

Which Tool for Which Job

A one-page decision guide. Three questions, three tools, and what each one costs.

Standardizing does not mean everyone uses one app.

It means every job has one obvious tool and nobody has to guess. Ask one question about the work in front of you. The answer picks the tool.

1. Is the work sitting in files on your computer?

Spreadsheets, PDFs, a folder of old emails, a pile of documents on your hard drive or in your Drive folder.

USE: CLAUDE COWORK

You point it at a folder. It reads what is there and puts finished files back. No pasting, no copying out.

GOOD FOR

- Writing an SOP from past examples
- Turning a POS or accounting export into a margin report
- Cleaning up a document set
- Building a client packet from files you already have

► STARTER PROMPT · COWORK

Read every file in this folder. These are our past client onboarding emails and forms. Write one standard onboarding SOP that covers what we actually do, in the order we do it. Flag anywhere the files disagree with each other instead of guessing which one is right.

Point it at the folder first, then paste this.

WHAT IT COSTS

Included with any paid Claude plan. Starts around **\$20 per person per month**. Not available on the free tier.

2. Is the work spread across your apps and the web?

The information lives in six different logins. Or the job needs to happen every Monday whether anyone remembers or not.

USE: CHATGPT WORK

You give it a goal in plain language. It plans the steps, pulls what it needs from your connected accounts and the web, and hands back a finished file. It can run on a schedule.

GOOD FOR

- Market and competitor research
- Weekly reports that pull from more than one source
- Recurring jobs somebody currently does by hand every Monday morning

► STARTER PROMPT · CHATGPT WORK

Every Monday at 7 AM, pull the policies renewing in the next 30 days.

Cross-check which of those clients we have not contacted in 60 days.

Give me one spreadsheet sorted by renewal date, and draft a short outreach email for each client we have not contacted. Do not send anything.

Set this as a scheduled task, not a one-time chat.

WHAT IT COSTS

Available on every plan, including free. The Business plan adds a shared workspace, an admin console, and a commitment not to train on your data. Per-seat price varies. Check it before you buy.

3. Is the answer buried in documents nobody reads?

Policies, manuals, contracts, warranty terms, safety procedures. Everything the business knows that lives in a file nobody opens.

USE: GEMINI IN WORKSPACE, OR NOTEBOOKLM

Two tools, one job, split by how you work.

- **Gemini** works inside the document you already have open. It helps you finish what you are writing, in Gmail, Docs, Sheets, or Slides.

- **NotebookLM** works across a fixed pile of documents and gives you something new out the other end: an answer with a citation, a briefing, an onboarding guide, an audio summary.

GOOD FOR

- New-hire onboarding built from documents you already wrote
- Answering "what does our policy say about this" without reading forty pages
- Pulling numbers out of a long email thread

► STARTER PROMPT · NOTEBOOKLM

Using only the documents I loaded, write a new-hire briefing that answers the questions a first-week employee would ask about lead times, tolerances, warranty, and safety. Cite the source document for every claim. If the documents do not answer something, say so instead of filling the gap.

The citations are the point. Check two of them before you trust the rest.

WHAT IT COSTS

Gemini is folded into paid Google Workspace plans. Business Standard is the floor for Gemini across Docs, Sheets, Slides, and Gmail, around **\$14 per user per month** on annual billing.

NotebookLM has a real free tier. NotebookLM Plus comes with Workspace.

What if the answer is all three?

For most small businesses it is. Do not try to do all three.

Pick the one with the loudest complaint attached to it. That is the one your team will help you with instead of resisting.

The complaint I hear most often

The tool that fits it

One-page summary

THE WORK IS...	TOOL	WHAT IT HANDS YOU	STARTING COST
In files on your computer	Claude Cowork	Finished files back in your folder	~\$20/user/mo, paid plans only
Across your apps and the web, or on a repeat	ChatGPT Work	Sheets, decks, reports, on demand or on a schedule	Free tier works; Business adds visibility
Buried in documents nobody reads	Gemini / NotebookLM	Answers with citations, briefings, onboarding material	~\$14/user/mo via Workspace; NotebookLM free tier is real

Prices verified _____. These move. Check before you buy.