



Knowledge to lead

File Sharing

File Sharing

File sharing refers to the public and private sharing of computer files or data in a network, with varying levels of access privileges assigned.

Typically file sharing requires users to upload and download files from a server. Peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing, however, does not follow the traditional model of uploading and downloading files from a website. Instead, files are shared directly between personal computers with no intermediate server, making it a peer-to-peer exchange.

File sharing allows a number of people to access one file, being able to combine elements like reading, writing, modifying, copying and printing. In order to share files, a file transfer system called the File Transfer Protocol (FTP) has become widely-used. FTP can be used to access (read and possibly write to) files shared among a particular set of users with a password.



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File Sharing Tools

Below is a list of file sharing tools that allow users to share content online:

	Dropbox	Box.net	Google Docs
Description	Downloadable tool (14 MB) which works like any other folder on the computer	Cloud content management system to manage and access content online	Online space which allows you to share and collaborate online
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Free up to 2 GB ✓ Enables access to files from anywhere ✓ Any files or folders saved inside Dropbox are automatically synchronized to Dropbox's servers and are accessible from any other computer using the account. ✓ Authors can share files after inviting people to a particular folder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Free web storage up to 5 GB for non-commercial use ✓ File size limit of 25 MB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Free ✓ Enables access to files from anywhere ✓ Authors can share files after inviting people
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keeps track of every change made to a document. Enables one to view or restore any previous version of a given file and to undelete files accidentally trashed. ✓ Allows sharing files with non-Dropbox users. Users can save their files on the Public folder and send the link to these documents to others, without requiring people to sign up for Dropbox. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Files can be shared as links ✓ Access available on mobile devices like iPhone or Blackberry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keeps track of who made changes to a document and when. Enables one to view or restore any previous version of a given file. ✓ Has an integrated chat that allows commenting in real time
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Doesn't enable users to edit a document at the same time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Features like syncing files to desktop and integration with Google Docs only available through paid subscription 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Requires the user to have a gmail account



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