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## APP REINVENTS SPREADSHEETS FOR THE SMARTPHONE ERA

 WORK & LIFESTYLE

**Airtable is a new organisational tool designed for simplicity and everyday functionality.**

Spreadsheets have become the solution for a vast array of problems. Backing up contacts, working out rent and deciding when the dog needs walking are all tasks assigned to Excel or its equivalents. But more often than not spreadsheets can prove an infuriatingly complex way of moving and arranging data. Already we've seen companies such as [Numerics](#) shifting business functions away from Excel, and now California-based startup [Airtable](#) is aiming to revolutionize the spreadsheet interface for the everyman.

The company is bringing the sort of intuitive functionality associated with mobile apps into the world of databases. The team have designed an attractive, straightforward app that is accessible both on mobile and on the web. Beneath the sleek design lies a powerful relational database — a series of tables linked by key fields. This means that users can filter and order a vast range of information in a dynamic way, without needing all of the data in front of them at once.

This dynamism is a departure from conventional spreadsheet tools such as Excel which, as Airtable founder Howie Liu points out, were originally set up exclusively for number crunching and financial analysis, rather than creating homework timetables and shopping lists.

Airtable is built with a wide range of functions in mind. It's designed so that users can create their own fields and incorporate images and video from integrated services such as Dropbox, Evernote and Google Drive. The app's potential as a tool for cooperation goes even further, with colleagues able to @mention each other in relevant notes, and to edit in real time as a team, with everyone's input tracked.

Airtable's aim is to reimagine the spreadsheet — Are there other everyday tools out there that could benefit from an app-friendly makeover?

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Email: [questions@airtable.com](mailto:questions@airtable.com)

Website: [www.airtable.com](http://www.airtable.com)