ENDING THE SCHEDULING PING PONG GAME

By Jennifer Johnson, CPA

Does this sound familiar? You want to coordinate a meeting with multiple attendees, some of whom are not in your office. After 10 emails with suggested times, you finally find a time that works for all attendees.

This email banter can be eliminated by implementing a simple and free scheduling tool. The benefits of a scheduling tool include improved communication, reduction of non-value adding emails and reduced frustration for all parties involved. In this article, we will compare three options for scheduling tools.

Doodle – Easy Scheduling

Doodle allows you to coordinate available times to meet with multiple participants. It can be accessed via a web browser or a downloaded app. The meeting planner selects all available times for a meeting and shares a link with all the meeting attendees. The link is shared via the planner's email.

Each attendee will open the link, enter their name and select the times that he/she is available. The meeting planner can see all available times for a meeting and select the best option for the participants. The meeting planner can also modify the notice if needed and settings are available to control what an attendee can see or do.

Doodle offers a free version for basic scheduling. With the free version, you do not need to create an account or download any software. The participants also do not need to create any accounts or have any special software other than a web browser. Upgraded versions of the tool are available for a fee.

LettuceMeet

LettuceMeet is a web-based tool that allows the meeting scheduler to select days and times for a possible meeting. Once the days and times are selected, the meeting scheduler will be provided a weblink that can be shared via the scheduler's email to all attendees.

Anyone with the link can add their availability to the calendar and a common meeting time can be selected. Neither the scheduler nor the invited attendees need to create an account or enter an email address.

The scheduler can create an account for free to access additional features of LettuceMeet, such as integration to an Outlook or Google calendar, notifications and tracking of meetings.

There is not a fee for creating an account. At this time, there is not a paid version.

Calendly

Calendly allows other people to schedule meetings with you. To use Calendly, you need to create an account and share your Calendly meeting link with others. You can do this by putting the link on your email signature or a website.

The link allows a person who wants to meet with you to see your available times and schedule time with you.

You can sync your Caldenly account to popular calendars like Google Calendar, iCal, Outlook and Microsoft Office

Exhibit 1 - Comparison of Tools

	Doodle — Doodle - Easy Scheduling	**lettucemeet** — LettuceMeet	**calendly** — Calendly
Description	Use Doodle to find the best time for any event. Suggest a number of times and invite participants to select their preferences.	Use LettuceMeet to coordinate a good time for a meeting. Suggest multiple options and share the options via a weblink with attendees. Attendees will input their choices and a common time can be determined.	Calendly is used to provide an easy way to allow others to schedule time to meet with you. A link can be provided to those who want to meet with you and they can see available meeting times.
Available Platforms	Web browser Apple iOs Android	Web browser	Web browser Apple iPhone
How is the tool accessed?	App or web browser	Web browser	App or Web browser
Do other participants need to have the app or an account to participate?	No	No	No
Do you have to create an account to use it?	No	No	Yes
Ease of use and setup	Simple	Simple	More steps to the setup process
Is there a paid version?	Paid version allows for branding; no ads; more communication	Only free version. You can create an account for added features but there is no fee	Yes, there are paid options.
Website	https://doodle.com	https://lettucemeet.com	https://calendly.com

365. Since your Calendly account is synced with your own calendar, any times that are blocked on your calendar will also be blocked on Calendly.

As a user of Calendly, you need to have an account with Calendly; however, the people who are trying to schedule a meeting with you do not need an account.

The basic service for Calendly is free and allows one connected calendar and event type. There are also multiple paid versions of the service that offer a variety of additional features and integrations.

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