



Microsoft Teams



Ebook: Microsoft Teams

How are workplaces improving productivity with Teams?

the I.T. team[™]
Maintaining the health of your I.T. system

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Introduction

These days, workforces have more choice of apps for communicating and file sharing than ever before. But the flexibility of options can often create inefficiencies and security issues due to multiple storage areas and devices, mixed messaging platforms and fragmented conversations.

As workplaces become more team-orientated, and with remote colleagues, customers and third parties, many organisations are seeing the need for a central hub where teams can collaborate, meet, store and share information all in one place.

The aim of this Ebook is to help you decide if Microsoft Teams is right for your organisation. Readers will get the following takeaways:

- Insight into Microsoft Teams and what it can do.
- Overview of some of the key features and benefits.
- Examples of how staff are using Teams and the efficiencies gains they're realising.
- Understand how adopting Teams into your organisation enables an evolution of productivity improvements.



Trends in the workplace

Today, in 2020, millennials now account for more than half the workforce, and common trends are affecting the culture of work and employee's expectations on what a modern work environment provides.

Workers are motivated towards more open collaborative workspaces, with a greater sense of purpose and a deeper connection to their company's mission.

People want to be able to interact and work with one another with ease, and the option to work remotely, anywhere, at any time. To do this they need the tools and digital workspaces to communicate, access their data, and stay productive.

Employer expectations are also changing, with less focus on routine tasks and more on creativity and strategy. Most companies want to embrace these workplace trends and to use technology to empower their employees to do their best work. However, security risks have also changed dramatically.

Modern threats are complex, use advanced social engineering, and target everyone in an organisation. With the pressure for open flow of information to drive productivity and teamwork, protecting your estate is as critical as ever.



- Sense of purpose
- Harnessing ingenuity
- Increased transparency
- Multi-generational teamwork
- Expertise without boundaries

Workers are collaborating more

Research has shown there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of employee collaboration.

Businesses are becoming increasingly global and cross-functional, silos are breaking down, connectivity is increasing, and teamwork is being seen as a major contributor to organisational success.

The changes in workplace collaboration and operation are driving an appetite for new tools that enable organisations to address the new scenarios.

- Staff are on two to three times as many teams as they were five years ago, making a transition from personal productivity to group productivity.
- Employees are spending twice as much time in collaborative meetings, phone calls and answering emails, which is taking up 80% or more of their working day.

- Teams now make up a mix of employees and external vendors. In the US, 40% of the workforce is now a 'contingent worker' or independent contractor.
- Many teams have remote members who either work from home, or are on the road, or are located off-site.
- For the first time, four generations are working alongside each other and have different expectations about the tools they use to communicate and collaborate.



Overview of Microsoft Teams



Fully integrated with Office 365, Microsoft Teams is the ultimate teamwork and communications tool for collaborating at work. It is designed to help teams manage chat, meetings, file sharing, and team discussions more efficiently.

Fundamentally, Teams provides a central hub of communication where everything you need to work on a project can be organised effectively and quickly. Staff can incorporate all the apps they already use into one interface, and they can collaborate on team projects in a format that everyone's familiar with.

Teams has all the features and more of standalone chat solutions such as Slack, Skype for Business and Trello, but unlike them it stores everything all in one place. This means everyone can easily communicate, find and share what they need, when they need it, anywhere, and on any device.

"Microsoft Teams earns points for being highly customisable, supporting a wide range of apps and services for integration, and hitting all the major features notes one expects to see in a business chat app." – Editor's Choice, PC Magazine

Some of the highlights of Teams include:

- Integrated with Office 365 and SharePoint
- Video and voice conferencing
- Seamless internal and external collaboration
- Outstanding security
- Works across multiple devices
- Meeting and scheduling tools
- Central data storage and document sharing
- Real-time team chat history across devices
- Conversation and contact search
- Virtual assistant bots for smart conversations



Microsoft Teams - the hub for teamwork

Key features

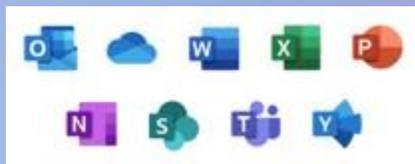
- Integration with Office 365

One of the strongest selling points of Teams is its native integration with the Microsoft Office 365 platform.

With easy and direct access to files in SharePoint, OneDrive and familiar Microsoft apps such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, teammates can communicate, access and share files, manage calendars, and collaborate on projects all in one place.

Having everything stored in one place and not across multiple apps and devices, increases efficiency through improved organisation, transparency, reliability and security.

As Teams is often included in Office 365 licenses, there's no need pay for competing standalone apps.



Key features

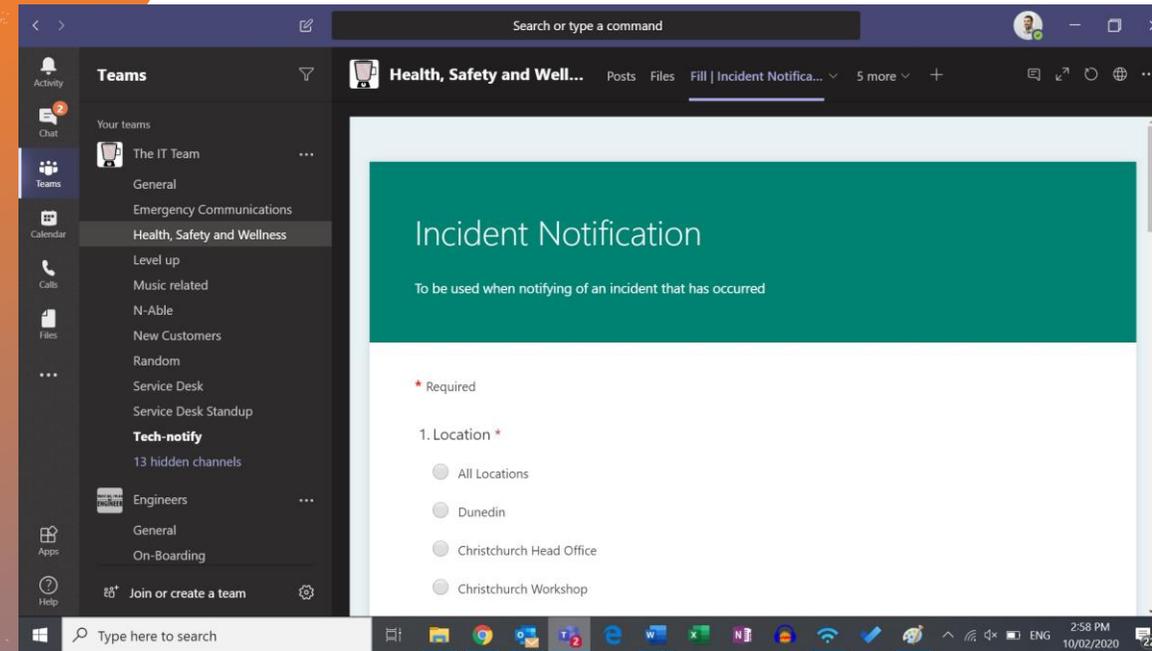
- Team collaboration

Microsoft Teams allows greater transparency and security of communications, while also providing the ability to control and manage team interactions.

Teams is the primary interactive space for conversation and collaboration. The navigation bar within the interface includes options for Activity (where all relevant user notifications are found), Chat, Calls, Files, as well as the option to open your Outlook calendar and other installed apps.

Channels can be dedicated to certain topics, making it easier to keep and track messaging on subjects and resolve problems faster without distraction. For example, you might have a channel dedicated to a project or a wider topic like health and safety. Users can belong to one or many channels that are relevant to them.

Channels are where posts and replies are threaded. Users can share links and files in their comments and the @mention button can be used to invite people to the conversation. The result is a clear, well-structured and secure interface with more features than any standalone solution.





Key features

- Video and voice conferencing

Microsoft Teams is also an advanced voice and video conferencing solution. It allows you to replace both traditional VOIP and conference room systems, plus you can set it up to be able to connect with anyone through PSTN phone systems, calling plans, or direct routing.

Staff can easily to connect and collaborate with colleagues and customers around the world using voice or video from the desktop browser, mobile, or meeting room device.

They can also share content, use the shared digital whiteboard, take meeting notes and chat, all in real-time.

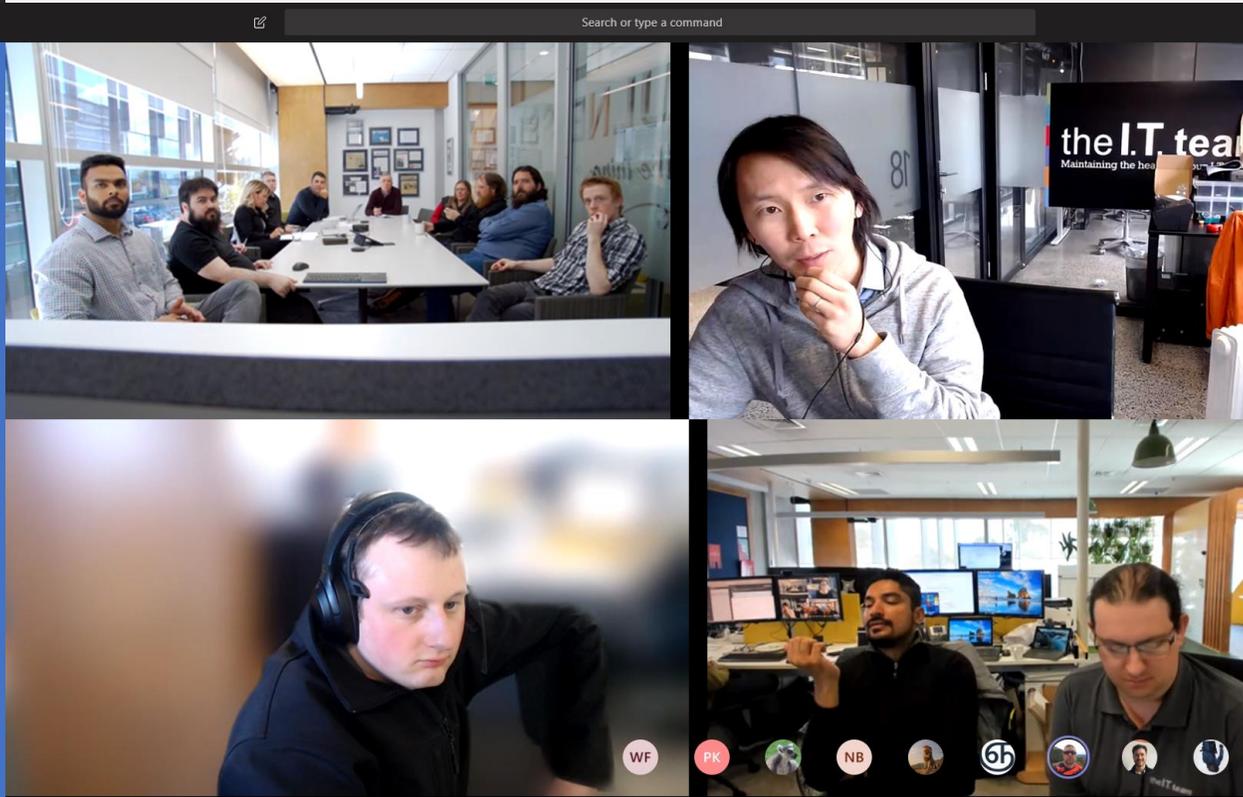
Meetings are simple to record and are stored automatically in Microsoft stream for playback or sharing, and you can also host large-scale live or on demand events.

Teams even includes advanced call features such as full-featured dialling, call history, hold/resume, transfer, call forwarding, cloud voicemail, improved delegation on busy, group call pickup, and more.

“You can make one-on-one calls or group calls with audio only or video. Anyone in your Microsoft Teams account can click your name, click the video icon, and call you. If you don't answer, the caller can leave a voicemail-like message.”

For scheduling calls, Teams has some nice tools and integrations with Outlook not found in most other team chat apps. ... With the appropriate permissions, you can view someone's Outlook calendar to find a good time for a video meeting. One call can host up to 250 participants.”

- Editor's Choice, PC Magazine



Efficiency and productivity gains

Forrester Research found that 3.2 hours in time per user per week is saved through improved collaboration, information sharing and more efficient meetings.

Here at The I.T. Team, we've first-hand experience of the efficiency gains and productivity improvements that Teams can help a business to realise.

Also, as Teams is continually evolving with innovative and useful features, we're constantly finding new and better ways of working together and sharing ideas.

Teams is an integrated tool within Office 365 and you probably already have a Teams license, so it's worth taking a closer look at what it can do.

For a business of any size, Teams is a compelling proposition.

Figuratively speaking, by Forrester's calculations, if a 20-person team works 45 hours a week and each person earns \$35 per hour, those 3.2 saved hours per user per week would amount to a whopping \$100,800 savings in just one year.

- Modern collaboration & effective teamwork
- Employee empowerment & engagement
- Business transformation





Why change to Teams?

It won't happen overnight, but when your organisation commits to using Teams, productivity and efficiency gains will become increasingly apparent.

You can adopt Teams incrementally in several ways, and we are confident you will notice improvements with each of those increments.

Since its launch, Microsoft has integrated an extensive range of features and tools with Teams, both in-house with their Office 365 integrations, and through hundreds of select partners, including Trello, MailChimp, SurveyMonkey, Evernote, Asana, and lots more.

Microsoft continues to innovate and add disruptive new features to Teams and, as a result, we believe this tool will be a gamechanger for small to medium enterprises.

Teams is now the fastest growing app in the history of Microsoft, and we expect to see further evolution of this flagship tool.

What users say about Teams

Video Calling

“Previously, our staff would communicate by text messages or WhatsApp. **Now that we use Teams, we can see a full record of all communications.** Our business communication stays secure within our organisation and not split across multiple, random and/or unsecured apps and devices.” – *Joe*

“Video calling and content sharing are the features I like best about Teams. **We’ve dramatically increased our internal and customer video calls in the last year.** Call quality is great and our customers have no issues with using video. **We’re also saving a huge amount of time starting and concluding meetings, to the point that our one hour meetings are now typically taking just 30 minutes.** With Teams Meetings there’s less small talk, or having to wait for people to get their coffees first. We record meetings in case anyone needs to refer back to them.” – *Sue*

“**If I’m travelling, we no longer have to move meetings to a different day as I can join the meeting on my mobile device; it’s almost seamless.** Staff are far more connected now with Teams, whether they are working from home, on the road, or are at a customer site. Collaboration is so easy - it’s as if they were in the office. Microsoft Teams has also proved more effective than email and other tools such as Yammer for organisation-wide announcements.” – *Connon*

File Sharing

“**For project management the tab feature is really useful.** Within chat, it allows you to pin important links to files and spreadsheets to track progress, as well as links to external websites for access to multiple sources.” - *Nick*

“There are many things I like about Teams. **You can share large files quickly without the hassle of upload or download interruptions,** and it lets you know if the file already exists. You can switch between features seamlessly and quickly to complete our stock movement and expense forms, or check and join meetings in the inbuilt calendar function all within the Teams app. **And the quality and reliability of video calls is way better than anything I’ve used previously.**” - *Gupreet*



What users say about Teams

Office 365 Integration

“We used to waste a lot of time setting up and initiating all the different technologies for our internal team collaborations for video calls and meetings, as everything was fragmented into multiple applications. **Microsoft Teams has effectively combined all the tools we use into one**, with the added bonus of integrating our SharePoint sites and all other Microsoft platform features as well. **It is the centre of all workflows and a big time-saver for all of us.**” - *Gnana*

“I like really like the seamless integration between Teams mobile and desktop apps, as it allows me to work from anywhere. Previously, I had to use the Viber desktop and mobile apps to maintain communications with our field technicians, due to the poor desktop/mobile integration with Skype for Business system. **Microsoft Teams has evolved into a collaboration hub and the core application for internal and external communications.**” - *Egor*

Remote Working

“I really like how, in Teams, I can easily message someone and then jump into a phone or video call with desktop sharing, file transfers, and so on. **Working remotely, communicating and sharing documents with colleagues in the head office is seamless.**” - *Andrew*



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Contact us

To learn how Microsoft Teams can make a difference in your organisation, contact our sales team for a free demonstration.

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