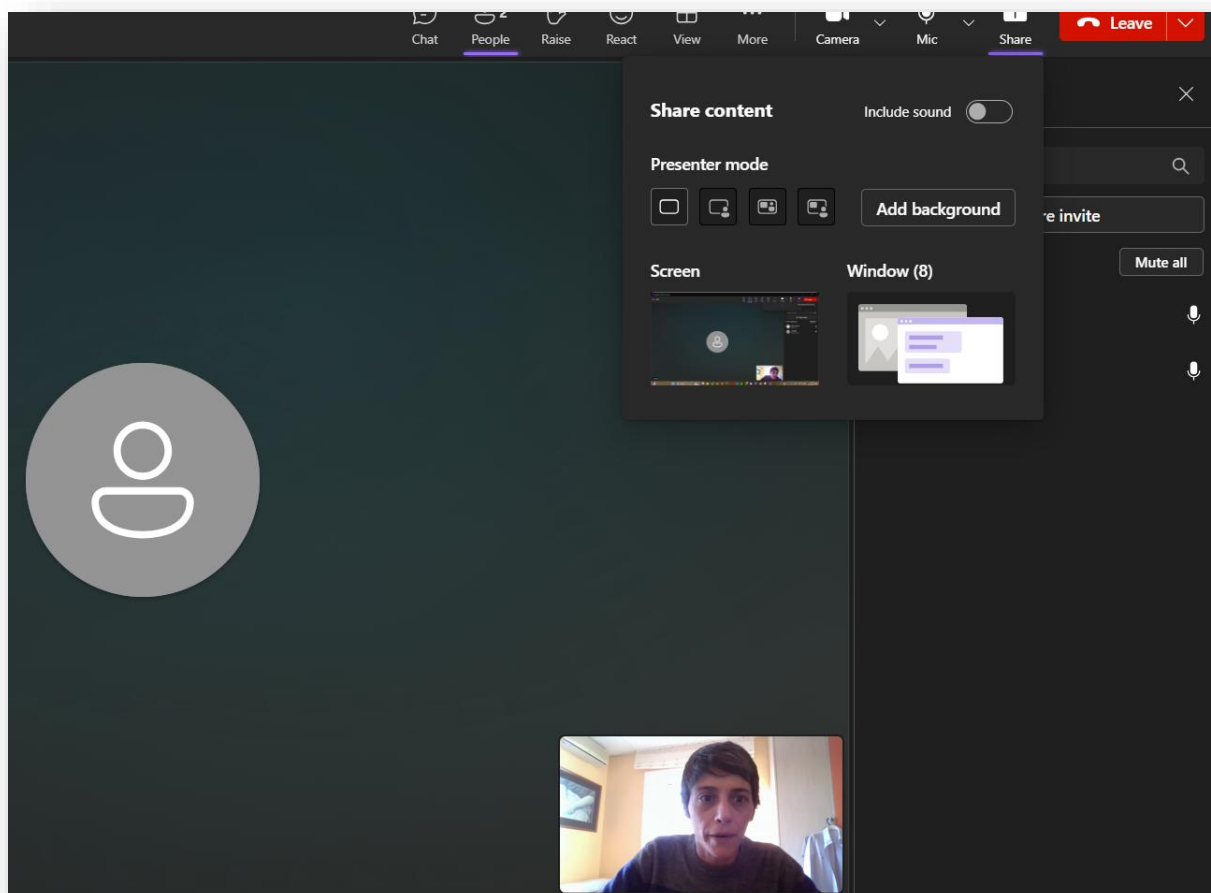
1. **Starting the video call.** Displays the Microsoft Teams interface while initiating a video call, emphasising the "Meet Now" or "Call" button for beginning the session.







2. **Sharing your screen.** The screen-sharing menu presents options for sharing a particular application window, browser tab, or desktop.



3. **The participant's perspective of the shared screen.** The shared content is visible on the participant's screen, illustrating how the shared window or desktop appears to others during the video call.



## 2. Collaboration Application: Google Docs

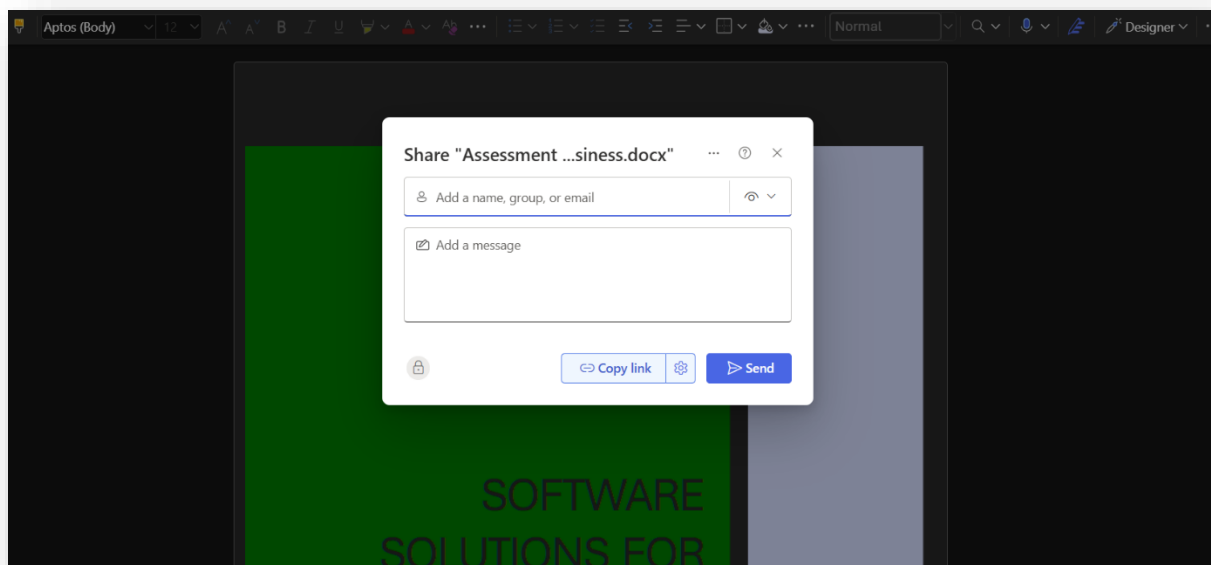
Feature to Test: Real-Time Collaborative Editing

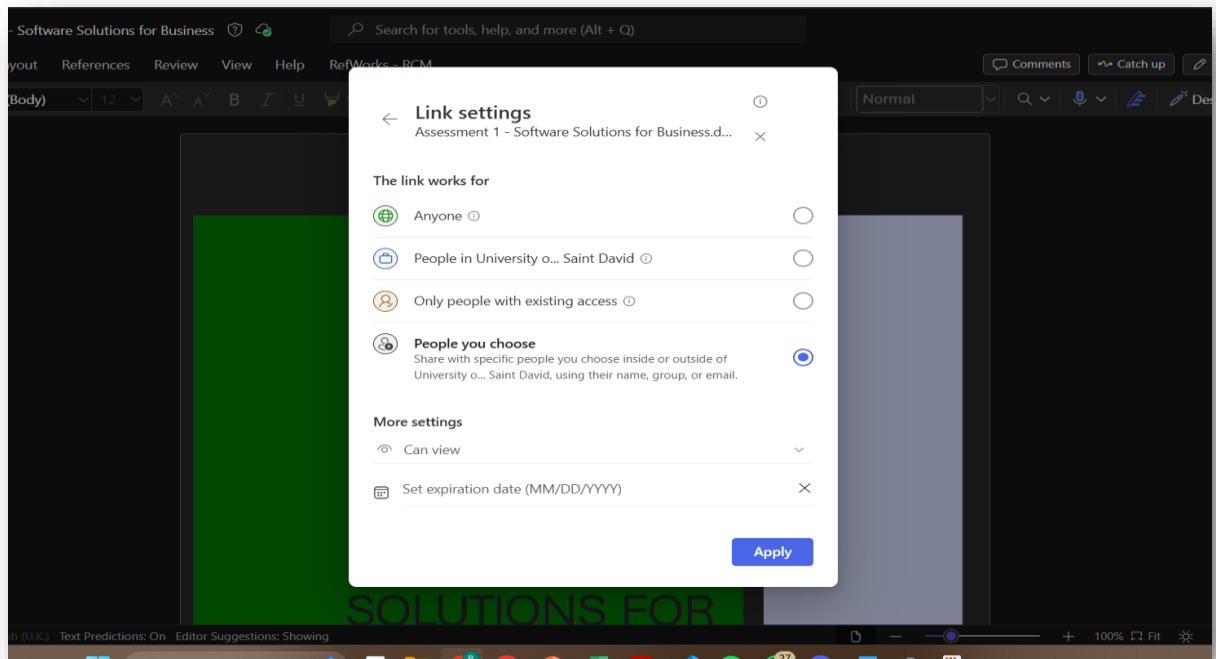
Steps:

1. Open Google Docs and create a new document.
2. Use the "Share" button to provide access to a collaborator.
3. Both you and the collaborator will edit the document at the same time.

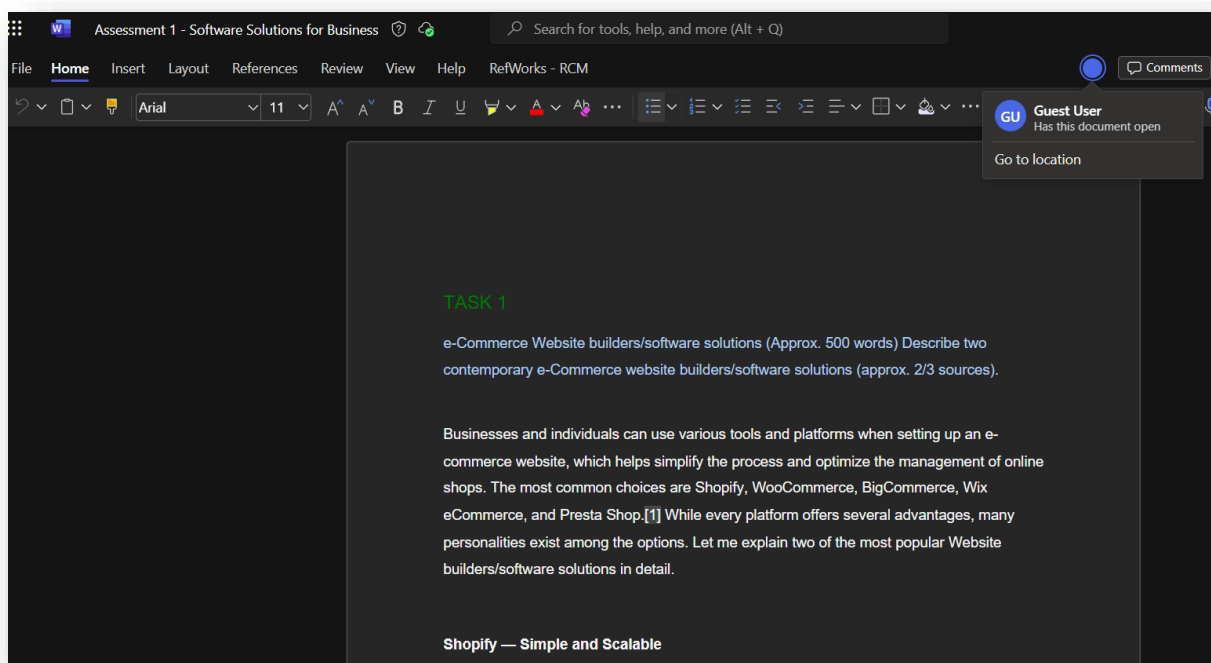
### Screenshots:

1. **The interface of the shared document.** This screenshot shows the Google Docs interface with the "Share" dialogue open, demonstrating how to grant editing permissions to a collaborator by entering their email address.



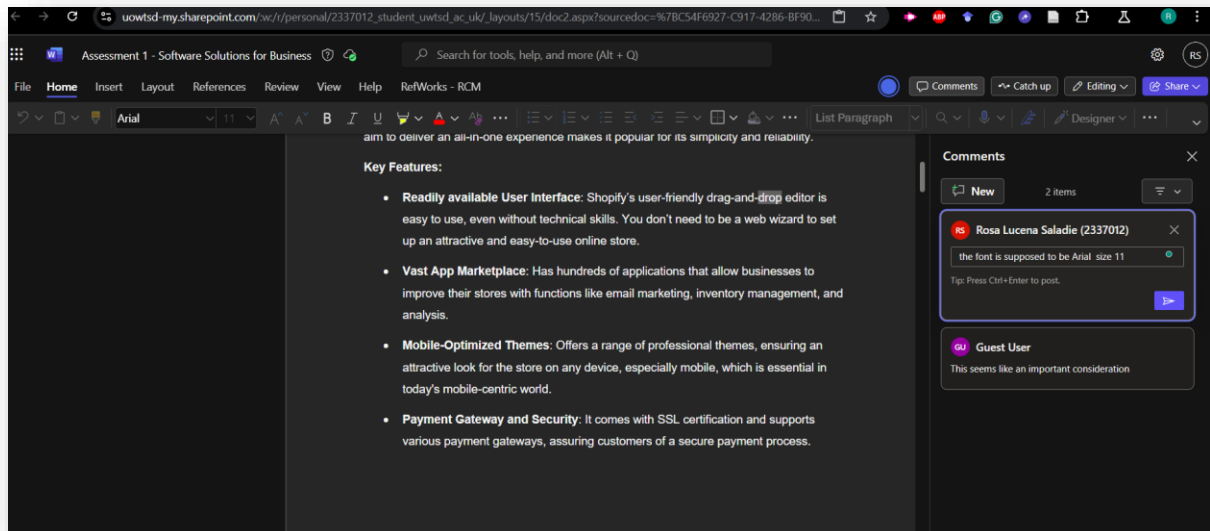


2. Both users make real-time edits with colour-coded cursors or highlights. A shared document reveals multiple collaborators' cursors in various colours.





3. **Adding comments or suggestions.** A section of the document is highlighted, showing a comment being made, along with a side panel displaying previous comments and their responses for effective collaboration.



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Thank you!