

Monthly Newswire

Welcome to our monthly newswire. We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and find it useful.

June 2020

Duet Display App

Use an iPad or Android tablet as a second display when working from home.

In the office, employees are used to working with two screens. However, with more people than ever working from home, we are missing the efficiency of a dual screen computer setup. Duet Display is an app that converts an iPad or Android tablet to a second screen. The app was created by ex-Apple engineers and works with both Apple and Windows computers.

Apple's latest systems allow you to connect devices wirelessly but it won't work with any iPad released before 2019 - Duet Display works with iPads dating from 2012. It also works cross-platform, so you can use a Windows PC or Mac as the host and Apple or Android mobile devices as the secondary display. You can even turn a Chromebook into a secondary display, since Chrome OS can run Android apps. Installing Duet Display is straightforward. You start by downloading the app (£9.99 on the Apple App Store or from duetdisplay.com).

Once you have downloaded and installed the relevant drivers on your Mac or Windows desktop or laptop, you simply plug your iPad or tablet into the computer's USB port. If you prefer to connect using WiFi you can upgrade to Duet Air which costs £1.99 extra per month. It is worth noting that Duet only supports one additional screen. You can drag a window from your main computer onto the iPad / tablet screen just as you would with an external monitor. If you already have the latest Mac and iPad, you can use macOS Catalina's included Sidecar feature.

But for people who have older devices, Android tablets, Chromebooks, or Windows laptops and desktops, Duet Display offers a simple, effective way to add a second screen to your computer – it is perfect for remote working.



Will Covid-19 Accelerate Remote Working Practices?

The coronavirus lockdown has forced businesses to adopt remote working across the board. Will employees want to continue working from home post covid-19?

In the past 10 years or so, the number of people working remotely has increased significantly.

Major contributors to this shift include technology related advancements, cultural changes to work-life integration and family commitments.

The Covid-19 lockdown has forced firms to rethink the way they do business. Most firms have rolled out new approaches to business continuity, cyber security and, of course, remote working.

It will not come as a surprise that the future of work was always going to involve a shift towards remote working.

Forward thinking businesses such as Google, Apple, Facebook and Netflix were among the first businesses to adopt remote working practices. Global trends were heading that way before the lockdown.

Regardless of what happens next, it is unlikely that working practices will return to the way they were. Commuting from home to a central office where you have face-to-face interactions with colleagues could become a thing of the past.

Firms that do not have flexible or work-from-home policies will struggle to retain employees and attract the best people. Now that those working in industries such as technology, finance or service-based roles that can be performed online have shown that they can perform their role from home, they are less likely to see the need to go to the office. If businesses ask millennials and generation-Z workers to return to the office, they are likely to be asked "Why?"

The most successful businesses will be those who encourage their people to develop their communication skills, focus on collaboration and roll out the technology that enables their people to perform their job online. However, not everyone will be able to work from home, all the time and some people may prefer to work in the office. In addition, those working in front line public services, retail, healthcare and the hospitality industry will still have to go to their place of work.

That said, cities are likely to be much quieter places going forward and businesses will have to adapt in order to provide their services to an increasingly remote working population. It seems likely that Covid-19 will indeed accelerate remote working practices and businesses will need to become comfortable with that.

Building a resilient supply chain

How do you create a resilient supply chain in uncertain times?

Before the current Covid-19 crisis, for most businesses, sourcing supplies was all about pricing, timing and making savings where possible. Now that supply chains have become disrupted, the priority is to keep operations online by making sure those supply chains keep flowing.

Volatility wreaks havoc on traditional supply chain planning. Production levels, raw material purchases, logistics and order fulfillment become almost impossible to forecast.

In the current environment, orders of raw materials and supplies are more likely to be delayed. You should build in some extra time in order to ensure you don't run out of stock before your next order is delivered.

Having a safety stock is a common approach to managing supplies during times of uncertainty. You don't want to have too much cash tied up in extra stock but having a sensible buffer can be helpful in smoothing out procurement issues.

Working with a single supplier is risky. If you are dependent on one single supplier, it makes sense to do some research and identify a second supplier that you can use if your supply chain is cut off due to delivery issues, disruption, etc.

On the sales side, it may be necessary to manage your customer's expectations regarding delivery timelines. For example, if you are an online retailer, it may take longer for goods to be delivered to customers through the mail. Up front communication with your customers is always best. If they know that there is a chance of a delivery being delayed, they are less likely to complain if it actually happens.

Managing cashflow is particularly important in uncertain times. You may find that your suppliers are less willing to give your firm 30 days credit. If possible, you could try to negotiate a discount for settling invoices within 14 days. After all, cash is king.



Effective webinars

Top tips for hosting an effective webinar.

Webinars have quickly become a key marketing and customer communication tool for many businesses. Whether you want to update your clients on new industry developments or host online tutorials on how to get the most out of your products / services, more people than ever before are choosing to dial into webinars.

Topic

If you choose a topic that doesn't interest your audience, your webinar is doomed to failure. Do your research and identify a topic that will resonate with your audience. Check out what your competitors are up to – are they covering an interesting topic that seems to get the attention of customers? Take the time to check out what other firms in other industries are doing too – you might be able to take a theme or idea and repurpose it in a way that works for your audience.

Promote your webinar

There is no point creating a webinar if nobody knows about it. Email a link to your customers inviting them to join in. Give them a couple of weeks' notice and follow up with a reminder a few days before the webinar.

If you want to attract some potential new customers, post an invitation to your upcoming webinar on your company website, LinkedIn page, on Twitter, etc. On the day of the webinar, send a final email reminder that includes a direct link to attend.

Practice

Practice makes perfect. Have a few rehearsals in order to ensure you iron out any potential glitches. A good practice session can help you to get your timing right, ensure your technology is working correctly and will also help you to deliver your content in an engaging and effective manner.

Timing

It may seem obvious, but ensure you choose the right time and day for your webinar. If some of your customers are in different time-zones, you can also record the webinar and make it available to them after the event.

Choose the right platform

It's important to use a reputable webinar platform that makes it easy for people to register and supports multiple ways for people to join. For example, some people may join from a computer whereas others might want to join via a smartphone app. The large, well-known webinar platforms such as GoToWebinar, Zoom, Webex or ClickMeeting offer the functionality that most business users will need.

Think about the number of attendees that you are likely to have as most webinar platforms offer different packages for say 100, 250 or 500+ attendees.

Follow up

As with any marketing activity, follow up is key. After the webinar, send an email to attendees thanking them for joining. If possible, include a copy of the slides or a summary of the topic covered. You could ask participants to suggest potential topics that they would like you to cover in the future - if you are going to provide webinars, it makes sense to tailor the topics that are of most interest to your clients.