Microsoft Office now available on all Chromebooks

Microsoft has been testing out its Office apps on Chromebooks for the past year, but they've been mainly limited to Google's latest PixelBook device. It now appears that testing has concluded, and a number of Chromebooks are now reliably seeing the Office apps in the Google Play Store for Chromebooks. Chrome Unboxed reports that the apps are showing up on Samsung's Chromebook Pro, Acer's Chromebook 15, and Acer's C771.

The apps are Android versions of Office which include the same features you'd find on an Android tablet running Office. Devices like Asus' Chromebook Flip (with a 10.1-inch display) will get free access to Office on Chrome OS, but larger devices will need a subscription. Microsoft has a rule across Windows, iOS, and Android hardware that means devices larger than 10.1 inches need an Office 365 subscription to unlock the ability to create, edit, or print documents.

It's a policy that could boost Office 365 subscriptions, but given the majority of Chromebooks are used in classrooms then the schools probably already have an Office 365 subscription or are using Google's own G Suite. Chromebooks have been rising in popularity, though. Google's devices helped the PC market grow for the first time in five years earlier this year, and outsold Macs for the first time in the US last year. Microsoft is trying to counter Chromebooks with its own Windows 10 S operating system and cheaper laptops aimed at schools.