

Digital Facilitation Tools for Online Workshops & Meetings

If you're new to facilitation and Design Sprints, getting to grips with all the tools that can help the process run smoothly, especially when it comes to remote Sprints, will be an essential part of your learning curve.

In this post, we've compiled all the tools and software you're ever going to need to run your online workshops and meetings. We'll be looking at online whiteboards, file storage, and document sharing tools, video conferencing software, online communication tools, task management aids, notetaking apps, meeting planning tools, and much, much more!

Let's dive into some of the fantastic technology currently available to enable you to run seamless and successful remote workshops, and help your team members make the most impact possible—wherever they happen to be!

- Online whiteboards
- Survey tools
- File storage and document sharing
- Free video conferencing
- Online communication tools
- Task management
- Notetaking apps
- Meeting planning
- Virtual facilitation tools
- Online design tools
- Screen recording
- Virtual Space
- Presentation tools

Online whiteboards

FigJam

FigJam, part of the Figma portfolio, is an online whiteboard for teams to express, explore, and share their ideas all in one place. Online meetings become instantly more engaging and collaborative while sketching and riffing are actively encouraged. One of the advantages of FigJam is that it works directly with your designs in Figma too!

Miro

Online whiteboard Miro is the perfect tool for teams who need to scale collaboration securely. The software boasts enterprise-ready security and advanced administration controls, enabling teams both large and small to feel confident in sharing their ideas online and in real time. Integrations with popular design tools also mean that Miro's whiteboard experience feels as seamless, intuitive, and immediate as an in-person collaboration.

Mural

Mural's easy to use digital canvas enables faster problem solving via visual collaboration. With over 300 templates covering brainstorming and ideation, meetings and workshops, strategy and planning, and design research and analysis, this tool is specifically designed with those new to online team collaboration in mind.

Stormboard

Stormboard offers built-in business processes and templates to empower its customers in their brainstorming and workshops. Geared in particular towards meetings, Stormboard guides users to define goals and capture, organize, and prioritize ideas using their seamless remote collaboration technology.

Limnu

Whether you're part of a product team or work freelance as a business analyst or designer, Limnu is set up to ensure digital collaboration is as easy as if a real whiteboard were in the room. The platform's drawing tools are smooth and intuitive, and the speed of the refresh is second to none.

Lucidspark

Bringing your best ideas to life via live collaboration, Lucidspark—a company which can boast Amazon, LandRover, and HubSpot as clients— is a free virtual whiteboard with a suite of products to fit each user's collaboration needs. This is the perfect tool for brainstorming ideas, presenting information during meetings, and playing icebreaker games with new team members.

Conceptboard

Offering both real time and asynchronous board management and collaboration, Conceptboard's online whiteboard has loads of neat features, including live cursors (which have participant names on them!), a template library, and a built-in project management system.

Ziteboard

A considerably more stripped-back experience, the lightweight online whiteboard from Ziteboard is an in-browser tool designed for immediate use: users are not required to either register or download software to get started. Marketed in particular at teachers and students, the board is an easy-to-use and fun intro to online collaboration.

Tldraw

Taking you straight to the in-browser whiteboard itself, Tldraw is quite literally an online whiteboard that can be shared and worked on immediately. What Tldraw lacks in instruction it makes up for in intuitiveness, and while it may not have the bells and whistles of some of the other online whiteboards, for very fast brainstorming and sharing ideas, you couldn't find a more efficient starting point.

Microsoft Whiteboard

If you've been using Microsoft Teams a lot these last couple of years, then Microsoft Whiteboard might be the online whiteboard for you and your team. Fully integrated with Microsoft Teams, meeting attendees simply have to click the Share button to launch a Whiteboard for everyone on the call to instantly collaborate in one place.

Survey tools

Google Forms

Included as part of the free, web-based Google Docs Editors suite offered by Google, Google Forms is a survey administration tool. Available solely as a web application, the service enables users to create, edit, and collaborate on surveys with other users in real-time. A significant advantage of using Google Forms is that the information collected can be used to automatically populate a spreadsheet, making it easy to analyze the results of the survey at a glance.

Typeform

With its sleek interface, custom layouts and themes, and libraries of photos and videos to choose from, design is a big part of the Typeform appeal and one of the company's selling points. When users are given a form that is a joy to complete and a delight to look at, they are more likely to complete it thoroughly and provide more thoughtful answers when they do.

SurveyMonkey

The world's leading survey sending software, SurveyMonkey, makes it easy for companies to measure and understand customer feedback. With surveys, polls, and quizzes ready to launch via email, social media networks, a weblink, or mobile chat, information can be collected from every kind of user group and for every type of company.

File storage and document sharing

DropBox

Most of us know DropBox: it's the original cloud storage service that allows users to save files online as well as sync them to various devices. It's free (up to 2 gigabytes of storage space), is accessible offline, and file share and collaboration with other DropBox users comes as standard.

Google Drive

One of the many advantages of Google Drive is its accessibility—with just a simple log-in, users can access all of their files from any device in the world. Files can be edited within the Drive itself, it has a fantastic search tool, and sharing files is as easy as sending a link. An additional bonus is the interface is exceptionally user-centric, pleasant, and intuitive to work with.

OneDrive

Microsoft's OneDrive cloud storage service is rich in features and well-integrated with other Microsoft Office products. Users can easily share, store, and collaborate on content, and each user receives up to 15 gigabytes of free storage space (with opportunities to earn more) when they register.

Box

With collaboration and security at the top of Box's agenda, the file storage company enables large file sharing (with anyone), as well as the viewing of and commenting on any kind of document from multiple devices. The app is optional, and users can still access their files in the browser.

Free video conferencing

Zoom

Many of us have become acquainted with Zoom over the last few years for remote work meetings and calls with friends and relatives. The video conferencing platform can be used via a computer desktop or a mobile app making it easily accessible to all users. Still, its main advantage is its ability to host very large online conferences, ideal for larger businesses. Zoom also allows you to split the audience into smaller groups, making it ideal for collaborating online.

Whereby

Whereby's USP is its ease of use. With no software or app to download, users creating a meeting can choose their own personalized URL (no long, random meeting links here!) before sending it around to those they wish to invite. When it's time to have the call, everyone simply meets in the browser, either on a mobile or desktop.

Skype

Skype, the original free video calling platform, hasn't gone away, although you may have forgotten about it after Zoom's meteoric rise to dominance during the pandemic. The main advantage of Skype over its competitors is that it allows free video meetings to last up to 24 hours with none of the limits that other video conferencing platforms have in place for the same service.

Google Hangouts

The great benefit of Google Hangouts is that it allows calls to be broadcast live (called "Hangouts on Air"). This means that anyone can hear and watch the call, with the user who has organized it having the option to select who can actively participate. The screen sharing option also gives team members the opportunity to share the digital projects they are working on with each other in real time.

Online communication tools

Slack

If you've not used Slack yet, where have you been? Not only can you create an emoji of your own face (yes, we've done that. Here's how you can, too), the main advantage of Slack is that it keeps all your communication in one place. It can significantly reduce email back-and-forths and replaces texts and instant messaging. It's also a lot of fun if a tiny bit distracting from getting your actual work done.

MS Teams

MS Teams is a chat and video service that is really focused on improving the experience of having work meetings. As soon as a meeting is created, you can discuss the agenda, share relevant files, and keep track of the meeting minutes and to-dos. When the call is over, a recording of the call is immediately available in the same tab so those who couldn't make the meeting can easily catch up on what they missed.

Discord

Although essentially offering a very similar service to Slack, Discord is marketed at gaming and online communities. Due to its popularity with gamers for live chat and screen sharing, the tool has developed higher quality sound and video, with gamers frequently leaving the service running in the background so they can talk to each other while playing online games.

Task management

Trello

As we welcome a new year, getting yourself organized might very well be at the top of your agenda. Trello is a great free tool for managing large projects and smaller tasks for those who work well with visual prompts. The tool provides an easy-to-follow visual representation of your assignments and shows you what your colleagues are working on and their progress with each task.

Todoist

Todoist doesn't just have a great name; this organizational tool helps you get back a sense of control in your life! The app allows you to keep track of all your tasks in one place, which you can access from any device, anywhere, including offline. Its enhanced collaboration features are also raved about by users.

Asana

Yes, Asana is a great task management tool, but the best thing about it is by far the unicorns. Asana's "Celebration Creatures" appear at random when you complete a task, giving you that extra incentive to get your work done. Believe us; few things will cheer you up as much as a unicorn, a yeti, a narwhal, or a phoenix flying across your screen when you tick off one of your to-dos.

Notion

Notion's drag and drop dashboard makes it easy for users to craft their own schedule or build customized workflows. The platform also contains numerous templates, including a product wiki template, a new hire onboarding template, and a design system template, which can all be modified to fit your personal or company needs.

Teuxdeux

Made for minimalists, Teuxdeux's selling point is its simplicity. Its UI is clear and clean, resembling an online version of paper and pen. Perfect for freelancers, tasks rollover at midnight to the next day if left unfinished (uh-oh!). With a free mobile-only option or a \$3 a month option, the app is also the ideal task management solution for a freelance budget.

Notetaking apps

Evernote

Although Evernote is one of the most well-known online notetaking applications available, what many people don't know is the versatility of the service. Famous for being a simple way of keeping notes,

users can also upload images, PDF files, links, and archives of websites as well as record voice notes.

OneNote

Originally a popular tool in educational circles, OneNote, part of the Office 365 suite, is now familiar in numerous workplaces. Anything saved in OneNote is shareable with other users, its user interface is friendly and easy to navigate, and it can even scan and convert handwritten notes into typed words.

Google Docs

Google Docs is great, isn't it? You won't be surprised to read that this post is being written in Google Docs right now. The tool pretty much covers everything you'll need for note taking or longer form content production: it allows for real-time collaboration, a history of changes, auto saving, the ability to work from anywhere, offline work mode, exporting, file storage, and more.

Notion

The great thing about notion is it allows you to organize pages in pretty much any way you want—kanban boards, wikis, calendars, notes, databases, you name it—it gives you ultimate control over how you manage your life and work.

Apple Notes

Apple Notes offers maximum flexibility. Whether you want to quickly jot down some ideas or dictate a voice note for transcription (here's how), Apple Notes is a handy tool for creative, spontaneous people to capture their ideas. Plus, in a similar vein to the other apps we've outlined here, you can also add images and share and use search tags to quickly find what you're looking for.

Meeting planning

SessionLab

Designed specifically with facilitators, trainers, and consultants in mind, SessionLab is a session planning system that enables workshopppers to combine knowledge sharing and sprint planning in one app. The tool also includes tips and tricks for the workshops themselves in its library of facilitation resources, perfect for when you've run out of icebreakers or idea generation exercises.

Google Sheets

Oh Google, is there anything you can't do? That's right, Google's back, this time with Sheets, the most intuitive, accessible, and shareable spreadsheets you're ever likely to find. Similar to Google Docs, Sheets enables real time collaboration by multiple users and contains a version history of everything you've done so any mistakes or accidental deletions can be easily rectified. The app also links neatly with Google Slides so you can present and communicate the results of your data collection in a stylized and easy-to-understand way.

Virtual facilitation tools

Butter

Butter is a video conferencing tool that helps facilitators set up the perfect flow for their workshops. A user can prep their entire session in advance, planning the agenda, breaks, polls, and more all in the app. With its minimalist aesthetic, the company seeks to keep things as simple as possible and keep a workshop group's attention all in one tab.

Stormz

Aimed at facilitators and coaches, Stormz is a tool to aid the planning of sophisticated workshops both online and in-person. The software contains over 50 different workshop templates for users to take advantage of, covering areas such as brainstorming, creative problem solving, design thinking, decision-making, strategic planning, and collaborative learning. For those with more facilitation experience, Stormz offers a customized option, whereby users pre-configure the exact steps of their workshop themselves via the app's clean, simple interface.

Axis

Axis promises a structured collaboration tool for digital meetings and workshop facilitation. With features including templates for every kind of meeting, accessibility from any device (no downloads), anonymous ideas-sharing, and evaluation activities, this is an ideal option for whenever going digital will help you deliver a better outcome for your client or workgroup.

Mentimeter

Mentimeter enables the creation of presentations with real-time feedback, encouraging maximum interaction and participation. Users build stylish presentations which include polls and quizzes which audiences can then respond to. With its live polling tool, responses are presented with stunning visualizations in real time, increasing engagement and interest.

Slido

Slido is a Q&A and polling platform that helps users get the most out of meetings and events by bringing together speakers and audiences. In addition, the tool crowdsources top questions and engages participants with live polls and quizzes.

Online design tools

Canva

Australian graphic design company Canva enables users to create visually compelling social media images, presentations, posts, and other digital visual content. With multiple templates and fonts, you don't need any prior experience as a graphic designer to use the tool, plus it's free!

Figma

Figma, the popular (and free!) web-based graphics editing and user interface design app, allows users to wireframe websites, design

mobile app interfaces, and prototype designs. The advantage of using Figma is its accessibility: thanks to its in-browser format, designers can collaborate with other users from any computer without having to buy licenses or download software.

VistaCreate

With thousands of professional, editable templates up for grabs (and for free!), VistaCreate's graphic design tool enables users to build engaging visual content at speed. Whether that's an Instagram post, a poster, a Pinterest graphic, or a logo, VistaCreate can bring the ideas of those with non-design backgrounds to life.

Screen recording

Loom

With so many of us working remotely, it's harder than ever to showcase our work quickly and effortlessly to our colleagues. With Loom, you can record quick videos of your screen to demonstrate to your co-workers what you're working on or record a short video message when there's no time for a call.

Vidyard

Designed with sales teams in mind, Vidyard evangelizes the personal touch, enabling sales teams to spice up their pitches and move away from dry email outreach. Using video to connect with potential customers at every stage of the customer journey, users can showcase their personalities, create authentic connections, and build trust.

Virtual Space

Thursday

When in-person social events are off the agenda, Thursday is a way to bring remote teams together to have fun, play games, socialize, and get to know new team members. Small breakout groups can play

games and participate in team-building exercises that you're likely to find more entertaining are considerably less awkward than the standard drinks over Zoom.

SpatialChat

A group video chat for "in-person" virtual meetings, the advantage of Spatial Chat is its adaptability. You can run an entire event from start to finish in one place: corporate workshop, half-time coffee break, networking hour, and evening afterparty.

Here.Fm

A place where colleagues, friends, and families can create their own unique, shareable video rooms, Here is a next generation in-browser video communication platform. Users can meet online to video chat, write, draw, screenshare, decorate, and move around—and all in the browser (just make sure it's Chrome).

Topia

Describing itself as a "spatial media platform", Topia combines world-building with encrypted video chat. Users essentially build and customize their own virtual worlds using pre-made kits or from scratch. With each world able to host around 500 participants, it's a great platform to host online events such as dinners, podcasts, concerts, and conferences.

Skittish

The very colorful Skittish platform is a place to build virtual worlds that can host online meetups, festivals, parties, or workshops. 3D spatial audio enables users to use their microphones to talk to others nearby, while cute animal avatars are used to represent each user.

Spatial

Spatial boasts' artist-built' spaces, offering users a more stylish version of the virtual world experience. With a focus on art exhibitions,

as well as meetups and parties, lifelike avatars represent users who can visit events as well as build and customize their own 3D spaces.

Wonder

Another virtual event hosting platform, Wonder, is pitched as an alternative to those who are fatigued from excessive video calls. Wonder attempts to better simulate real-world events, with users jumping between groups and calls, enabling more natural networking, collaboration, and conversation.

Welo

Welo offers users a virtual environment within which teams can host collaborative sessions in a more interactive and playful way than the more traditional video conference call. Every detail of the virtual spaces can be customized, while numerous templates exist for those who want to launch an engaging, productive work environment quickly.

Teamflow

Offering frictionless communication and collaboration, Teamflow is a virtual office for everything from watercooler chitchat to scheduled meetings. Relevant documentation for meetings can be attached to the virtual meeting room itself, and whiteboards and post-it notes are on-hand for notetaking and brainstorming.

Presentation tools

Google Slides

If you thought you'd seen the last of Google in this post, then you were wrong. Google Slides, a free to use, real-time collaboration presentation tool, has all the benefits you might expect from a Google tool, such as autosave, offline access, and the ability to access it from anywhere. Other benefits include making it super easy to embed video, images, and maps into slides, and sharing with others is both seamless and intuitive.

Visme

Aimed at both the total novice and the expert designer, Visme helps corporations and professionals showcase their expertise via impactful, visually engaging presentations. The platform covers multiple areas of design: infographics, branded documentation, social media posts, and video and animations. The content users can create can be static or interactive, depending on the template chosen.

Prezi

With its visual storytelling software, Prezi offers an alternative to traditional slide-based presentation formats. The map-like overview feature allows users to pan between topics, zoom in on details, and zoom out to reveal context. The tool is also integrated with popular video conferencing tools, including Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts, Slack, Facebook, GoToWebinar, and Webex.

We hope you've enjoyed our extensive rundown of the best digital facilitation tools for online workshops and meetings and feel inspired to experiment with some of these excellent platforms in your next workshop, meeting, presentation, or video call!