

# Communications Tech Bundle

## Introduction:

Operating an organization can be difficult in these unprecedented times. Having a predetermined practice for transitioning to virtual space will ensure that there will be no lost time or communication between people within your organization. With this in mind, we have compiled three different IT Bundles that can assist you and your organization with your transition towards a more flexible work environment.

This Communications technology bundle includes internal communication, external communication, and project management applications. These applications have been vetted by NIWRC for accessibility, ease of use, and ease of integration into current workflows. In a time when online communication has taken a forefront we know choosing applications that work best for your organization is a priority.

## Definitions:

### **Internal Communication:**

- Verbal or written communication between two or more individuals in the same organization. This could include chatting over the video calls, online chat, virtual calling and more.

### **External Communication:**

- Any communication that takes place between two or more people from different organizations.

### **Project Management:**

- The tracking of an organization's projects and tasks.

## Digital Etiquette

Digital etiquette is simply the standards of communicating politely in a digital environment.

NIWRC suggests some of these guidelines when constructing an organization-wide digital communication standard.

- 1) Tone can be difficult to convey via text. When in doubt, choose words that convey a cordial, professional demeanor.
- 2) Remember that anything you post on an application or online may be archived, and so should be considered both public and permanent.
- 3) Remember that others are as busy as you are. If your organization utilizes some sort of calendar system, honor this. If a co-worker is out or busy, respect their time.

- 4) Remember that while it is nice to see everyone's faces over video-conferencing, computer fatigue is very much a real thing. If you are constantly interacting over video calls it is ok for your employees to take a break from on-screen facetime.
- 5) Utilize your out of office! It may seem small, but setting your working hours on whichever schedule system your organization uses can be very helpful. It not only lets people know when you are available, but also when you absolutely are not. Keeping work hour boundaries can be beneficial to employee burnout, especially if working from home or hybrid.

## Google Workspace Disclaimer

Different programs of the Google productivity suite known as Google Workspace will appear commonly in these tech bundles. This is because it is a multipurpose technology solution.

These applications are useful for many different purposes when using a hybrid or home-based work plan. Google suite offers a variety of different packages depending on the size of your business. [Here is a google doc with more information.](#)

## Applications

Below are NIWRC's suggested communication applications. Many of the applications can be used singularly or integrated together to provide an optimal working environment.

<a href="#"><u>Zoom</u></a>	A commonly-used video conferencing software that enables both internal & external communication.
<a href="#"><u>Slack</u></a>	An application that allows you to connect both internally and externally. Formats include video calls and online chat channels.
<a href="#"><u>Google Meet</u></a>	A video conferencing application within Google Workspace. Allows for both internal and external communications
<a href="#"><u>Google Calendar</u></a>	Widely utilized calendar applications within Google Workspace, can be shared with both inside and outside entities. Multiple calendars can be layered to communicate a top-down version of an organization's work.

<a href="#"><u>Around</u></a>	A video-based platform for internal communication. Facilitates quick, easy meetings.
<a href="#"><u>Google Sheets</u></a>	A Google Workspace application with various different capabilities. Can be used to track and monitor projects.
<a href="#"><u>Asana</u></a>	A project management application that allows you to work collaboratively across teams to track and follow your team's projects.
<a href="#"><u>Airtable</u></a>	A multi-purpose application that allows you to customize tables and construct databases as needed. Multiple templates can be made and used for various needs.

## Recommended Equipment

NIWRC suggests investing in the following equipment to create a streamline of communication both internally and externally.

Suggested Equipment	Use Explanation
Desktop or Laptop	<p>A workplace desktop or laptop is essential for virtual work, be it entirely remote, or a hybrid schedule.</p> <p>If you are having your staff travel back and forth from a physical location, it is suggested to either have a desktop setup both in office and at home, or to provide an easily portable laptop.</p> <p>For staff that are fully remote but typically only work for one location, either a singular desktop or laptop can be used.</p>

<p>Web camera</p>	<p>A web camera is essential for virtual meetings. While some of the applications suggested above prioritize audio communication, a visual connection can greatly enhance trust and collaboration.</p> <p>We suggest either ensuring that employee laptops have a web camera built in, or that a USB web camera is purchased to connect to staffs' computers.</p> <p>Another thing to consider is that web cameras can act as an accessibility aid for those who need to read lips or who communicate via sign language.</p>
<p>Microphone</p>	<p>A microphone required to verbally communicate. Like the webcam, a microphone may already be integrated into an employee's laptop. If not, we suggest purchasing a compatible USB microphone or, USB webcam/microphone combination.</p>
<p>Speakers</p>	<p>A sound system is required in order to hear others virtually. Almost all laptops have speakers built in that are of varying quality. If no speakers are built into the device, independent speakers with either a USB or audio jack can be purchased.</p>

## To Request More Information

If you have read through this best practices guide and video tutorials would like further assistance on how to use, download, and set-up these applications, NIWRC offers technical support. You are able to send your technical support requests by submitting a request form found here: [Tech Bundle TA](#)