

Google software bug shared private online documents

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"We've identified and fixed a [bug](#) where a very small percentage of users shared some of their documents inadvertently," [Google Docs](#) Product Manager Jennifer Mazzon wrote in a message at the firm's website on

Saturday.

"We're sorry for the trouble this has caused. We understand our users' concerns (in fact, we were affected by this bug ourselves) and we're treating this very seriously."

The problem occurred in cases where people had chosen to collaborate on multiple documents and adjusted settings to allow access to others, according to Google.

Collaborators were unintentionally given permission to access documents aside from the ones intended.

"As part of the fix, we used an [automated process](#) to remove collaborators and viewers from the documents that we identified as having been affected," Mazon said.

"We then emailed the document owners to point them to their affected documents in case they need to re-share them."

The slip comes as Google and other Internet firms entice people to rely on applications offered online as services "in the cloud" instead of buying software then installing and maintaining it on their own machines.

While the trend toward cloud services is growing, some still worry about the privacy of data kept online and whether it is shrewd to rely on the Internet for access to information and applications.

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