

Gmail celebrates its 20th birthday

4th April 2024



The world's most utilized email provider turned 20 on Monday. Gmail was launched on the 1st of April 2004. At that time, it was revolutionary because it offered a huge amount of storage, and it was free. Some people thought it was a hoax

because it was announced on April Fools' Day. However, it was no joke. Gmail offered an enormous 1 gigabyte of storage for free. Many other providers only provided 15 megabytes. At first, people could only sign up for Gmail after receiving an invitation. It became a "must-have" tool for technology fans. Another reason for Gmail's success is that it searched mails faster than any other email service at the time. It was also better at filtering spam.

Since 2004, Gmail has become the world's biggest email provider. More than 1.7 billion people use it. That's 20 per cent of the world population. Around 45 per cent of email users in the USA use it. Over the years, Google has increased its free storage to 15 gigabytes and has added many new features. One of these is a one-click unsubscribe button to keep unwanted mail away. Another feature is an "undo send" button. This allows users to stop a mail from being sent after clicking "send". The PC Mag website said Gmail is an important part of life today. It wrote: "Gmail is so embedded in so many people's lives that hardly anyone thinks much about it." It is likely people will use it forever.

Sources: theverge.com / pcmag.com / techradar.com

Writing

Email is better than writing letters. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

email / revolutionary / storage / hoax / April Fools' Day / gigabyte / invitation / spam world / population / free / unsubscribe / undo / send button / part of life / forever

True / False

- 1) Gmail was first started in February 2004. T / F
- 2) Gmail gave its users 15 megabytes of free storage. T / F
- 3) At first, you could only join Gmail after getting an invitation. T / F
- 4) Gmail was so successful because it filtered ham well. T / F
- 5) Over 1.5 billion people worldwide use Gmail. T / F
- 6) Over half of people in the USA use Gmail. T / F
- 7) There is a button on Gmail that allows you to unsubscribe to things. T / F
- 8) A PC website said we think about Gmail a lot. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| 1. utilized | a. enthusiasts |
| 2. launched | b. fixed |
| 3. hoax | c. gave |
| 4. provided | d. probable |
| 5. fans | e. started |
| 6. world | f. points |
| 7. features | g. global |
| 8. important | h. used |
| 9. embedded | i. valuable |
| 10. likely | j. joke |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of email?
- b) What is the best email provider?
- c) What do you think of Google?
- d) Is email or letter-writing best?
- e) What April fools' jokes do you like?
- f) How much storage do you need for your email?
- g) How useful is email?
- h) What is a 'must-have' technology tool for you?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. it offered a huge | a. receiving an invitation |
| 2. Some people thought it was a | b. after clicking "send" |
| 3. only sign up for Gmail after | c. use it forever |
| 4. It became a must- | d. amount of storage |
| 5. It was also better at filtering | e. send button |
| 6. a one-click | f. have tool |
| 7. Another feature is an undo | g. many people's lives |
| 8. stop a mail from being sent | h. spam |
| 9. Gmail is so embedded in so | i. unsubscribe button |
| 10. It is likely people will | j. hoax |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What can we use instead of email?
- What new things would you like email to have?
- What do you think of an 'undo send' button?
- Do you ever send mails you wish you hadn't?
- How important is Google in your life?
- Will we be using email forever?
- What questions would you like to ask Gmail bosses?

Spelling

- Gmail was ncueahdl on the 1st of April 2004
- it was orynuotvleair
- it offered a huge amount of gatseor
- people thought it was a aoxh
- after receiving an viintntiao
- better at tifleirgn spam
- the world's biggest email vpoerrdi
- 20 per cent of the world auoltponpi
- a one-click unicssbbeur button
- Another atrefue is an "undo send" button
- mdddebee in so many people's lives
- people will use it efrorve

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. j	4. c	5. a
6. g	7. f	8. i	9. b	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Email

You think Email is the best way to communicate. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): video chat, letters or social media.

Role B – Video Chat

You think video chat is the best way to communicate. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): Email, letters or social media.

Role C – Letters

You think letters are the best way to communicate. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): video chat, Email or social media.

Role D – Social Media

You think social media is the best way to communicate. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): video chat, letters or Email.

Speaking – Communication

Rank these with your partner. Put the best ways to communicate at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------|---------------------|
| • Email | • Social media |
| • Chat | • Instant messaging |
| • Video | • Smart speakers |
| • Blogs | • Text messaging |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	T	4	F	5	T	6	F	7	T	8	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.