TClub 104.1

What visual sharing tools and techniques add to Productivity?

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Introduction to Visual Sharing Tools and Techniques

The following are tools and techniques you need to know how to use to be more productive with a computer and to make yourself more available for support.

1. Screen snipping without and with annotation\
2. Screen recording (make a video of your screen for sharing with others)
3. Screen sharing in real time (allow another person to see your screen as you see it)
4. Cloud File sharing with real time collaboration and editing
5. Cloud Folder Sharing
6. Cloud Account Password Sharing

1) Screen Sharing / Snipping without and with Annotation

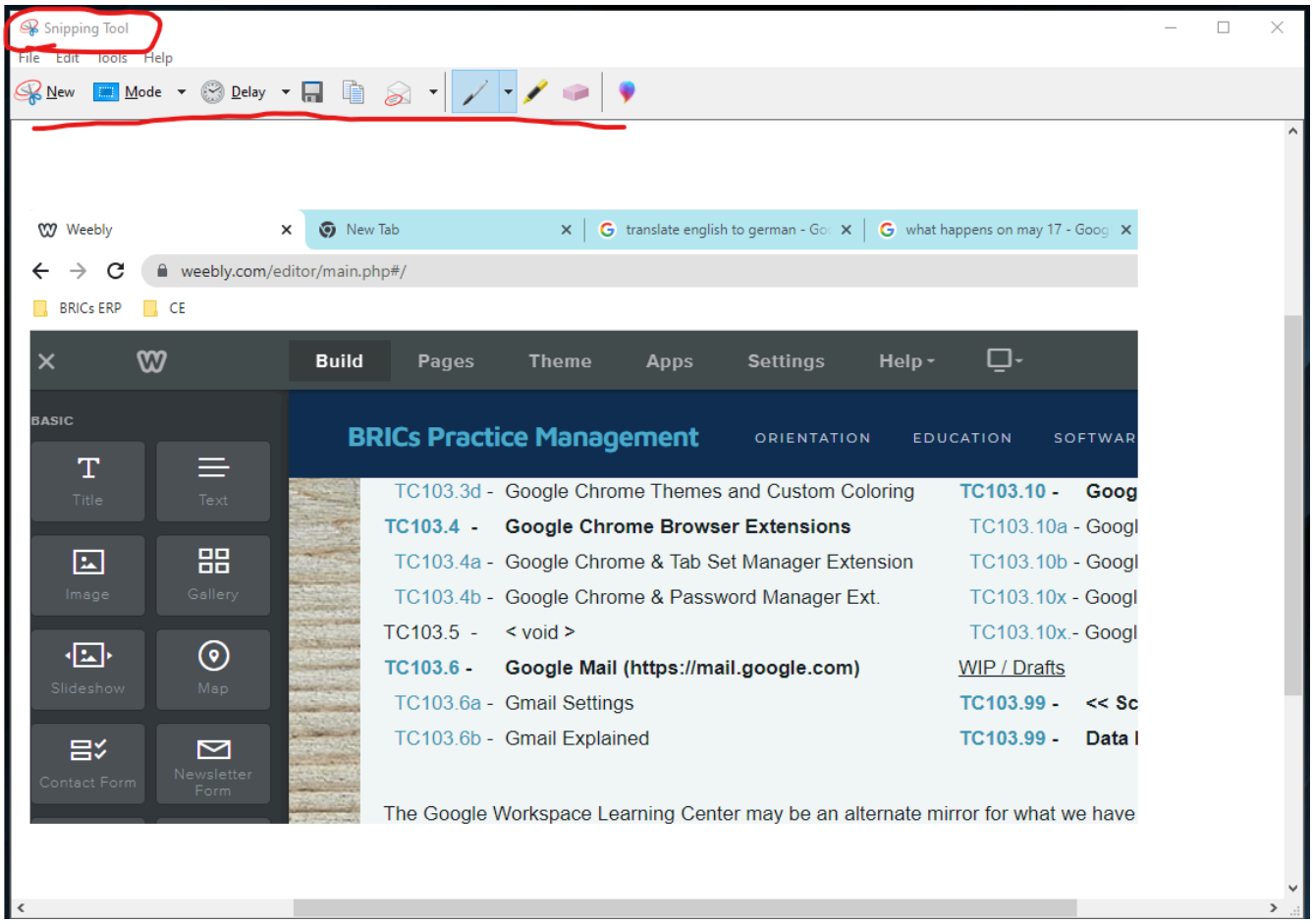
Most Operating System Software now includes functionality or additional software which allows you to make an image of your screen or a portion of your screen with ease. For free or for a fee, you can also download or install other software that does the same with more functionality.

This type of tool is extremely valuable for sharing problems you are encountering, news or information you find interesting or even making a joke.

This type of software may or may not include “annotation” tools. Annotation tools allow you to “mark up” the image with digital pens and highlighters. It also may allow you to add formatted text, arrows and other features.

You will want to know how to annotate the photos quickly for the most powerful experience.

In a supplement to this document we go over the standard offerings in the major operating systems and we introduce some history for some of the paid options, that most do NOT need for basic needs.



2) Screen recording (making a video of your screen)

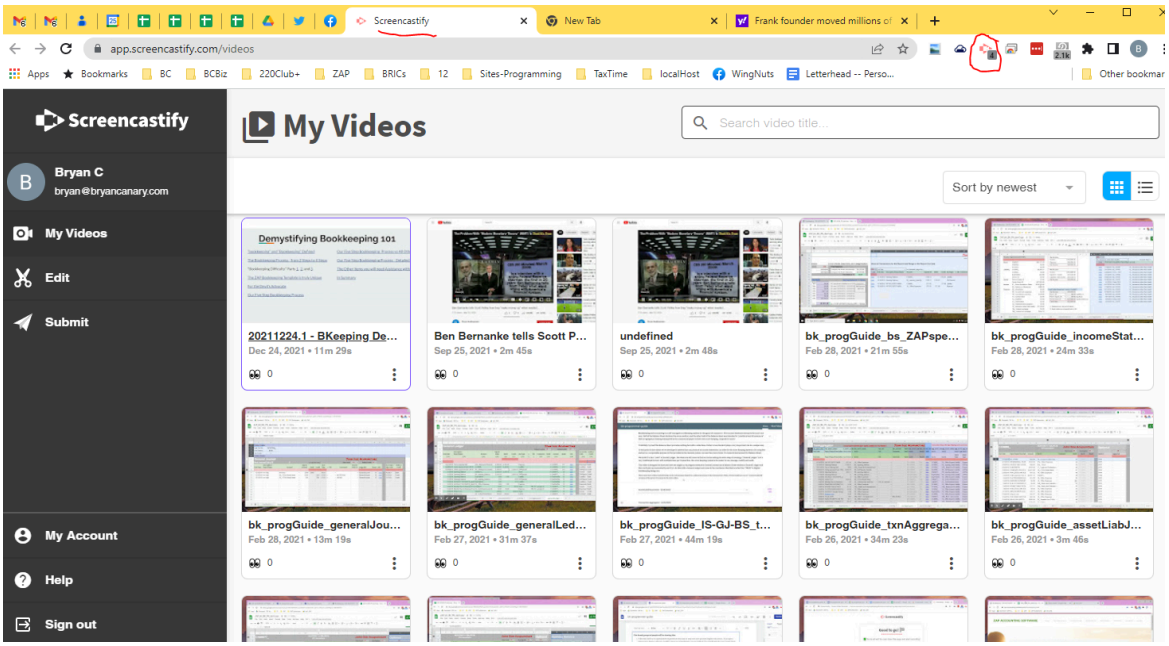
Prior to the smartphone and the Cloud Software revolution making a video of your computer screen was not done often between laymen.

The software to do it was certainly around in the 1990s, but it was not typically inexpensive and it was often designed for complex use and applications. I don't recall if there were free versions available. Presumably there was.

1. Owning the software to make the video was only the first problem.
2. Sharing the videos with others was oftentimes problematic due to file size limitations for email attachments and this was before things like dropbox existed or were in high use.
3. Even if you could share the smaller video files with others via email or a shared folder, if the file didn't have a standard encoding recognized by the recipient's computer, the file would not open and play without additional work by the recipient. There seemed to be a lot of "attorney involvement" related to copyright on patents that really hindered the mainstream uptake of this tool.

Even today, I get video files taken with mobile phones and sent to me via email that won't open on my PC or from Google Drive without installing some other software. It seems the desire to control encoding systems still is problematic today.

Thankfully, there is now at least one, and presumably many, browser extensions for screen recording with related cloud storage, file sharing and playback services that support creating videos and sharing them from the cloud.



These services eliminate 1) downloadable software requirements 2) sharing of small or large video files via email or sharing service and 3) encoding issues on playback.

All of these will require a visit to the App Store for a given web browsers and the installation of an extension, but that part can be very easy and then it's available to you in any browser you log into.

In a supplement to this document we go over one of the Chrome Browser Extensions we use called "Screencastify".

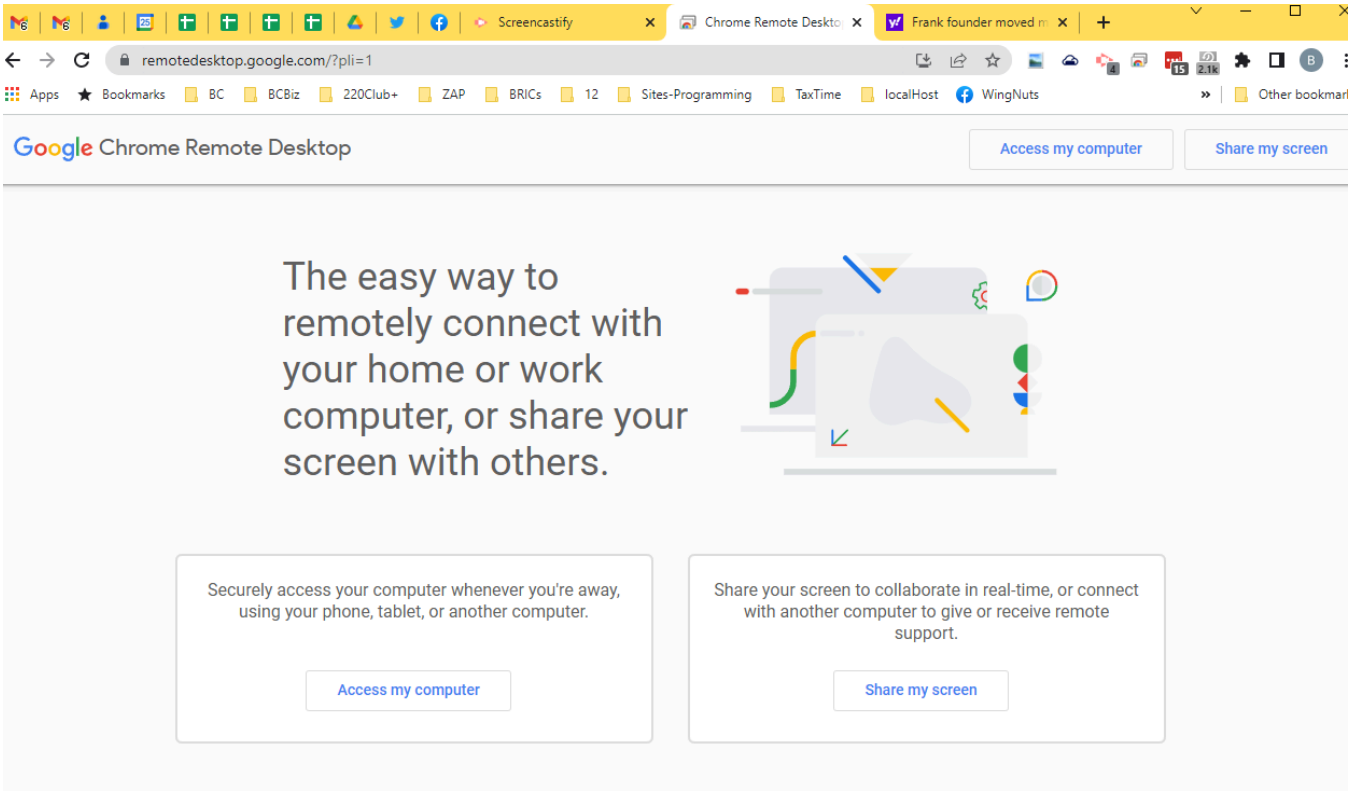
3) Screen Sharing in real time

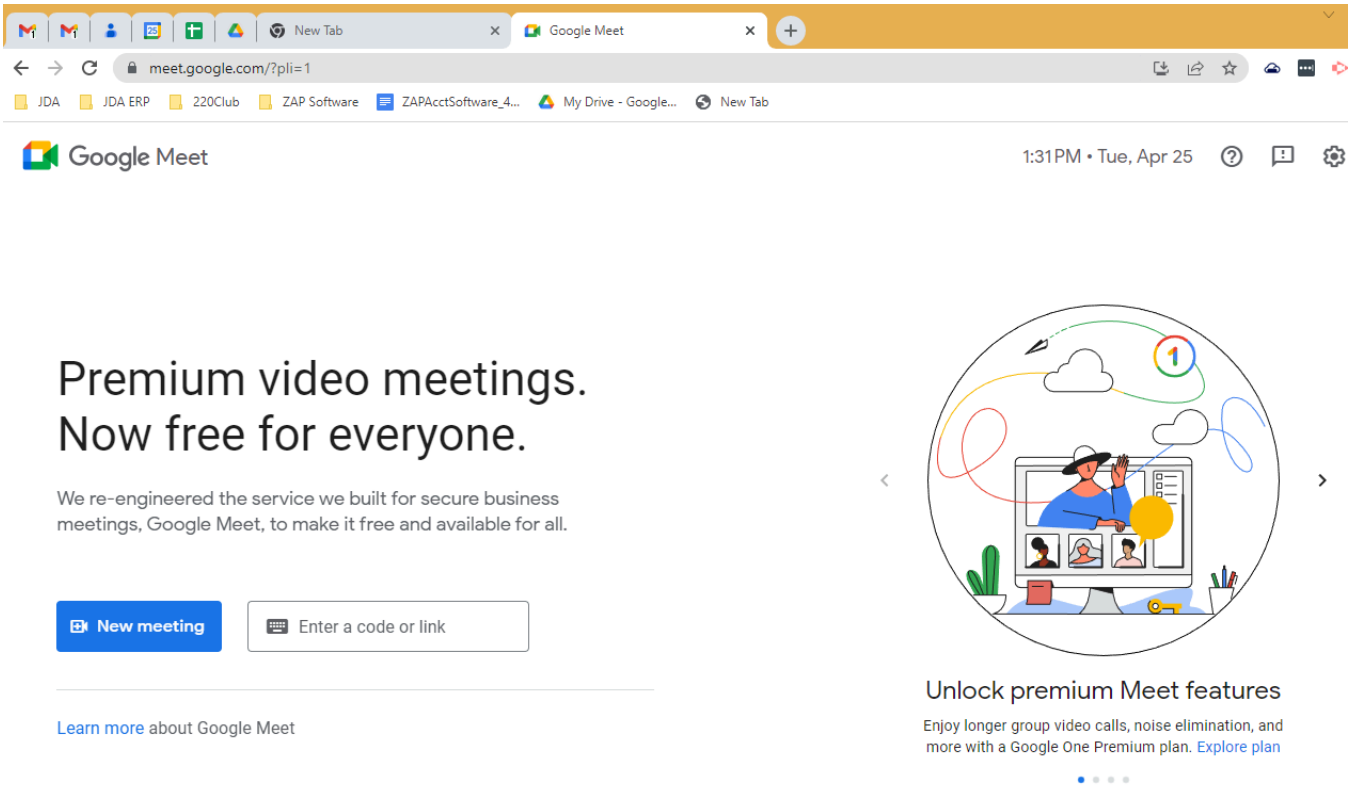
There have always been various tools for screen sharing via both paid and free software. They often required both parties to have software installed. That was a drawback, because oftentimes you were doing screen sharing to help a computer novice try to figure something out. To have to start out blind, and trying to help them get the software loaded they needed to get your help could take 30-60 minutes or more..

The really powerful software was the type that allowed the support person to send a link in an email and the recipient only had to click on the link to allow your access. It did all the software install work by itself.

That software was priced very high, very quickly, from the beginning, seemingly to discourage layman use. What you are NOT seeing for free in the marketplace got buried in the late 1990s and early 2000's for corporate profits.

In a supplement to this document we discuss two of Google's offerings (Remote Desktop and Google Meet) that allow for Screen Sharing. There are hundreds to choose from and some of the others might be better.




New Tab
Google Meet
meet.google.com/?pli=1
JDA
JDA ERP
220Club
ZAP Software
ZAPAcctSoftware_4...
My Drive - Google...
New Tab
Google Meet
1:31 PM • Tue, Apr 25
Premium video meetings.
Now free for everyone.
We re-engineered the service we built for secure business meetings, Google Meet, to make it free and available for all.
New meeting
Enter a code or link
Learn more about Google Meet
Unlock premium Meet features
Enjoy longer group video calls, noise elimination, and more with a Google One Premium plan. Explore plan

4) Cloud File Sharing with real time collaboration and Editing

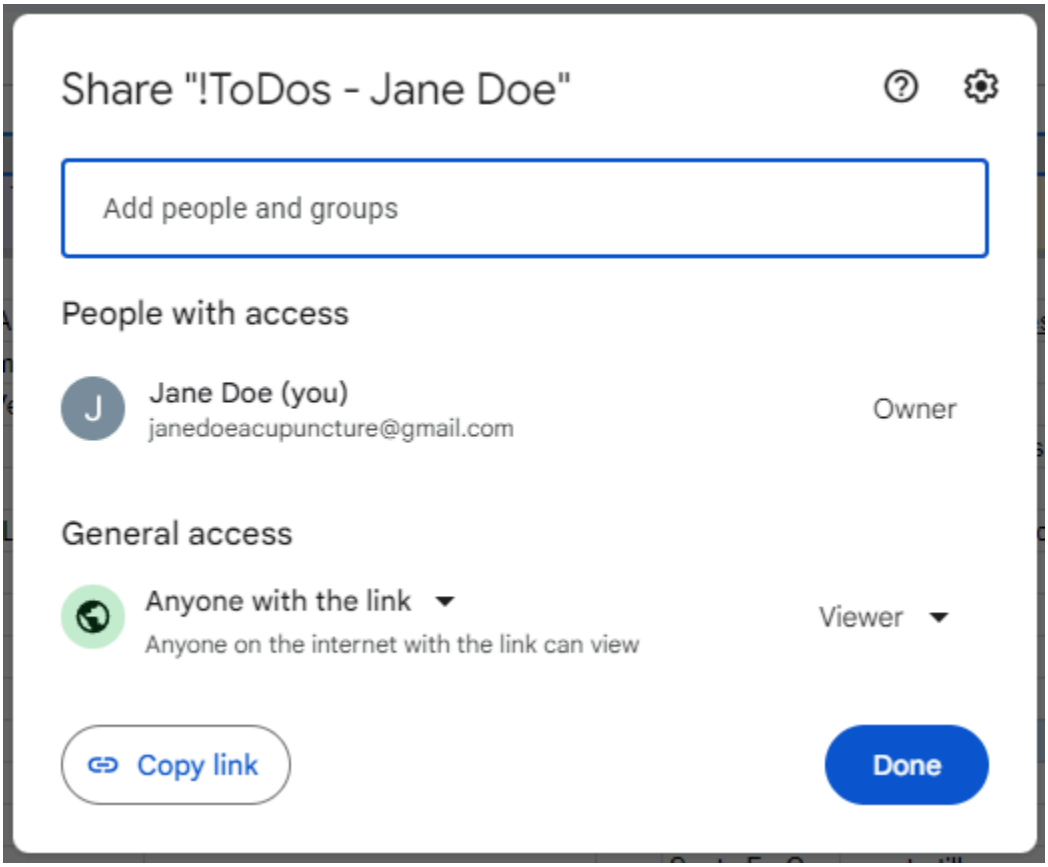
This may feel like it doesn't fit into the same genre as the others. We included here because it offers a very collaborative visual experience that is far beyond screenshots and can rival videos or surpass them, depending on what you are trying to convey or do.

This type of File Sharing in real time collaboration will never replace screen shots, screen recording or screen sharing. It has different benefits and sometimes it's all that's needed and it's the right and simpler choice for great collaboration.

Google was the first to introduce this type of cloud software file sharing with their Google Docs and Google Sheets Applications. Others now exist too.

Prior to this type of software, if you were having a problem with something in a file, you had to a) take a screenshot of it or b) shoot a video of it or c) do a screen share.

We covered Sharing a little in TClub 103. In a supplement to this document we share a little more about this type of sharing and when it might come in really handy.

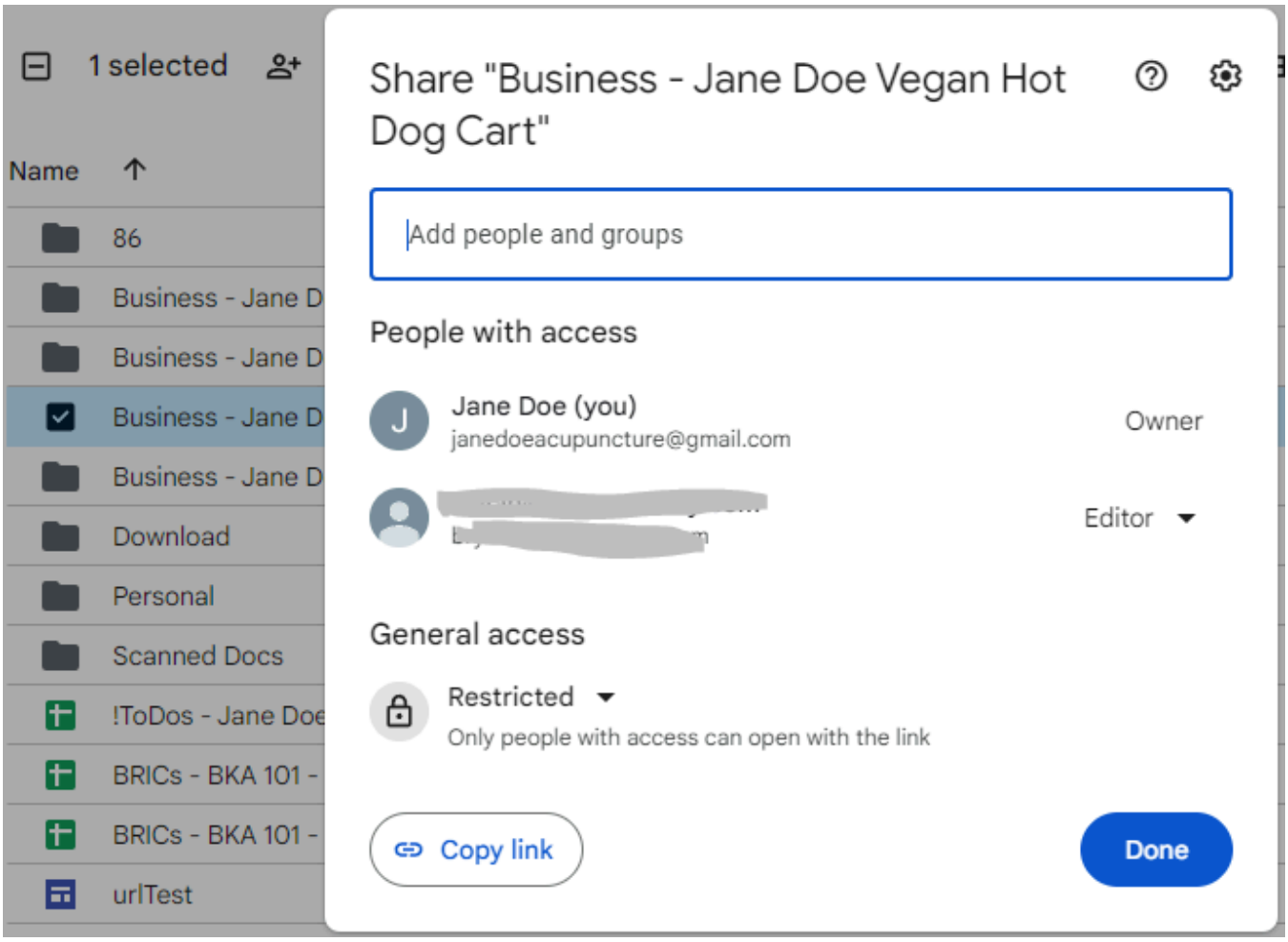


5) Cloud Folder Sharing

Cloud Folder sharing is when you give someone access to a folder (directory) in an online service, and thus give them access to all the files and folders in the directory. Just because you give access doesn't necessarily mean they can download, edit or change files in the folder. That is all setting dependant.

Below is an image of this in Google Drive. That is one of hundreds of services for folder sharing.

Note, if you compare this image with the one in the prior section, from the sharing popup you can't tell if you are sharing a folder or a file.



5) Cloud Account Username and Password Sharing

If you are working with someone you trust implicitly you can share your username and password for Cloud Accounts to facilitate visual sharing.

HOWEVER, the requirement for two step authentication, which used to be an option in most services, is in fact negatively affecting that sharing method and must be taken into account when doing that type of sharing. This is in fact a BIGGER DEAL than most in small business might imagine if they have one key office person or support person they want to share things with. It requires some thought and strategy.

Summary

Learning to communicate quickly with images, videos and screen sharing, file sharing, folder sharing and account sharing is a key to increasing productivity and decreasing time spent communicating about complex matters.

See our sub chapters for more on each of these sharing methods.