The Innovative Instructor

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Best Practice Forum

To the "Cloud" and Back Again
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What it is

The term 'cloud' refers to storing files on a remote server. Services such as Dropbox, Google Drive, and OneDrive provide cloud storage that keeps your files secure and backed up, ensuring that they are available when you need them. Access to your files will require an internet connection on your computer or mobile device. Such services typically offer a small amount of storage for free with fees charged for upgrading the services. Fortunately for Hopkins faculty, students, and staff, IT@JH offers a cloud storage service called JHBox with at least 25 gigabytes of storage per user at no cost.
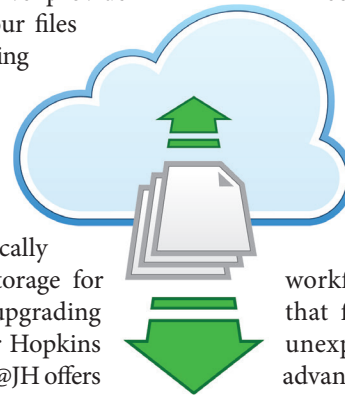
Why does it matter

Most people have encountered the issue of having a file that is too large to email to a colleague. Some may have had a portable drive fail or a corrupt file wreak havoc with a presentation at a conference. These problems can be solved by 'using the cloud' for file storage. Using a file sharing/cloud service like JHBox reduces workflow delays and guarantees that files are available when the unexpected happens. JHBox has advantages over non-JHU services because of its integration with the JHED authentication system.

How to do it

Here is a set of instructions for uploading your files and sharing them in JHBox.

Accessing JHBox

JHBox can be found in the JHU portal menu (my.jh.edu) or accessed directly from https://jh.app.box.com. When using the direct link, be sure that you are placing your Hopkins credentials in the JH authentication screen only. Before using JHBox, you must agree to the Terms of Service.

JHBox has a preview feature that will display images, documents, and even stream media such as videos and audio.

Uploading files

All of your files are found in the *Files* tab at the top of the page.
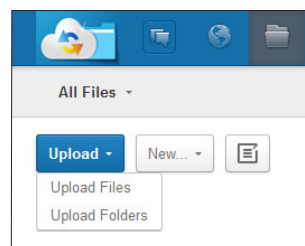
From the *Files* tab click the Upload button, found at the top left of the screen, to upload files to JHBox. The button presents two options for uploading files - *Upload Files* and *Upload Folders*. When choosing the *Upload Files* option, your computer's file browser will appear allowing you to select multiple files, but not folders, by holding down the *Shift* key.

The option for uploading folders requires the use of JHBox's Java file upload application. A popup window will appear with the Java uploader. Your browser's Java plugin may not be enabled, so you may have to click on the plugin to enable it. A dialog box will appear asking if you would like to run the Java application. Clicking *Run* or *Allow* will start the Java uploader. You can drag and drop folders or click *Add Files* to use the Java file browser. The advantage to uploading folders would be to maintain an existing folder structure without having to create folders as you upload.

If the process of using the file browser seems too tedious, you can drag and drop files into JHBox's file listing window. You can even navigate to a folder in your JHBox to drag and drop files directly into that location. This feature only works for files and any selected folders dropped into the window will be omitted.

Deleting files and folders in JHBox moves the content to the *Trash* folder. Deleted content will remain there for 3 months before it is permanently deleted.

Sharing

You can share individual files or entire folders, allowing anyone who has the link to view the content. For files uploaded to the top-most folder, named *All Files*, the files are automatically private unless individually shared. Private in this case means that only you can view the content. Content in JHBox cannot be found by search engines such as Google or Bing. It is important to know that when sharing a folder, all of the files contained within that folder will be shared as well. This also includes files uploaded to a previously shared folder.

To change the sharing settings for files and folders, click on the *Share* link on the item in the file listing. A popup will appear with a URL link for sharing and an access setting selector with the following 4 options:
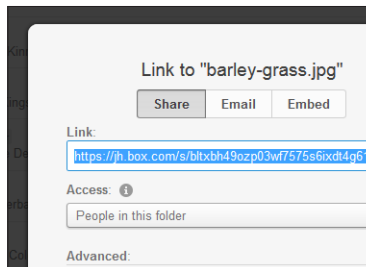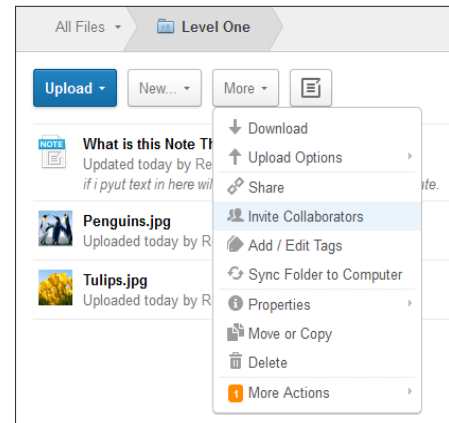
- **Anyone with the link:** This will be defaulted to "People in this folder" because of JHU's sensitive information policy.
- **People in your company:** All Hopkins affiliates who have a JHED-ID. These users will be prompted for their JHED credentials when accessing content. This is the default permission setting when choosing to share the content.
- **People in this folder:** Individuals you selected to have access or permissions in this folder. See below for collaboration/folder settings. This is the highest restriction level when sharing. Users may need a Box account to access.
- **Remove link**: If you no longer want to have a link or folder shared, simply remove the link which will make it private again. If you re-share the item, a new link will be generated.

Also in the row that appears when sharing content is an *Advanced Settings* button. This will bring up an options box that allows you to set a custom link, set link expirations, disable the download button for content, and to create a direct link to the resource for embedding.

Collaborating

JHBox has more elaborate settings for collaboration in folders. You can set up a list of collaborators to work on or view files within a folder by clicking the *More* button and choosing *Invite Collaborators*. An options box will appear with a field for adding email addresses, setting permissions such as Editor, Viewer, Uploader, etc., and setting a welcome message.

Additional Resources
- IT@JHU info pages on JHBox:
  http://www.it.johnshopkins.edu/services/collaboration_tools/jhbox

Author's Background
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A member of the Center for Educational Resources, Reid provides training on a variety of programs, aids in educational resources development, and shares expertise on information and graphic design for faculty at the Homewood campus. He holds a BFA in Illustration and a MA in Digital Arts from Maryland Institute College of Art.

Creating folders makes it easier to manage permissions and organize content. The option for creating a new folder is found in the *New* button in the top left of the window. There are additional folder settings found in the *More* button, which include syncing with your computer, setting notifications, and additional security settings.

Other thoughts

JHBox has many more features worth exploring. In the *New* menu at the top of the screen, you can create notes, bookmarks to other webpages, and even documents such as Google Docs/Spreadsheets or Word/Excel files, each of which can be private or shared among colleagues. Comments and tasks can be set for files as well, allowing for greater communication with your collaborators. File versioning is on automatically and there is a way to review usage statistics on your files and folders so that you know who saw your content and how frequently.

JHBox also has free supplemental programs, for access and editing features. For mobile access, JHBox has apps for iOS and Android. For improved workflows, the desktop application called Box Sync allows you to easily manage files on your computer, and the application Box Edit allows you to work on files in the browser and save edits directly to JHbox.

JHBox has replaced JShare as Hopkins file sharing system. While JHBox has many convenient features, it will not be able to host webpages. For more information on other options for hosting webpages, please visit:

http://www.it.johnshopkins.edu
/services/webservices