Email and Google

How do I prepare to use Google Hangouts in my classroom?

Getting ready to Hangout (on Google)

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Google Hangouts is a communications platform that allows users to participate in text chats, voice calls, and video calls on multiple devices such as computers, tablets, and smart phones.

For the purposes of this guide, we will assume that you are using Google Hangouts through the Gmail web interface, in a web browser on a computer. For alternative use cases, e.g. Google+, or the (Google) Hangouts app on a smartphone, refer to Google's documentation (linked below).

Note on terminology: Google Hangouts is the name of both the communications platform as well as the myriad plugins, extensions, applications that utilize the platform. This can lead to some confusion. A call or conversation on the platform is referred to as a Hangout.

Preparation

There are a number of things that Carthage users can do to prepare for using Hangouts in the classroom:

Check the classroom's Internet connectivity

- A Google Hangouts voice or video call is a stream of data, and streaming data requires a stable connection to be smooth. Therefore, a wired (Ethernet) connection is preferable over a wireless (Wi-Fi) connection.

- Carthage Media Services does not service classroom connectivity. If you suspect that your classroom's connectivity is sub-par, notify the Networking office in ample time for them to correct the issues. The easiest way to do this is to send an email to computing@help.carthage.edu detailing the problems you have observed.

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- Media Services cannot troubleshoot or correct connectivity issues at the time of your Hangout, nor can they troubleshoot any connectivity or Hangouts problems for the remote location(s) you are calling.

ALWAYS use your own computer, rather than relying on one borrowed from the library!

That way, you'll have a machine with which you're familiar and you'll be able to rehearse with the machine you'll actually be using for your Hangout session.

Enable Hangouts in your Carthage Google Apps account

If you haven't already done so, you need to enable Hangouts in your Carthage Gmail account.

- Click your profile photo at the top of your Chat list in the lower-left hand corner of your browser window.

- Click "Try the new Hangouts."

- The Gmail webpage will refresh, and you'll be able to start using Hangouts.

Contact Information

Be sure to get the following contact information for the people on the other end of your Hangout:

- The Gmail / Google Apps address (e.g. somebody@carthage.edu, somebody@gmail.com) that they intend to use for your Hangout.

- Alternate contact information (e.g. phone number), in case of technical difficulties.

Schedule Ahead of Time (and Rehearse!)

Set the date and time for both a rehearsal Hangout and the actual Hangout and assure all parties are logged into Gmail at least 5-10 minutes before the scheduled

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Hangout start times. Rehearsing your call a few days in advance gives you time to iron out any technical difficulties with video and sound.

- Set a rehearsal Hangout date and time

- Set the actual Hangout date and time

Before you start your Hangout...

You can start a Hangout with anyone you'd like as long as the person has a Google Account! If you start a Hangout with someone who doesn't have a Google account, an invitation will be sent to their email address asking them to join Google Hangouts.

Starting a Hangout

- Open Hangouts in Gmail (or Google+, if you have a Google+ profile set up)

- In Gmail, click on the Hangouts icon ( ) in the bottom-left corner of the Gmail webpage.

- In Google+, click on the Hangouts icon ( ) in the top-right corner of the Google+ window.

- Select a person from the Hangouts list. The list is order with your most recent Hangout at the top. You can click the search button and type a name or email address when you find the person you want, click their name.

- If you want to start a group Hangout, check the boxes in front of multiple people's names and click the chat icon ( ) to start a message or the video icon ( ) to start a video call.

Resources and References

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[Google Hangouts](#) article on Wikipedia

[Google+ Features: Hangouts](#) on Google.com

Posted 10/24/14

Unique solution ID: #1343
Author: bmetzler
Last update: 2014-11-05 22:59