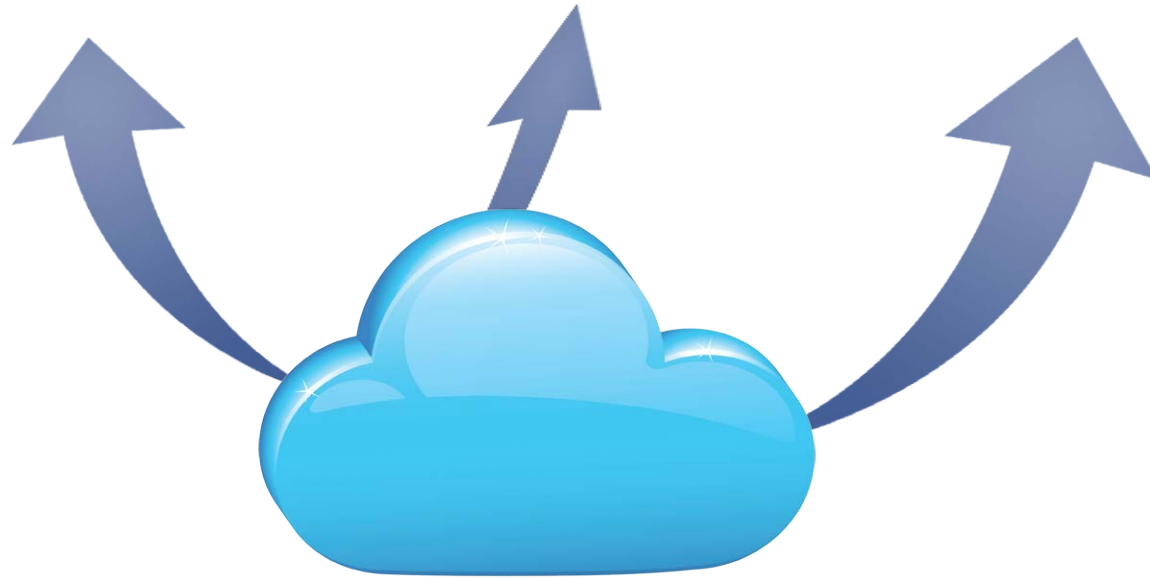


Cloud Storage Evaluation

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DGM 2271 Digital Design I

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Evaluations

Box

Box is an Online cloud storage service. With Box you can share files with multiple collaborators. It was founded in 2005 by Aaron Levie, Dylan Smith, Sam Ghods, and Jeff Queisser. Box is becoming more and more popular for businesses and enterprises. I will briefly go over the pros and cons of Box.

Box allows you to upload all types of files such as documents, videos, photos, etc. Since Box is an Online cloud service, you can access the files anywhere with an Internet connection. Box is also compatible with phones and tablets. This means you can upload, download, and view files anywhere with any device.

- 1 The first thing I want to point out is the pricing. Based on the pricing, it is in favor of businesses and professional users. This makes sense as to why Box is popular among businesses and enterprises. Box is not really useful compared to other cloud services for the individual plans. Other services offer more storage and bigger file size. On the other hand, for businesses for a fair price you get unlimited storage, 5gb file upload and remarkable security.
- 2

Pros:

- Easy to share folders
- Uses cloud services
- Clean interface
- Easy uploading

Cons:

- Limited storage space (Individual plan)
- Manual uploading
- 3 • File size limit (free plan)
- Not easy to preview files

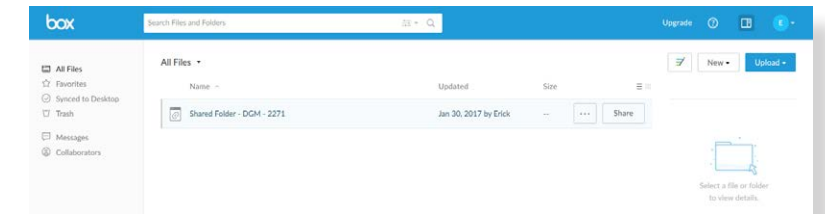
Pricing for Individual Plans

Plan	Price	Storage	File Upload Limit
Individual	Free	10 GB Storage	250 MB file upload limit
Personal Pro	\$10 per month	100 GB storage	5 GB file upload limit

Pricing for Business Plans

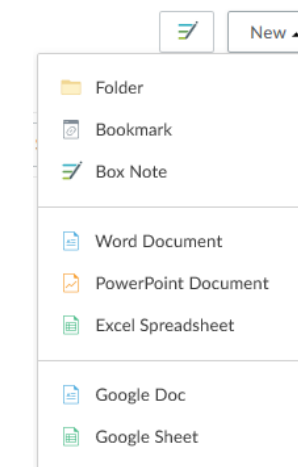
Plan	Price	Storage	File Upload Limit
Starter	\$5 per user/month	100 GB secure storage	2 GB file upload
Business	\$15 per user/month	Unlimited storage	5 GB file upload
Enterprise	Contact Us	Unlimited storage	5 GB file upload

Box Interface

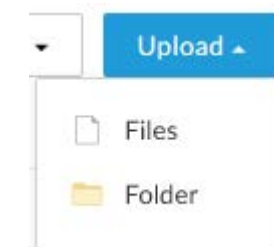


This is displaying the clean and simple interface of Box. Box has many features but very few buttons on screen. It has a few drop down menus but these menus are very short. They focused on keeping things clean and simple. It has a **high signal to noise ratio**.

Menu for New files.



Upload Menu.



Creating new files or uploading is very easy. You click on the new or upload button and a menu will drop down then you select the type of file you want to create. You can also drag files from your computer to upload. Most things in Box can be accomplished with one or two clicks.

Dropbox

Dropbox is a file hosting service. By downloading the client software on your device you can then use it for cloud storage and file syncing. As long as you have the Dropbox software all your files are available. This means you can have your files on all your devices.

Pros:

- Easy to sign up
- Integration of third party apps
- Most popular
- Don't need special email or account
- Easy to use

Cons:

- Limited free storage (2gb)
- Easy to accidentally delete files
- Support features

I did a brief research on Dropbox. I mostly found pros for Dropbox. Dropbox was released in 2007. At that time, it was really successful. Since 2007 it is one of the most popular services used and the number of users is growing every year.

Features:

- Easy interface
- File syncing
- File sharing
- File versioning
- Live collaboration

Business Pricing:

Standard
\$12.50 / user / month

Advanced
\$20 / user / month

Enterprise
Contact us for pricing

Storage:

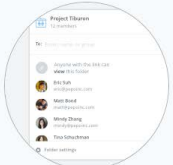
2TB

Unlimited

Unlimited

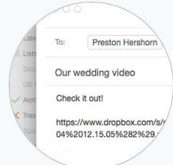
Other features from dropbox.com

Large files



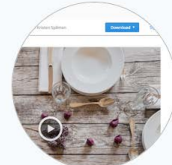
Sharing large files is as fast as sharing small ones. Put any file in your Dropbox, then send it quickly with a simple link.

Simple sharing



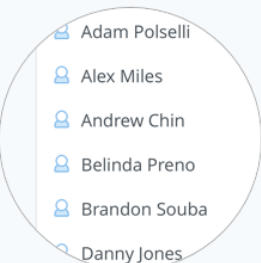
Create a link to share any file in your Dropbox. Then send the link by email, chat, or even text message.

Preview and download



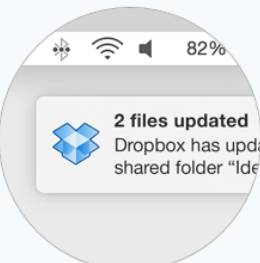
When you send someone a link to a file, they can preview and download a copy — even if they don't have a Dropbox account.

Shared folders



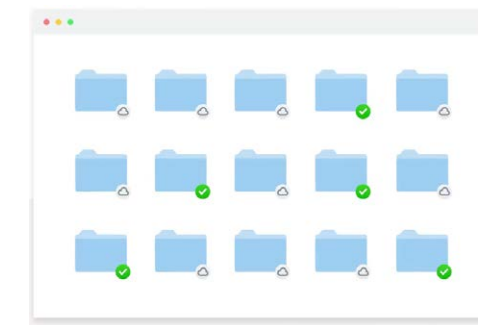
Work on the same files by creating a shared folder. When you add people to the folder, its files will appear in their Dropbox as they do in yours.

Automatic updates



When you edit a file in a shared folder, everyone gets the update automatically. There's no need to email versions back and forth.

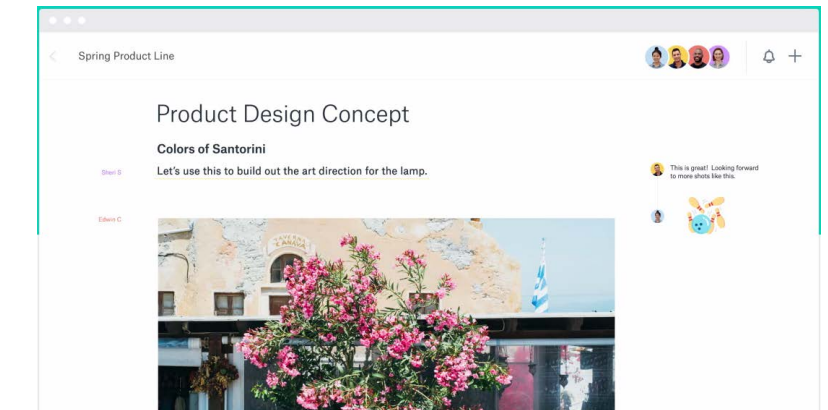
Smart Sync



The business version of Dropbox has a feature called smart sync. With smart sync all your files (local and cloud) are on your computer. The benefit is that they are displayed on your computer but they do not take hard drive space. This feature is for macOS

Windows, it is also backwards compatible with older operating systems.

Dropbox Paper



Another great feature of Dropbox is Dropbox Paper. This is where team collaboration happens. The purpose of paper is to help your team in the creative process. It helps in creating, reviewing, and organizing your ideas. Everyone involved can make a change live. You can also see who made what changes.

Google Drive

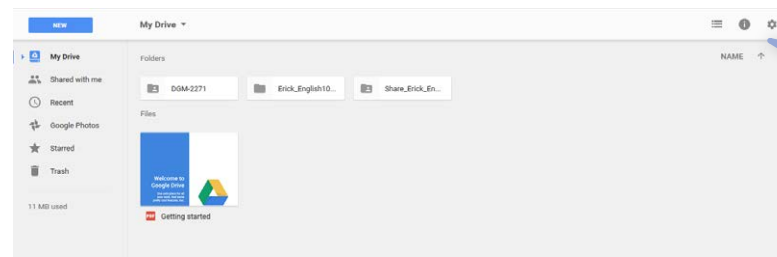
Google drive is a cloud storage service. With Google drive you can store different files like documents, videos, pictures, presentations, etc. Google drive was launched in 2012. Google drive is similar to Box. It is an online service you don't download anything to your computer.

Google drive is cheaper than the other service. The basic plan is \$5 a month with 30gb of storage and the business plan is \$10 a month with unlimited storage. Google drive is also part of the Google suite which includes Gmail, Calendar, Hangouts, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Sites, and others. Google drive works perfectly with the other Google apps.

I did find a couple of cons for Google drive. The first thing is using it. The interface is a little confusing. It is not as clear as the other services. There are icons that I have no idea what they do. Sharing files was confusing. You have to go inside the folder to share it. Other services and operating systems allow you to share folders just by highlighting it.

Another issue I had is the public and private settings. For example, it is hard to identify which files are being shared and who it is shared with. It is not visible and you have to search to find out. They have tried to fix this issue by adding an icon on the folder to show that it is shared. I don't think that is too clear especially for new cloud users.

Google Drive Interface

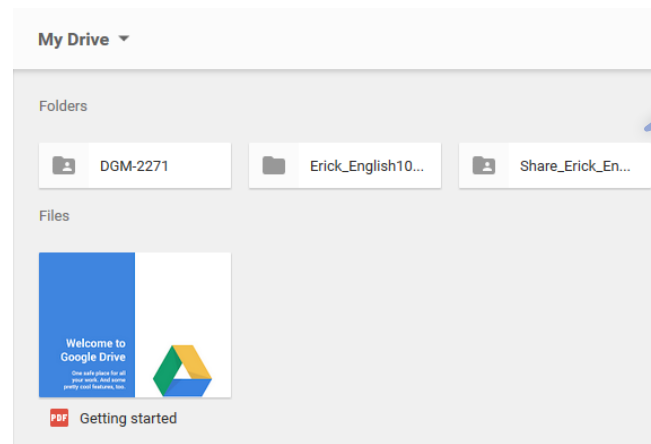


What do these icons do? Some icon's functions are repeated this makes the interface confusing.

Out of all the cloud services I have seen, Google drive has less support for file formats. Google drive does not support a lot of

files format. However, it does support the major formats like .jpg, .gif, .psd, .pdf, .doc, .mp3, .mp4, .html, etc. For some this may not matter but for others it might matter. For example, a file format not supported is files for Sketch.

Google Drive Files



What files are public or private? Who else can see the folder?

Supported Formats

- Native formats (Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, Drawings)
- Image files (.JPEG, .PNG, .GIF, .TIFF, .BMP, .WEBP)
- Video files (.WEBM, .MPEG4, .3GPP, .MOV, .AVI, .MPEG, .MPEGPS, .WMV, .FLV, .OGG)
- Audio formats (.MP3, .M4A, .WAV, .OGG)
- Text files (.TXT)
- Markup/Code (.CSS, .HTML, .PHP, .C, .CPP, .H, .HPP, .JS)
- Microsoft Word (.DOC and .DOCX)
- Microsoft Excel (.XLS and .XLSX)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.PPT and .PPTX)
- Adobe Portable Document Format (.PDF)
- Apple Pages (.PAGES)
- Adobe Illustrator (.AI)
- Adobe Photoshop (.PSD)
- Autodesk AutoCad (.DXF)
- Scalable Vector Graphics (.SVG)
- PostScript (.EPS, .PS)
- Fonts (.TTF)
- XML Paper Specification (.XPS)
- Archive file types (.ZIP, .RAR, tar, gzip)
- .MTS files
- Raw Image formats

Pros:

- Cheaper
- Preview files
- Part of Google Apps
- Google security

Cons:

- Public/private settings not clear
- Privacy concerns
- Limited file formats
- Confusing interface



Plan

Plan

I have chosen to use Box for managing a work group. My plan is based on a small design group. I feel that Box can meet the needs for this group. Box will not be a financial problem.

Starter

Secure file sharing and collaboration. Ideal for small teams.

\$5 per user/month

Try It
Buy It

100 GB secure storage

2 GB file upload

The Starter plan from box will be a good way for the team to start. This plan is recommended for teams with 5 to 10 users. At first it is only \$5 per user/month. This plan has 100GB of storage that is more than we will need.

A feature I thought was useful was the searching in Box. The search has a filter that is easy to use and well organized. You can search by date, file type, etc. This is a useful tool for all types of users.

Speaking of users. It is expected that about 3 users will need to see all the data and the rest only need to see some of the data. Box has a great way to setup permission levels. This will also avoid the deletion of files from users who are new to Box or who accidentally delete files. This way the project will not be affected.

The 3 users can have a editor level this will allow them to make any change. The other users will have a viewer uploader level. They will basically be able to view files but not edit or delete.

This is a very basic folder structure. The deliverables folder will contain the most up to date files. This folder will be seen by everyone. The Project folder is the folder were all the rest of the files will be stored. The Project folder will only be seen by the other users. Inside the assets folder are more folders. These folders will contain the most files. The psd and InDesign folders could also have multiple files but it is best to keep this folder small and use more layers in the project files. Any fonts used should be exported to the fonts folder. An upload folder has been included inside the deliverables folder. This is because the other users will be viewer uploaders. This is were they can upload their files with suggestions or files the team will need for the project.

Search Filter

🔍

Content Filters
Metadata

File Type(s)

Any Type
▼

Date Updated

Any Time
▼

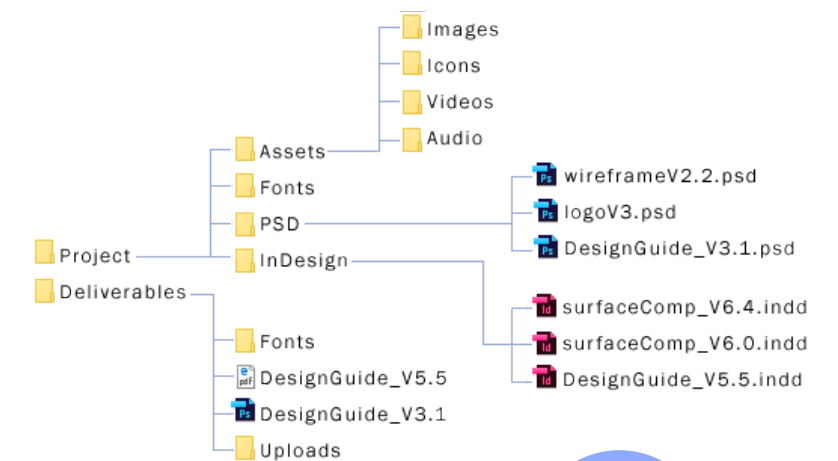
Owners

Enter a set of names or email addresses

Permission Levels Chart

Permission Levels	Upload	Download	Preview	Get Link	Edit	Delete	Owner
Co-owner	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Editor	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Viewer Uploader	•	•	•	•	•		
Previewer Uploader	•		•				
Viewer		•	•	•			
Previewer			•				
Uploader	•						

Basic Folder Structure



Conclusion

After researching a few of the cloud services I realized that they pretty much do the same thing, that is store data. Some services have additional features like collaboration, syncing, mobile support, and so on. There are many services that are really good and are well designed. At the end of the day I think it comes down to what the project is and what the team needs.

I want to point out the interface of the cloud services and their association with the design principle of **Mental Model**. A mental model is when people understand and interact with systems and environments based on mental representations developed from experience. (Lidwell, William, Universal principles of Design).

I think the services were designed based on our experiences with managing files. I pointed out earlier with Google Drive how I didn't know how to share the files. The other services had an icon or a button that gave you the option to share. This is also on operating systems. At the top of the finder or file explorer there is a button where you can share your files. The creators of the services used this **interaction model** to design their services. The same way we used to share out files is used in the cloud.

Another example, is clicking and dragging. We are used to clicking and dragging our files to manage them. In the cloud we can do the same thing. To move a file, you just click and drag. To upload a file, you can click and drag. I think this is why it feels so easy to use cloud storage services. They were design in a way that is familiar to us.