

Google Update Podcast - Episode 78



Welcome to the Google Workspace Updates podcast by Strawberry7! We're here every week to let you know everything that's happening around Google Workspace.

This document includes all of this week's updates. Our podcast is available in audio format from your [usual podcast provider](#) or in video format on our [YouTube channel](#).

Contact [Strawberry7](#)

- Check out our [YouTube Channel](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Tweet us at [@strawberry7ict](#) or [@wignall_adam](#)
- [Book a meeting with Adam](#)
- For any advice, email us at info@strawberry7.com

On with the show!

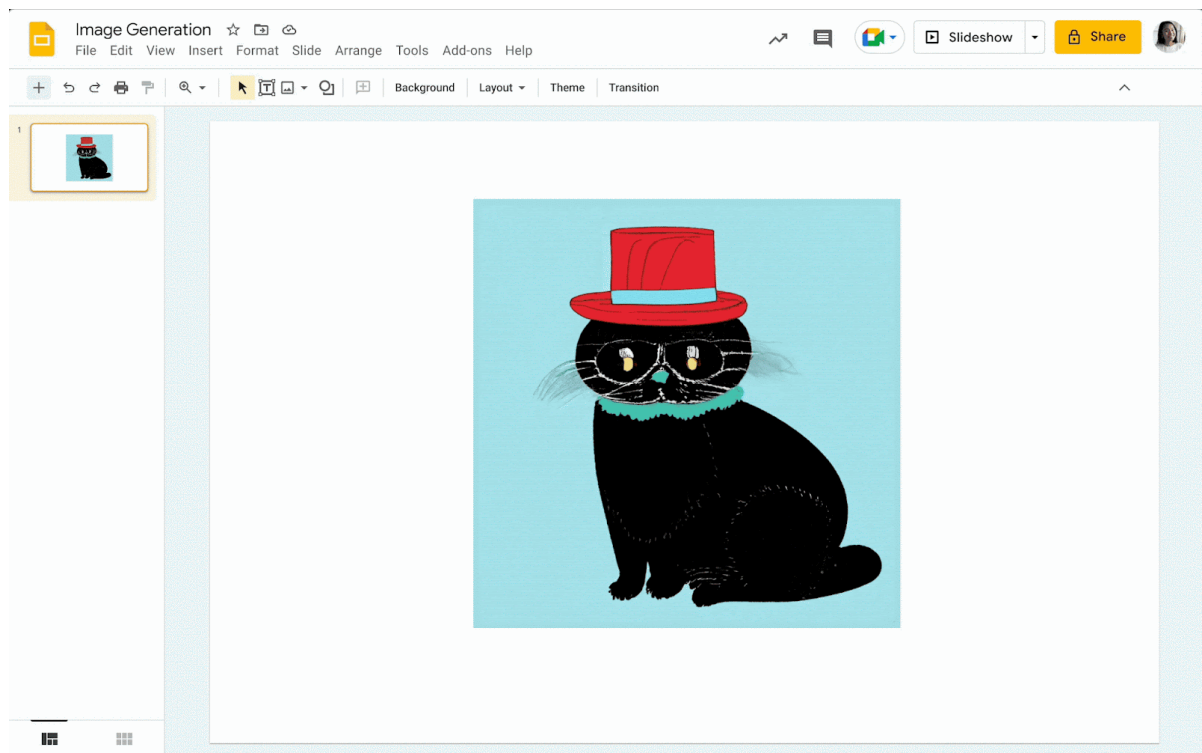
1. Google Slides

Remove the background from your images in Google Slides.

You can now easily remove the background from images added to your Google Slides presentations. To do so, *simply select an image on your slide > right-click and select "Remove background" or select the "Remove background" button in the toolbar.*

Available now to Gemini Enterprise and Gemini Business add-ons, and to users on personal accounts through Google One AI Premium.

Learn more about [removing an image background](#).



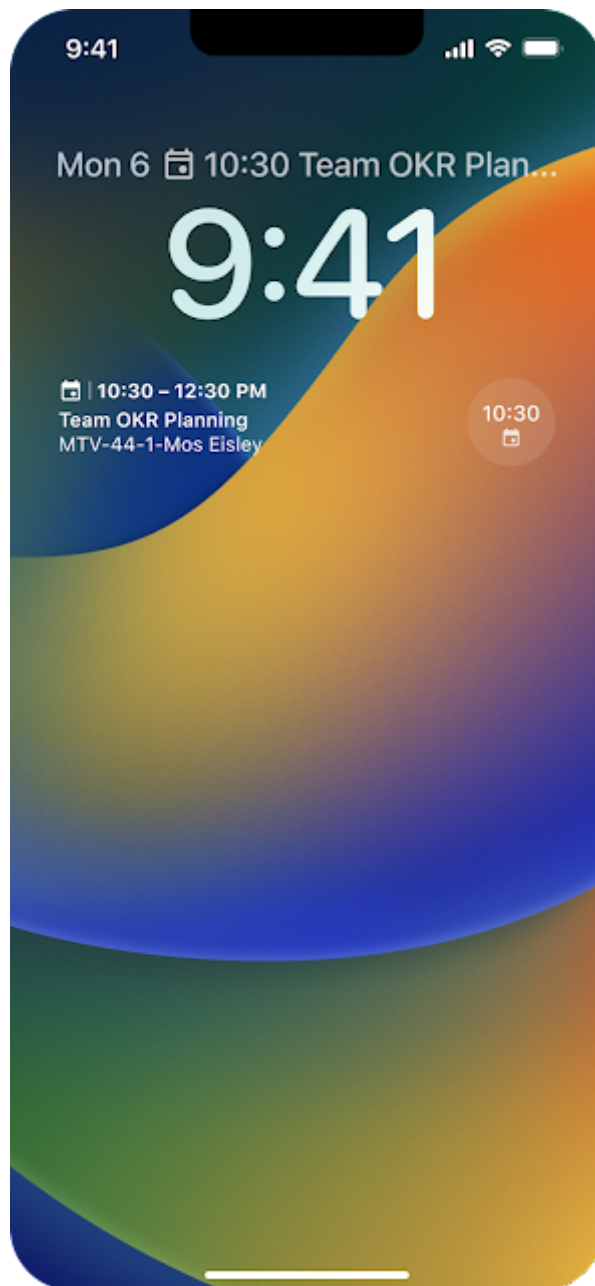
2. Google Calendar

New Google Calendar lock screen widgets on iOS mobile devices.

Google is excited to announce the launch of Google Calendar lock screen widgets on iOS mobile devices (iOS16+) and iPads (iOS17). These will surface an upcoming event or task, giving you a quick glance right from your lock screen.

Available now to all Google Workspace customers, Google Workspace Individual subscribers, and users with personal Google accounts.

Learn more about [how to add widgets to your Lock Screen](#).



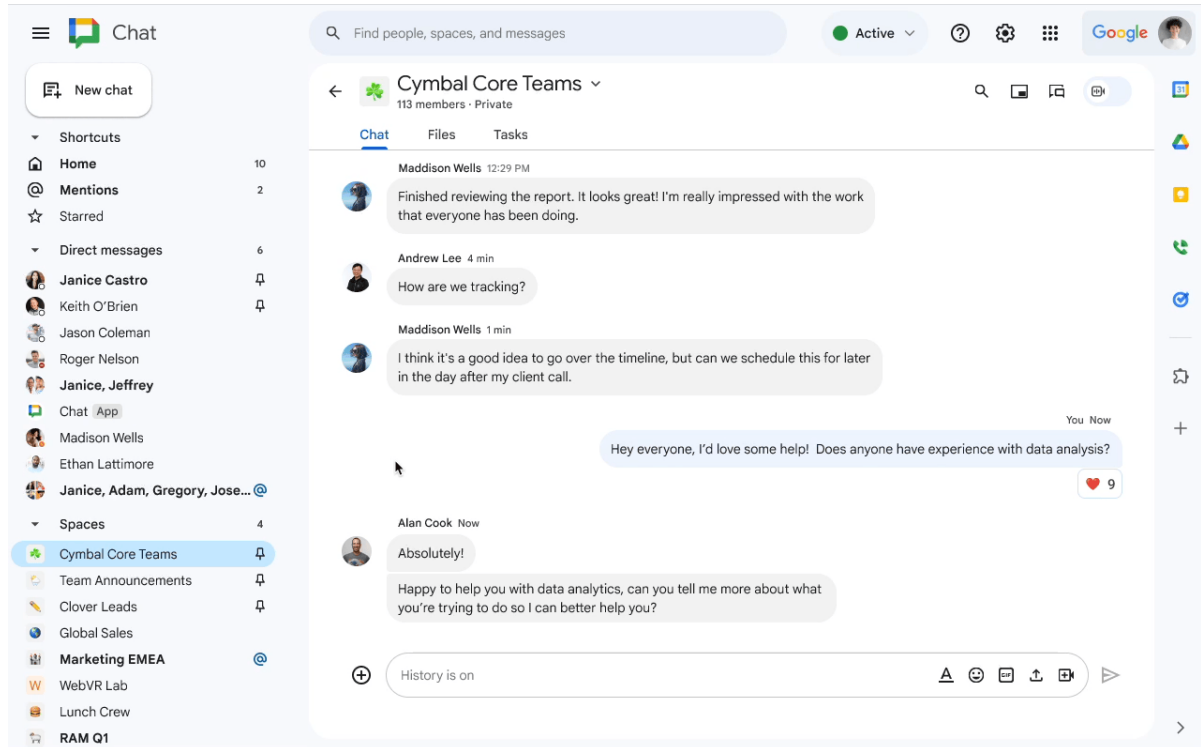
3. Google Chat

Hovercards for group messages and spaces are now available in Google Chat.

When hovering over a space or group chat within the left navigation in Google Chat, you will now see a hovercard that displays an abridged list of members and their avatars. This is especially useful when you need to distinguish one chat from another. In addition, you can include space hovercards across Chat apps using the shared hovercard library.



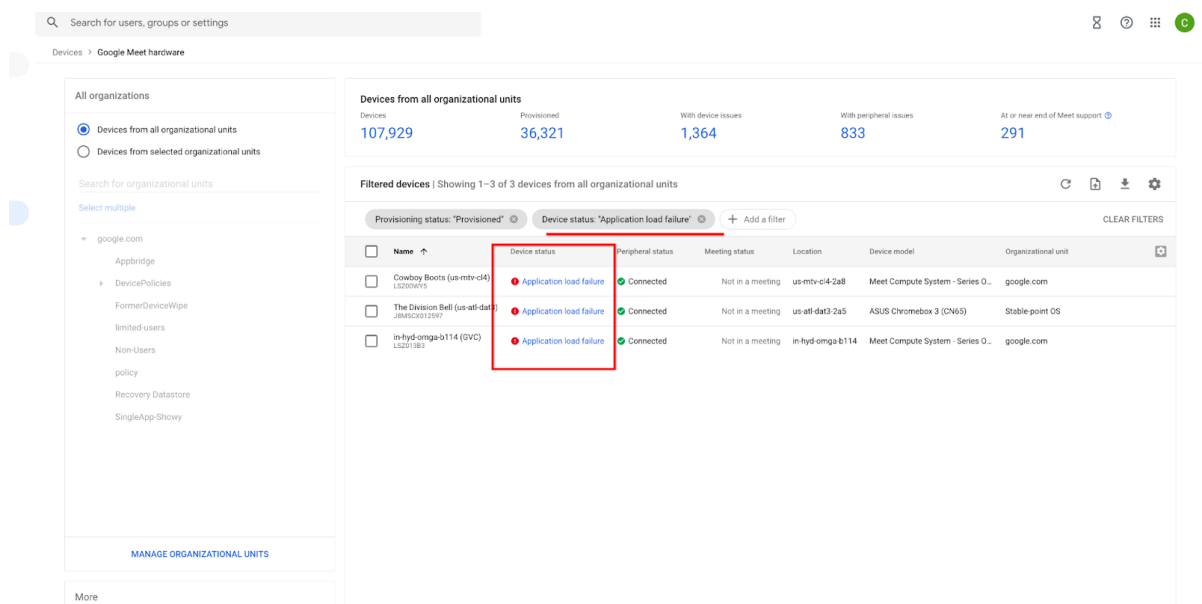
Available now to all Google Workspace customers, Google Workspace Individual subscribers, and users with personal Google accounts.



4. Google Meet Hardware

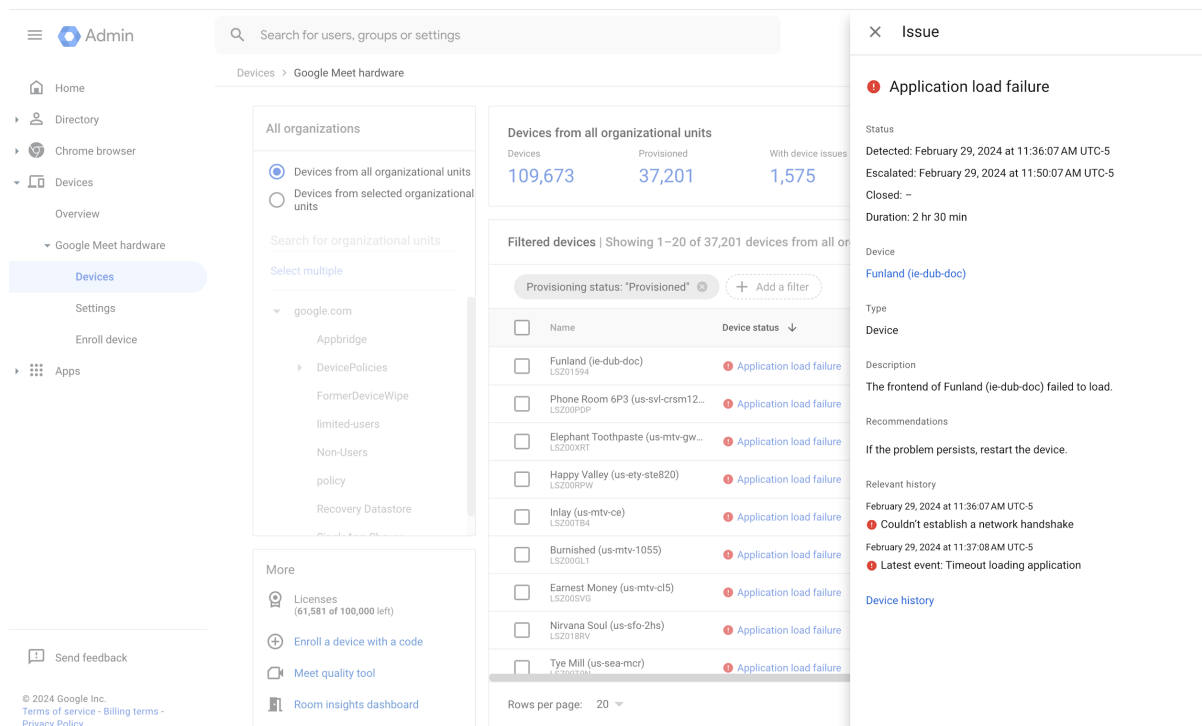
Application load failures are now captured for the Google Meet hardware devices.

In November 2023, Google announced a [series of improvements](#) for managing Google Meet hardware devices, which included surfacing additional information about device issues, such as a description of the issue, when the issue was detected, and more. Today, we're adding an additional data point: admins can now see when the Google Meet app fails to load for a device.



The screenshot shows the Google Admin console interface for Google Meet hardware. On the left, there's a sidebar with 'All organizations' and a list of organizational units. The main area displays 'Devices from all organizational units' with counts for 'Provisioned' (36,321), 'With device issues' (1,364), and 'With peripheral issues' (833). Below this, a table of 'Filtered devices' is shown, with filters for 'Provisioning status: "Provisioned"' and 'Device status: "Application load failure"'. The table lists three devices, all with a red dot icon and the text 'Application load failure' in the 'Device status' column, which is highlighted by a red box.

"Application load failures" will now be displayed in the "Device status" column.



This screenshot shows a more detailed view of the 'Google Meet hardware' page. The left sidebar shows the 'Admin' menu with 'Devices' selected. The main area shows 'Devices from all organizational units' with counts for 'Provisioned' (37,201) and 'With device issues' (1,575). A table of 'Filtered devices' is shown, with filters for 'Provisioning status: "Provisioned"' and 'Device status: "Application load failure"'. The table lists several devices, all with a red dot icon and the text 'Application load failure' in the 'Device status' column. On the right, a detailed view of the 'Application load failure' error for the device 'Funland (ie-dub-doc)' is shown. The error details include the status, detected time, escalated time, closed time, duration, device name, type, and description. The description states: 'The frontend of Funland (ie-dub-doc) failed to load.' Recommendations include: 'If the problem persists, restart the device.' Relevant history shows: 'February 29, 2024 at 11:36:07 AM UTC-5: Couldn't establish a network handshake' and 'February 29, 2024 at 11:37:08 AM UTC-5: Latest event: Timeout loading application'.

When you click on the alert, you'll see more detailed information on the error.

Getting started

● Admins:

- To filter for devices that are in the "Application load failure" state specifically, navigate to *Admin Console > Google Meet hardware > Devices > Filter by 'Device Status' and select 'Application load failure'.*

- Visit the Help Center to learn more about [understanding device usage in your organisation](#).

- **End users:** There is no end user impact or action required.

Rollout pace

- Rapid Release and Scheduled Release domains: Gradual rollout (up to 15 days for feature visibility) starting on March 18, 2024

Availability

- Available to all Google Workspace customers with Google Meet hardware devices

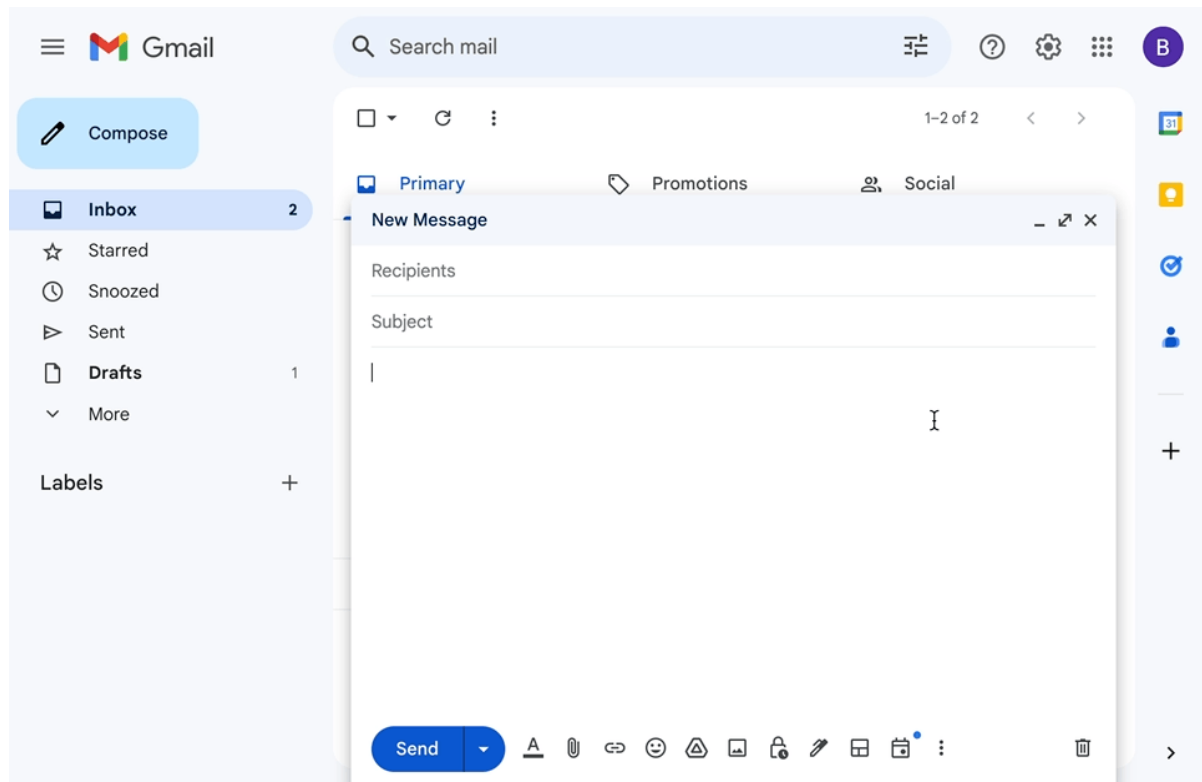
5. Gmail

Create fully customised email campaigns using new layout editor tool.

[In 2022](#), Google made it easier for you to send professional-looking emails, announcements, newsletters and more with layouts. These are predefined email templates that can be further customised with company or brand colour schemes, logos, images, links and more. [In 2023](#), Google took this a step further by introducing the ability to customise an existing template, reuse a custom layout in multiple email campaigns, or create a brand new layout from scratch for Workspace Individual subscribers.

Today, they're excited to announce that even more users across Google Workspace editions can now create customised email layouts using a new email layout editor that is accessible from the compose screen in Gmail or Google Drive. In the layout editor, you can create a new email layout from scratch or select from a predefined set of email templates, which include images, text elements and buttons.

You can then fully customise these templates by placing elements such as colour schemes, logos, images, footer text and links wherever you'd like. You can also share a layout file directly from the email layout editor using the Share button. Once another user has edit access, they can open the same layout in their Gmail or from Drive and you can collaborate with them in real time.



With Google Workspace, you can create, collaborate and communicate seamlessly across the apps. This new feature is yet another way Google are striving to help you do so as you create fully customised announcements, newsletters, and other mass-email campaigns.

Getting started

- **Admins:**

- Customised layouts are ON by default at the domain level. You can turn layouts ON or OFF for specific domains, OUs, or groups by going to the admin panel for Gmail.
- If you don't want users to use Docs, Sheets, Slides, Drawings, Forms, and email layouts, but to still use Drive for file management, leave Drive turned ON and turn OFF Docs creation.
- Visit the Help Center to learn more about [managing Gmail settings for your users](#), customising access policies for different [organisational units](#) or [groups](#), and [turning Docs creation ON or OFF](#).

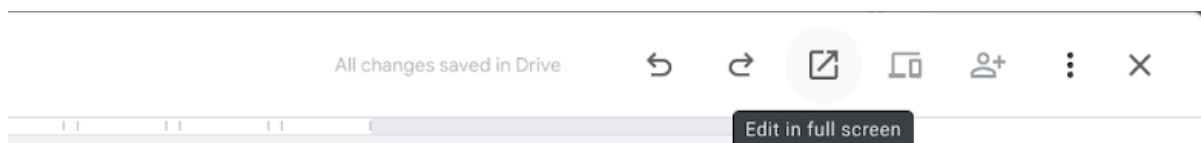
- **End users:** If enabled by your admin, visit the Help Center to learn more about using [layouts](#) in Gmail and Drive.

- **Gmail:**

- You can access custom email layouts in Gmail from the layout icon in your Compose toolbar.

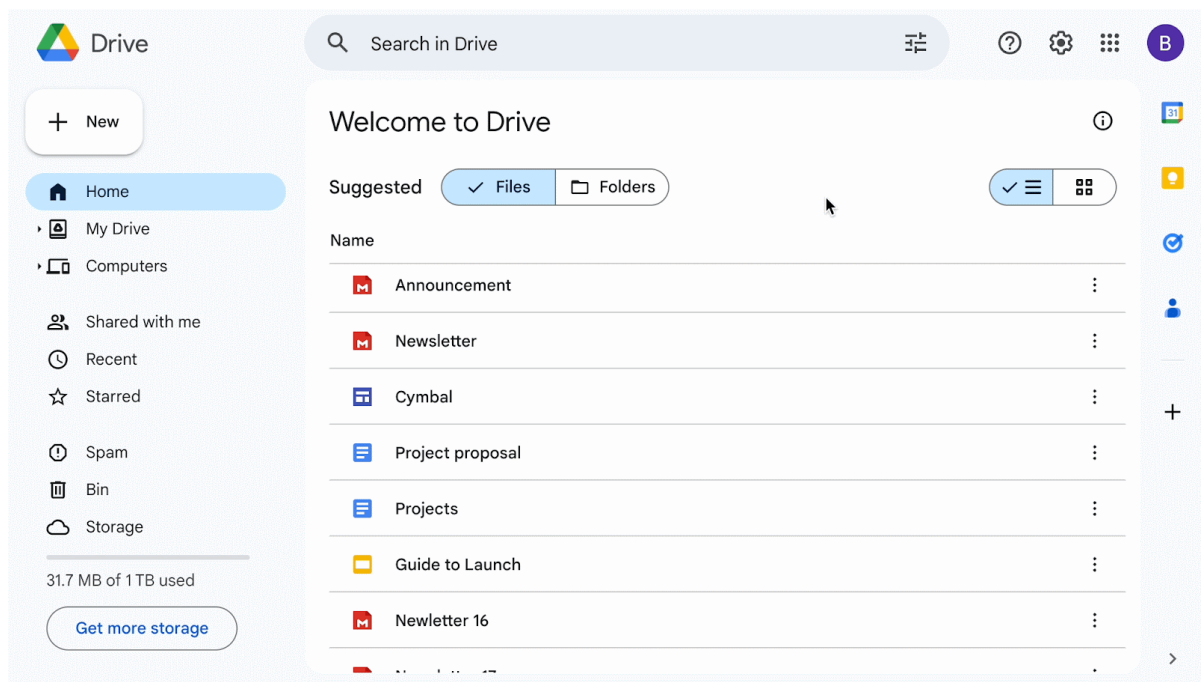


- You can then open the full screen editor from the embedded editor in Gmail using the “Edit in full screen” button in the top-right:



○ Drive:

- You can open an email layout that you have in Drive (an email layout created previously or an email layout shared with you) by double clicking the email layout file in Drive.



- Your custom layouts are stored in Drive as a special file type associated with the layouts editor. You can find email layouts in Drive by searching: "type:email-layouts"
- You can also access the standalone editor by going to docs.google.com/email-layouts/create?title=newDoc.
- Mail-merge tags work with email layouts when enabled in Gmail. You can insert mail merge tags in email layouts. Visit the Help Center to learn more about [sending personalised emails with mail merge](#).

Rollout pace

Embedded layout editor (in Gmail's compose window):

- Rapid Release domains: Gradual rollout (up to 15 days for feature visibility) starting on March 12, 2024
- Scheduled Release domains: Gradual rollout (up to 15 days for feature visibility) starting on April 8, 2024

Full screen editor for email layouts & feature availability via Google Drive:

- Rapid Release domains: Gradual rollout (up to 15 days for feature visibility) starting on March 25, 2024
- Scheduled Release domains: Gradual rollout (up to 15 days for feature visibility) starting on April 15, 2024

Availability

- Available to Workspace Business Standard, Business Plus, Enterprise Standard, Enterprise Plus, Education Standard, Education Plus and Workspace Individual subscribers

6. Admin

Select App Access Controls can now be applied at the organisational unit.

Google Workspace Admins can now configure a number of App Access Control (AAC) policies at the Organisational Unit (OU) level. Previously, this was only possible at the domain level. Specifically, this applies to:

- What happens when users try to sign in to [unconfigured third-party apps with their Google Account](#).

- Whether [internal apps](#) built by your organisation can access restricted Google Workspace APIs.
- Whether [custom messages](#) will be shown to users when they can't access a blocked app.

Google knows that users rely on a variety of tools to do their best work, including third-party apps. However, not every third-party app aligns exactly with every organisation's security policies. App access controls give customers and partners the ability to control access to third-party apps and how those apps access Google Workspace data. This update gives admins added flexibility, allowing them to set App Access Controls as they see fit at the OU level, rather than across their entire domain.

Additional details

For Google Workspace education editions, the "User requests to access unconfigured apps setting" can now be configured at the OU level. Visit the Help Center to learn more about [managing access to unconfigured third-party apps for users designated under the age of 18](#).

Getting started

- Admins: Visit the Help Center to learn more about [controlling which third-party & internal apps access Google Workspace data](#).

Rollout pace

- Rapid Release and Scheduled Release domains: Gradual rollout (up to 15 days for feature visibility) starting on March 13, 2024

Availability

- Available to all Google Workspace customers

7. Google Chat

Import data from other messaging platforms using the Google Chat API is now generally available.

Google Workspace developers registered in our [Workspace Developer Preview program](#) have been able to [import user data](#) from other messaging platforms into Google Chat using the Google Chat APIs. This functionality is now generally available to all Workspace developers and admins.

In order to import data, you can create a Chat app and “[import mode](#)” Chat space. Within an import mode space, Chat apps can import the following data as equivalent [REST resources](#):

- [Messages](#)
- [Attachments](#)
- [Reactions](#)
- [Memberships](#) with the following considerations:
 - [Historical memberships](#) must be imported when a space is in import mode. You can't import historical memberships after the space completes import mode.
 - Other existing memberships from the source messaging platform must be created after a space completes import mode.
 - Members must be users within the same domain.
- [Spaces](#): only SpaceType.SPACE is supported.

This is a helpful workflow for those who are transitioning from other messaging platforms to Google Chat. Rather than copying source data into regular spaces, import mode has the following advantages:

- **Preservation of resource creation timestamps:** You can set a historical time for the creation times of space and message resources, letting Chat apps retain historical context during user adoption of Google Chat.
- **End users can't view or access spaces in import mode:** To prevent user interference with a space undergoing data import, or to avoid possible user confusion as a result of viewing an in-progress data import, spaces in import mode are hidden from end users. After a space has completed import mode, you can add users to the space.
- **Chat turns off notifications during import mode:** This helps users to avoid unnecessary alerts about the migration.

Getting started

- **Admins:** Visit the Help Center to learn more about [importing message data to Google Chat from another service](#).



- **Developers:** Use our Developer Documentation to learn more about [developing Google Chat apps to import user data](#), [authenticating with the Chat API when using import mode spaces](#), and [importing resources using import mode spaces](#).

Rollout pace

- Available now.

Availability

- Available to all Google Workspace customers