

Google wooing Microsoft business customers

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A sign is displayed outside of the Google headquarters in 2008 in Mountain View, California. Google on Monday ramped up a campaign to convert businesses worldwide into users of email, calendar, document and other software programs it offers online as services on the Internet.

Google on Monday ramped up a campaign to convert businesses worldwide into users of email, calendar, document and other software programs it offers online as services on the Internet.

"Gone Google" advertising was expanded to Britain, France, Canada, Japan, Australia, Singapore, and other countries.

Ads are being displayed in places such as train stations and airports "to help companies, schools and organizations learn all about the benefits of going Google with our enterprise products."

Google has been enhancing and expanding online [software](#) services as a

trend toward Internet-based cloud computing has gained momentum.

Companies hustling to survive in grim economic conditions have been attracted to cost savings that stem from renting software instead of buying, installing and maintaining it on their own machines.

US software giant Microsoft has responded to the trend with a "software plus services" model that combines its core packaged products with programs hosted online.

Google Apps programs hosted on the Internet giant's computers are used by more than two million businesses in more than 100 countries, according to a blog post by Vivian Leung and Tom Oliveri of the Google Enterprise Team.

"Each day, thousands of companies choose to 'go Google,' that is, switch to Google Apps,' Leung and Oliveri said.

"These companies no longer have to deal with the hassles of managing email servers or rolling out software updates, and their employees now enjoy the convenience of shared documents and calendars, [Gmail](#) and more."

Konica Minolta, Rentokil Initial, and TOTO are among firms that have recently "gone Google," according to Leung and Oliveri.

Early this year, [Microsoft](#) added to its international menu Office Communications Online and Deskless Worker Suite software that handle tasks such as email, calendars, collaboration, and instant messaging.

Microsoft's new Windows 7 operating system to be released on Thursday and Office 2010 business software programs to make their debut next year have reportedly been crafted with cloud computing in mind.

IBM this month announced a basic "[cloud computing](#)" email service at a price that undercuts a plusher offering by Google.

IBM unabashedly pitched its new LotusLive iNotes as an alternative to [email](#) service [Google](#) has been promoting as part of a campaign to win businesses over to using applications hosted as services on the Internet.

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