Google is killing Google Cloud Print

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It’s almost December, but Google’s 2019 product bloodbath isn’t done yet! The latest product to receive a death sentence this year is Google Cloud Print, an excellent printer-to-cloud bridge service that launched in beta in 2010. According to a new Google support page and emails sent out to GSuite Admins, Cloud Print will die December 31, 2020, at which point it will no longer be supported, and “devices across all operating systems will no longer be able to print using Google Cloud Print.”

Google kills product

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Cloud Print is—well, *was*—pretty cool. Printers are some of the dumbest, most archaic “tech” devices on Earth, but Cloud Print was the missing link, allowing your dumb printer to work with more modern devices. You could print from Chrome and Chrome OS, or print from a phone, or even print remotely over the Internet. The idea was that the Cloud Print server was built into every copy of the Chrome browser, and your printer probably connected to a computer running Chrome at some point, either over a local network or USB cable. Once your printer

hit a computer running Chrome and you registered it to your Google account, Google took care of the rest. The printer was accessible from pretty much anywhere via your Google account, as long as the local computer was turned on. Chrome OS and Chrome on the desktop would automatically list Cloud Print printers alongside your local ones. Android supported cloud print throughout the operating system, and on iOS, Cloud Print was built into Gmail, Chrome, and the whole Google Docs suite.

Cloud Print was a huge success, as far as printing services go, and it even ended up being *built-in* to traditional printers. Google has a list of hundreds of cloud-ready printer models that connect directly to Google's service, no intermediate computer needed. So much for that.

In the support page detailing Cloud Print's demise, Google justifies the move, saying, "Google has improved the native printing experience for Chrome OS, and will continue adding features to native printing." Cloud Print *was* used to print from Chrome OS, but that doesn't help people who want to print from Android or print remotely. Cloud Print was so easy that it was nice even when native support was an option. Sure, you *could* go through the whole hassle of installing hundreds of megabytes of printer bloatware and out-of-ink notifications that will run 24/7 in the background, or you could just print to the Cloud Print printer, which was already set up when you signed in to Chrome. Why bother with crappy printer software?

Cloud Print has a year to live, then it will be collating documents in heaven. Google says, "We recommend that over the next year, you identify an alternative solution and execute a migration strategy." Google's been great at executing things lately.

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