

Microsoft releases OneNote for Macs, makes it free

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Microsoft Corp. on Monday released a version of its OneNote note-taking software for Macs and added new features and a free tier for all of the software's users in moves clearly targeted at up-and-coming productivity software rival Evernote.

The moves offer more consumers a taste of its Office 365 suite of [software](#), which normally costs \$99 a year. The free version of OneNote keeps some functions that give it an edge over the free tier of Evernote, including offline access to notes and the ability for multiple people to work on the same note simultaneously.

New Microsoft users also get 7 gigabytes of free online storage through

its OneDrive cloud storage service. Free Evernote users are limited to uploading 60 megabytes of data per month. Evernote's premium users, who pay \$45 a year, can upload 1 GB of data per month.

Some [new features](#) play catch-up to what Evernote offered already, including a OneNote Clipper button for Web browsers that saves Web pages as notes, and a universal email address me@onenote.com that gives users a single destination to email documents to themselves for saving as notes. Evernote has its own clipper and an individualized [email address](#) for sending notes to oneself.

People who purchase a full Office 365 Home Premium subscription—which includes the Outlook email program, Excel spreadsheet software and PowerPoint presentation tool—will be able to use OneNote functions that are better integrated with other Office programs and get 20 GB of [cloud storage](#). Business users who pay to subscribe will have access to change history and tools that protect sensitive information.

The moves are part of a push by Microsoft to open up the company to working with other software platforms beyond Windows and to emphasize its cloud offerings. While the changes were in place before new CEO Satya Nadella took over in February, he fully supported the moves, said David Rasmussen, group program manager for OneNote.

"We want to actually remove all barriers for people to adopt this," Rasmussen said.

Microsoft didn't completely open up its latest software developments to other platforms, however.

One new function, which it calls Office Lens, allows users to take pictures of documents or whiteboards. The program squares up and

cleans up the image before saving it as a note, making words recognizable and searchable through character recognition software. The feature comes as a free app only available for Windows Phone.

The premium tier of Evernote has a similar feature that allows users to take photos of business cards. The app automatically saves the information as a contact entry.

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