

# Using iPads with a Student-Run Firm to Enhance Learning and Client Work

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## Rationale

Students in WTAMU's student-run public relations firm, 1910 PR, were offered an iPad Pro with an attached keyboard and Apple Pencil for one month this spring as part of a collaboration between the university CIO and the Dean of the Sybil B. Harrington College of Fine Arts and Humanities. Their use of the iPads was part of a test before expanding the initiative across other classes in the fall. Having the latest iPad Pro in their hands gave students an opportunity to learn the best uses for a professional tool as they completed coursework and client work, such as content creation, social media management, media relations, and event planning.

## Student Learning Goals

1. Students will apply what they learn from an iPad Pro/Apple training course.
2. Students will devise how to use an iPad Pro efficiently and effectively for client work.
3. Students will evaluate which apps help them the most with client work.

## Connection to PR Theory or Practice

A continuing interest among researchers includes the effectiveness of hands-on, real-world public relations education including the work students do in student-run firms (e.g., Swanson, 2011). Although there is increasing pedagogical literature related to industry software tools and online platforms (e.g., Fraustino, Briones, & Janoske, 2015), tablet usage has not been examined much outside of K-12 (e.g., "iPad in Education"), despite being espoused by the PR industry since the iPad's inception (Mendolera, 2011). If "the iPad revolutionized the industry" (Mendolera, 2011, para. 1), it is ideal for PR students to have the chance to use it for client work.

## Evidence of Student Learning Outcomes

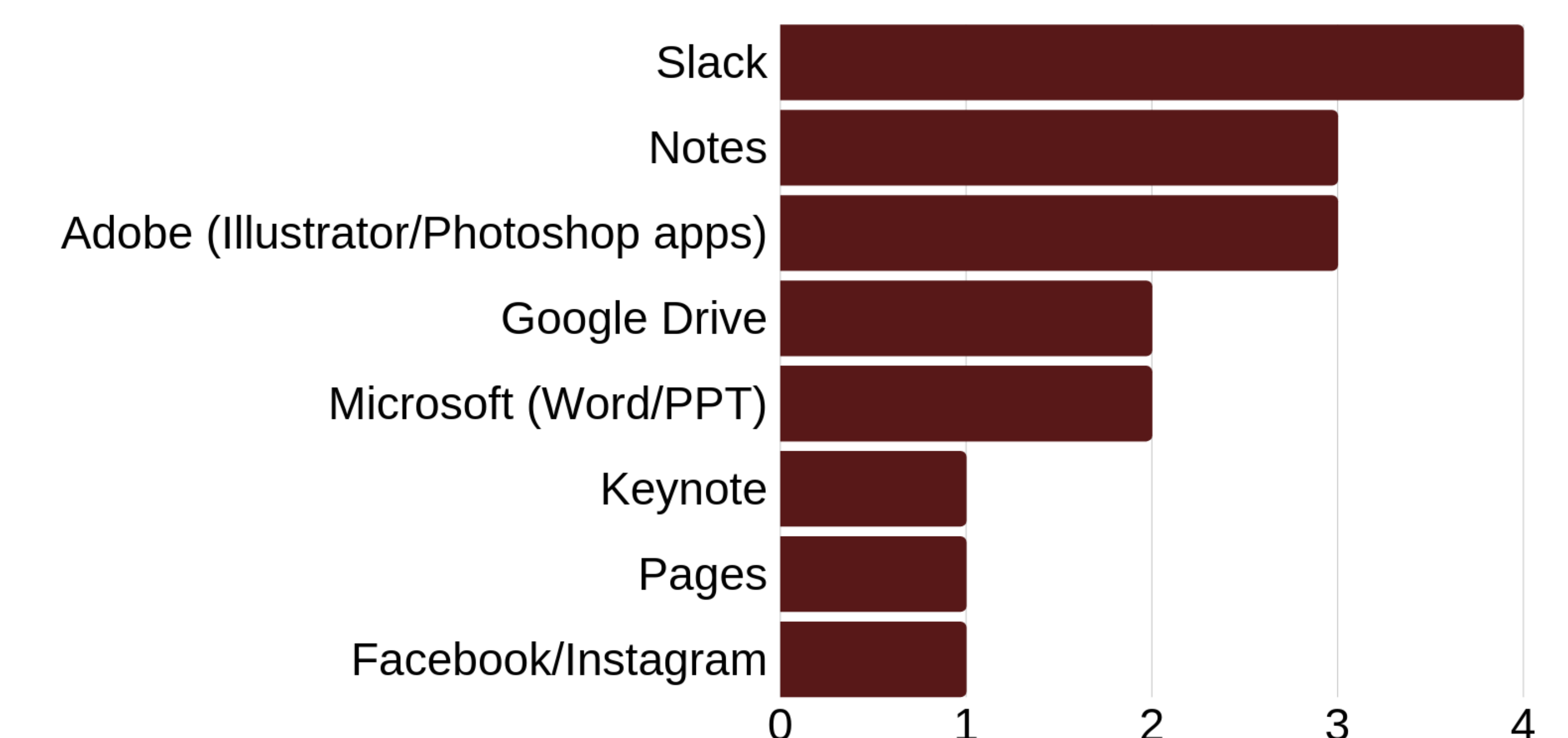
Students in the pilot group attended a course taught by an Apple trainer and then used the tablets for a month of client work. On the last day of class, a Qualtrics survey regarding iPad usage was given. Ten of the 12 students rated the iPad Pro as extremely helpful for classwork, and all agreed the iPad would be useful for work with 1910 PR next semester. Students appreciated "learning all of the functions I did not know an iPad could do." Slack, Notes and Adobe programs were among the most used apps. One student said, "I used the voice memo app for interviews and used the camera to scan documents. It really opened up new ways of getting work done." Students concluded that Adobe, Slack and Google Drive would be the most useful apps for future PR firm students. Eleven of the 12 students were satisfied or very satisfied with the iPad initiative, and all of the students recommended WT continue the iPad Pro program.

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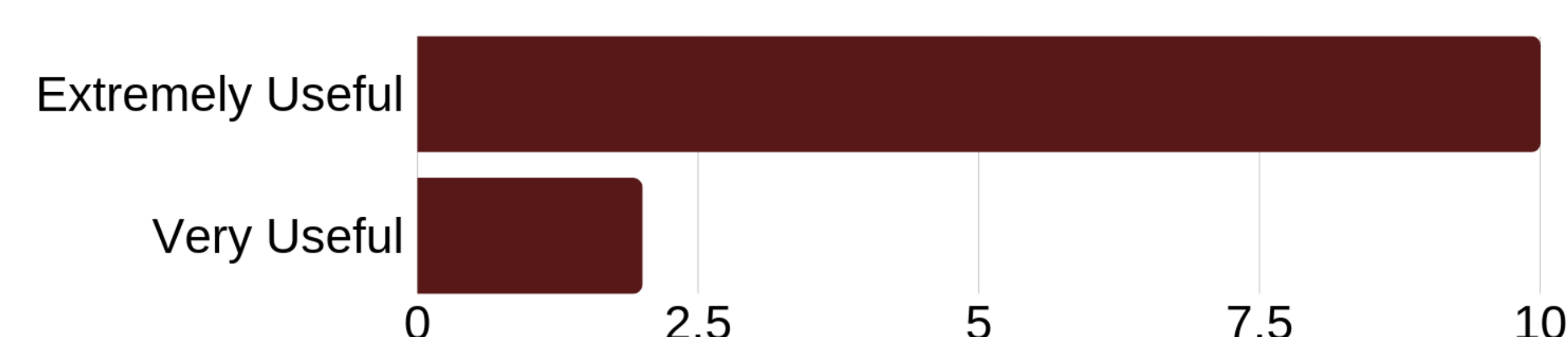
"Note taking during client meetings, PDF scanning capabilities for signing contracts"



## What app did you use the most on the iPad Pro?



## How useful was using an iPad Pro for classwork?



## References

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