

## Google tests free web spreadsheet

Google has introduced a free web-based spreadsheet, continuing its expansion into territory traditionally dominated by Microsoft. At the moment the spreadsheet is at the beta test stage, so it is being



made available only to a limited audience. But once the internet search leader has smoothed out any possible kinks and enhanced its functionality, it will be widely available.

Google's spreadsheet is not as sophisticated as Excel. It will not create charts or respond to right click by providing a menu of controls, for instance. However, it will enable people to gain access to the same spreadsheet from different computers at different times, so groups of authorised users will be able to collaborate more easily; adding and editing data without the hassle of emailing attachments.

'This latest offering from Google represents another step in the outsourcing revolution,' says Martin Pollins, a chartered accountant and founder of Bizezia ([www.bizezia.com](http://www.bizezia.com)), a provider of online management and marketing tools. 'I expect applications such as word processing, presentation and other software currently dominated by the Microsoft Office bandwagon will also be made available by ASPs,' he adds.

Google recently bought Writely, an online word processing application that also allows users to collaborate online, and launched an online calendar so it seems set on a collision course with Microsoft.