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### Skype vs Google+ Hangouts, a business perspective

Posted by [Annette Gardner](#) on Mon, Feb 25, 2013

Skype or Hangout? Which cloud solution first pops to mind when you need to collaborate with others? One of the many advantages of cloud computing is the array of great business level video conferencing applications that are now available.



Skype is a great quick and easy option, offering free and paid for versions where you simply click on a persons name and off you go. It's also possible to make cheaper-rate calls to global landlines and mobiles and the solution comes with option to download the management console, Skype Manager. It is worth remembering though that you need a Premium account to chat to more than one person at a time.

Google+ Hangout is a great option too, launched straight from your mailbox or Google+ account, you get video conferencing and so much more. Free video conferencing for up to 15 people with an option to transmit 'on air' and a set of fully integrated apps with additional free email, calendar and social media platform. So, as they say, a bit more bang for your buck. There's even an option to upgrade to a business account through [Google Apps for Business](#), for a mere \$50 per user per year.

Each cloud application though has its pros and cons, so we've put together a list of what we think are the key differences between Skype and Google+ Hangouts.



### Skype vs Google+ Hangouts, a business perspective

		
<b>Description of the solution</b>	Stand-alone cloud-based online traditional and VoIP calling, video conferencing, IM and file sharing service	Included with Google+, Hangouts are a cloud-based VoIP calling, video conferencing, IM and file sharing service that integrates with a host of Google solutions; including Google Drive for face to face real time document collaboration.  For business users, Google+ comes free with Google Apps for Business
<b>Owned by</b>	Microsoft	Google
<b>What do you need to get started</b>	Create an account online and download the version of Skype appropriate for your device (PC, Mobile, Tablet etc).  Updates do not happen automatically and need to be manually installed.	A Google account with Google+ activated (either individual or through Google Apps), and a browser.  All updates happen automatically.
<b>What you get for your money (or for free)</b>	Some stuff is free upon signup:  Your account and all upgrades  Voice and video calls to other skype users  Instant messaging and file sharing  Some stuff you pay for:  Calls to mobiles and landlines worldwide  Text messages  Group video calls with up to 15 people	Free for everyone as Hangouts are part of Google+ (which is free) or included with the purchase of Google Apps for Business.  Hangouts give you the following:  Your account and all upgrades  Voice and video calls to other Google+ and Gmail users (Gmail functionality available through free plugin)  Instant messaging and file sharing  Private video conferencing for 10 or 15 people  Public video conferencing 'on air' streamed through your G+ page and youtube channel  Integrated apps that allow you to share Google Docs, YouTube videos and SlideShare whilst on a Hangout  Landline and mobile calls and text messaging is not done through Google+ Hangouts but rather at a cost through Gmail.
<b>Account options &amp; the costs for a business</b>	Free version with limited features  Pay as you go  Subscription plan  Premium account - this is probably better for business users as it includes everything the product has to offer	<b>Free for individuals:</b>  Hangouts are part of Google+ which is free for any individual.  <b>Included with Google Apps for Business:</b>  Google+ and Hangouts are included with Google Apps for Business Google's complete cloud computing business solution.

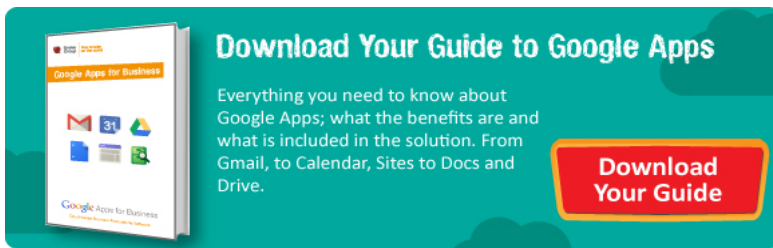
## Skype vs Google+ Hangouts, a business perspective

	<b>Business Account Cost:</b> <p>The Premium account costs \$56.04 per user, per year. (Landline and mobile call costs are extra)</p>	<b>Business Account Cost:</b> <p>Total cost per user per year: \$50.00 (and you get the entire Google Apps for Business Package - landline and mobile call costs are extra)</p>
What else comes with it/additional business features	<p>Premium account comes with <a href="#">these features</a></p> <p>Skype Manager: Create accounts, allocate credit and assign features like group video calling.</p> <p>If you have a certified office phone system you can Make Skype calls directly through that.</p> <p>Skype Numbers: You are allocated a Skype number that anyone can call you on. Print the number on business cards or post online.</p> <p>You are able to create groups - which is a particularly handy feature. This is handled through Circles on Google+.</p> <p>Voice Messages: Skype will take a voice message when you're not available</p> <p>Call forwarding when you're offline</p>	<p>Hangouts come as part of Google+, and by default with Google+ you have access to either the free or business version of Google Apps.</p> <p>So with Hangouts you also get your own:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gmail</li> <li>Google Calendar</li> <li>Google Drive &amp; Docs</li> <li>Google Sites</li> <li>Google+</li> </ul> <p>Although the phone management features of Skype are not available through Hangouts you are getting an all in one business solution rather than just a VoIP/Phone replacement.</p> <p>Google Apps for Business offers additional business benefits/functionality.</p>
Apps?	<p>Yes</p> <p>Available on all mobile and tablet devices except BlackBerry</p>	<p>Yes - through Google+</p> <p>Google+ Apps available on Android and iOS</p> <p>Available through the web browser on other devices</p>
Call quality	Very effective and consistent - depending on your Internet connection.	Very effective and consistent - depending on your Internet connection.
Creating a video call	<p>Very easy. Click on a persons name within your contact list to start talking.</p> <p>Starting a voice or text based chat is equally as easy.</p>	<p>Very easy, with a multitude of ways to create/schedule a Hangout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One click through your Gmail once you've installed the plugin</li> <li>Through your Google Calendar</li> <li>One click through your Google+ account</li> <li>Schedule a Hangout through Calendar or Google+ Events</li> </ul>
Number of people who can call or video conference at once	<p>25 people for voice calls</p> <p>10 people for video calls</p> <p>* Multi person calls only available through the premium account</p>	<p>10 people for Hangouts on the free version</p> <p>15 people for Hangouts on Google Apps for Business</p> <p>You can choose whether or not you want to show your live video feed</p> <p>Hangouts on Air are shared with the world and can be recorded and stored on YouTube</p>
Ease of use	Intuitive and easy to use.	Highly intuitive and arguably better than Skype. Once you're in it's easy to find all the tools you need, screen sharing for example. Everything is easily accessible.
Tool Example: Screen Sharing	<p>Possible: Yes</p> <p>You need to be in a video call to share your screen with another user. Group screen sharing is only available through the premium account option.</p>	<p>Possible: Yes</p> <p>You can share your screen with others whilst on a Hangout or,</p> <p>You can create a chat room to prepare and test the screen before anyone else joins</p>
Integrated Apps	<p>Through Skype you are able to send files to each other.</p> <p>Unfortunately no other app integration has yet been included.</p>	<p>There is a great selection of optional apps you can integrate into your Hangout e.g. YouTube, Google Docs and SlideShare.</p> <p>So - whilst on a Hangout you can share a Google Doc with everyone and then you can all work on that same doc together, in real time.</p> <p>You can also watch video together, play games through the Google+ platform etc.</p>
Integration with any other solutions?	Microsoft is starting to integrate Skype with with it's other products and has initially <a href="#">focused on Lync</a> . Further integrations in the future seems likely.	Hangouts are part of Google+ which in turn is heavily integrated with other Google products; Google Apps (Gmail, Calendar, Docs), Maps and Search

## The bottom line for businesses

The bottom line is that if you're looking for a phone replacement service and cloud-based video conferencing application and you're happy to pay over \$50.00 per user per year (plus landline and mobile calls) then Skype is the solution for you. It is easy to use and simple to manage and offers all the functionality you'd expect. It's a good solution that works really well.

However, if you are looking for a wholly integrated video conferencing service that offers a complete cloud-based business solution for less money per year than Skype, then Google+ Hangouts through Google Apps for Business is the right choice for your business. It couples technology, collaboration and productivity in an easy to use and really rather useful package.

A promotional banner for Google Apps for Business. On the left is a graphic of a book titled 'Google Apps for Business' with icons for Gmail, Calendar, Sites, Docs, and Drive. To the right of the book, the text reads: 'Download Your Guide to Google Apps' in large white letters, followed by 'Everything you need to know about Google Apps; what the benefits are and what is included in the solution. From Gmail, to Calendar, Sites to Docs and Drive.' Below this text is a red button with white text that says 'Download Your Guide'.

Tags: [cloud](#), [Google Apps for Business](#), [Google+](#), [Business](#), [Skype](#)

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