

Moving Beyond Email – The Era of SMB Online Collaboration Suites

SMB Readiness Grid: Online Collaboration Suites

September 2010

Report Alert

ANALYSTS: LAURIE McCABE, ARJUN AGGARWAL, SANJEEV AGGARWAL

Abstract:

Collaboration is probably the only activity that everyone in every company engages in every day. Whether a CEO or new hire, an accountant or a construction worker, everyone needs to share and manage information, ideas, resources, and connections to get their jobs done.

Until recently, most small and medium businesses (SMBs) could get along just fine with a few tools such as email, calendars, document sharing, and the good old telephone. But today, many SMBs are finding that they need more effective collaboration tools to share knowledge, streamline processes, and keep everyone in the organization “on the same page”. They need to make information easier to find, share, and use as well as to connect with the right people at the right time—on any device. According to SMB Group survey data, a quarter of SMBs intend to invest in collaboration solutions in the next 12 months.

Because the need to collaborate is so fundamental, many vendors see it as an irresistible opportunity. As the cloud-based computing model has matured, both traditional collaboration giants such as IBM and Microsoft, who have long offered on-premise solutions, and cloud-centric players such as Google and Zoho, have launched integrated online collaboration suite solutions designed to appeal to SMB needs and budgets.

In this study, we examine the online collaboration suite landscape. Our analysis is based on in-depth interviews with online collaboration suite vendors, several SMB customers that use and/or have tried their solutions, data from our recently completed [SMB Routes to Market Study](#), and secondary research. We start by discussing the collaboration challenges that SMBs face and examine how online collaboration suites can help them address them. Then, we compare the SMB market readiness of eight online collaboration suite vendors, evaluating their marketing strategies, solution capabilities, service offerings, and differentiation.

The report features the SMB Readiness Grid and detailed comparison reports designed to help SMBs evaluate solutions based on several criteria, including: company strengths, solution capabilities, and marketing strategies relevant to the SMB market. Detailed vendor profiles are also included in the study.

Vendors covered: Google Apps for Business, HyperOffice, IBM LotusLive, Microsoft BPOS, OnePlace, Salesforce Chatter, VMware Zimbra, and Zoho Business.

Main Report: 37 pages

Appendix: In-depth vendor profiles, 28 pages

Price for internal use only: \$6,500

External posting rights: Posting rights are available for an additional fee

To purchase this report, please send mail to sales@smb-gr.com or call Sanjeev Aggarwal at (508) 410-3562

Moving Beyond Email: The Era of SMB Online Collaboration Suites

*SMB Readiness Grid: Online Collaboration
Suites*

Laurie McCabe, Partner

Arjun Aggarwal, Junior Analyst

Sanjeev Aggarwal, Partner

September 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Section 1: SMB Collaboration Market Dynamics 3

Section 2: How Online Collaboration Suites Help SMBs Solve the Collaboration Challenge 5

Section 3: Putting SMB Collaboration Players in Perspective 7

Figure 1: Top Reasons Why Specific Solutions Get on SMBs’ “Short List” for Collaboration Solutions..... 8

Figure 2: Target Market and Positioning..... 9

Section 4: Core Product Offerings and Pricing..... 11

Figure 3: Online Collaboration Suite Core Offering and Pricing..... 14

Section 5: Service and Support..... 16

Figure 4: Service and Support Plans and Options..... 17

Section 6: Beyond the Basics—Tapping into Specific Requirements 19

Figure 5: Key Online Collaboration Suite Differentiators 22

Section 7: Channel Strategies 25

Figure 6: Marketing and Channel Strategies 26

Figure 7: SMB Collaboration Solution Purchase Channels (from RTM survey) 28

Figure 8: Reasons SMBs Selected This Channel to Purchase Collaboration Solutions 29

Section 8: Summary of SMB Online Collaboration Vendor Strengths and Weaknesses 29

Section 9: SMB Online Collaboration Suite Vendor Readiness Grid..... 33

Figure 9: SMB Online Collaboration Suite Criteria and Vendor Ratings..... 34

Figure 10: SMB Readiness Grid for SMB Online Collaboration Suite Solutions..... 35

Section 10: Additional Guidance for SMB Collaboration Decision Makers 36

Appendix: Companion Document - Vendor Profiles 37



SMB GROUP, INC.

The SMB Group focuses exclusively on researching and analyzing the highly fragmented “SMB market”—which is comprised of many smaller, more discrete markets. We take a custom approach to working with clients, assessing where you are in the market today, and the steps you need to take to get where you want to be tomorrow. Our pragmatic, actionable research approach provides you with insights and recommendations you need to capitalize on shifting market requirements and trends, and create successful go-to-market outcomes. We also work closely with your marketing team to help integrate key findings and deliverables into your marketing and media outreach campaigns to boost market awareness and consideration of your offerings.