USE MICROSOFT'S ONEDRIVE TO SHARE FILES WITH OTHERS

IMPORTANT NOTE: ONEDRIVE'S CLOUD-BASED TECHNOLOGY WILL ONLY WORK WHEN YOU ARE IN YOUR MICROSOFT ACCOUNT!

Computer users have been limited in the way in which they can access files on separate systems. Traditionally, users store their files on a local hard drive (such as the C: drive). To use those files on a different computer, that computer must have a network connection to the user's network drive, or the user must transfer files manually using a removable drive such as a flash drive.

With cloud technology, the user only needs access to the Internet in order to work on files. OneDrive is Microsoft's cloud-based technology that provides access to users' files from any location at any time. The advantage with cloud technologies is that you aren't limited to a removable drive strategy. Storing files in the cloud also provides a more flexible way for users to share files (photos, for example) with other users.

As with most systems, cloud-based systems have some disadvantages. First, you must have an Internet connection to access files. Also, your files may be subject to terms and conditions imposed by the cloud company that gives it rights to read and access your files. Currently, Microsoft OneDrive does not indicate that it has those rights, but you should be aware of that possibility as you decide to store your photos, documents, videos, and other items in the cloud.

Microsoft believes that every user should have access to his or her files anytime and anywhere he or she wants them (with Internet connectivity, of course). In addition, the device you use to access your files should be irrelevant. For example, users should be able to access files using a personal computer, a tablet, a smartphone, or a laptop.

To effectively use the OneDrive app, you must be signed in to your **Microsoft account.** Signing into your computer with a local account will only let you use the OneDrive app to browse your local PC. You won't be able to access your cloud files unless you also log in to **OneDrive.com** (and enter your Microsoft account's username and password.

Locating OneDrive

OneDrive is available on the Windows Start menu. It is also found in the Navigation column (left side) of File Explorer (Windows key + E).

Adding files to OneDrive

One of the tasks that you can perform with OneDrive in File Explorer is to add files to your OneDrive folders. Use the following steps:

1. In File Explorer, navigate to your folders and select a file or a collection of files. Right-click the files and choose Copy.
2. Click the OneDrive folder icon in the left pane of the File Explorer window.
3. Right-click and choose Paste to paste the files into your OneDrive.

Uploading the Files Beyond the Desktop

Once you have copied and pasted your selected files, OneDrive then automatically uploads the files to your OneDrive account online and displays those files in your OneDrive folder on the Internet.

Working in the Cloud

One of the most powerful uses of OneDrive is the capability to share files with others. The following steps show you how:

1. Open the OneDrive folder in File Explorer on your computer to access the file you want to share.
2. Right-click on the target file you want to share.
3. Click *Share a OneDrive Link*. A message appears above the taskbar indicating that a new link to the OneDrive file has been sent to your Windows Clipboard.
4. Open your e-mail application. You will use e-mail to share the new link to other people whom you want to access your shared OneDrive file.
5. Enter the e-mail address(es) of the recipient(s) of the file.
6. Right-click and choose Paste in the body of the e-mail message to paste the shared OneDrive link in the e-mail message.
7. Click the Send button.
8. Upon receipt of the message, the recipient simply clicks the link and has access to your shared file(s). (Note that only those files that you specifically share with another individual are available to him. He does not have access to other files that are on your OneDrive.com account.