Digital Tip in Action: Using Collaborative Software and Applications

[00:00] When students, researchers, and professionals work on a collaborative project, communication is important. Here, we briefly explain the functionality of three different categories of collaborative software and applications, and suggest some popular options. Chat applications allow two or more users to communicate in real-time using short text messages, audio, video, or even file attachments. Although the informal nature of this quick communication

[00:30] may be inappropriate for interacting with some clients and customers, it's a great way to communicate with others inside your organization. As always, it's important to select the best medium for your message. A quick notification might be perfect for a chat. If a longer conversation is needed, you might use chat to see if a colleague is available for a conversation in person.

[01:00] Here are some popular chat applications. Consider the text, audio, or video functionality that's most useful to you. Also research which devices are compatible with those used by your team. If you find whiteboards or sketchpads helpful in face-to-face meetings, you may want to experiment with online whiteboard applications, which allow multiple users to write, doodle, and draw, usually while simultaneously chatting. These applications can be especially helpful for creating

[01:30] diagrams, developing flowcharts, or mocking up Web site wireframes. Here are a few popular options. If you are responsible for managing a collaborative team's ongoing work, you may benefit from using project management software, which allows you to assign tasks to specific individuals, set and monitor deadlines, exchange files, track budgets, and maintain a record of your team's work. Ask your organization's IT department

[02:00] if your company already has a license to a commercial application or whether particular applications will work best with your servers. In the meantime, here are some popular options to consider. Remember: When selecting collaborative software and applications, research possible options and then select the program that best fits the needs of you, your team, and your organization.