# Breakthrough teamwork tools

4 tips to identify what works for you

# Introduction

You've seen the impact high-performing teams can have in business. But what if they could achieve even more? What if they had the space to be more creative, to share ideas instantly and easily across geographies and generations while staying in sync with each other?

In a world where collaboration is how work gets done, teams need work spaces and tools they're comfortable using. And it's up to business leaders to make it **easy** for them to get both.

The very nature of teams is evolving rapidly. There's never been a wider spectrum of workstyles, there are more working millennials than ever before, remote working is commonplace, and the tools used to get work done have expanded far beyond email and phones. Teams are composed of people inside and outside traditional IT barriers, such as firewalls. They're spread across time zones and composed of a changing cast of characters.

As a business leader, you need to make sure your organisation provides collaboration tools that suit different personalities, skillsets and needs. Because what works for one person or team may not work for another. You also

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**The thing that's challenging is to make sure that there's a platform for collaboration. Teams are very liquid; we need to keep up with the way our people like to work."**

Jason Warnke, Managing Director, Internal IT, Accenture

need to accommodate the diverse workstyles of the multiple generations now in the workforce. Millennials have been using chat and social media their whole lives and want the same engaging, real-time experiences at work. Other generations favour the traditional voice, email and document-based apps. All tools need to interoperate seamlessly, because everyone expects the fluid digital experiences they're used to from their day-to-day lives as consumers.

But extending modern collaboration to meet these many requirements only succeeds if your platform can successfully unify people into high-performing teams, regardless of their needs and preferences.

So, what is the right technology solution for modern collaboration and teamwork? It must be flexible enough to meet all your teams' communication needs, become a single hub for teamwork, be customisable and stay secure.

Such a hub **is** possible. With scalability, app integration capabilities, ease of use and automation at the forefront of the tools you use, you can create higher-performing teams that collaborate more effectively with their colleagues every day.

**Here's what your teamwork tools should empower you to do.**

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# Chapter 1.
# Communicate without effort

Today's workplace has seen a consistent and growing need to communicate in the moment and keep everyone in the know. Great ideas often start small, among a few close collaborators, and then quickly grow to include a larger team that helps bring them to fruition. To keep that momentum going easily, intelligent communication capabilities are essential.

Teams need to be able to communicate freely and scale up or down as needed, bringing additional team members into the conversation while giving everyone a way to stay informed about what's going on. One-on-one, small group and large group conversations should all be supported, and from the devices and locations of their choice.

Microsoft Teams, the hub for teamwork in Microsoft 365, makes it simple for teams to communicate in real time, make fast decisions and share content in an open and transparent way. Teams cuts across organisational boundaries by allowing private chats, group



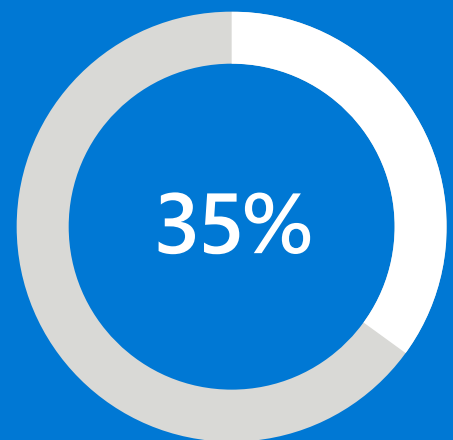**Chapter 01.**

**Communicate
without effort**

chats or team conversations that are visible to the entire team. Work that traditionally required an in-person meeting happens right in the hub – through chat, calls, smaller group video conferences and shared files – faster than before, from virtually anywhere and even with guests outside your organisation. This allows your teams to be more connected and enables individuals to manage a greater flow of information.

Bringing all the conversations to one place also lets you reference them later or easily bring new members up to speed. The conversations persist so other team members can view them, making insights more discoverable. Don't remember a decision made months earlier? A quick search reveals an entire record of the conversation. New members just joined the team? Adding them will give them access to group conversations and files in one go.

# Employees who use social messaging tools internally can see as much as a 35% reduction in time spent searching for company information.[1]

[1] 'The Social Economy', 2012, McKinsey Global Institute.

**35%**

**Chapter 01.**

**Communicate without effort**

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# You have that constant thread of communication that you can go back in history and see. It's all right there in a single interface."

**Matt Cochran, Information Technology Manager, Hendrick Motorsports**

**Chapter 01.**

**Communicate without effort**

Chapter 2.

# Be more productive
# through better integration

When teams use disjointed applications, siloed information can make collaboration feel like a complex, time-consuming effort. They'll waste time locating files, remembering different logins or switching between apps.

Your teams need flexible tools to work with. When tools are integrated with the business applications they're already using, work happens faster, enabling a frictionless communication and collaboration experience.

We've designed Microsoft Teams to be a hub for both communication and collaboration. Employees have access to conversations, files, people and apps **in one shared workspace** – ultimately spending less time searching and more time making decisions. They can directly link to files, documents and emails for instant discussions and co-authoring within the app. It's also integrated with familiar tools like Word, PowerPoint, SharePoint, OneNote and Power BI.
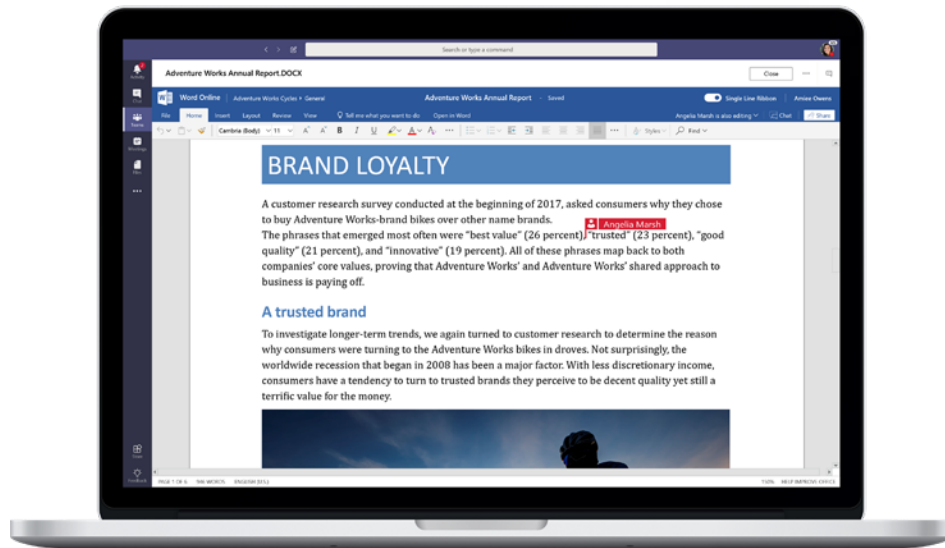


Review documents within your chat

Chapter 02.

Be more productive
through better integration

What's more: an integrated solution can directly affect your bottom line. Last year, organisations that successfully adopted a unified communications system saw huge returns compared to those that did not.

When your applications work together as well as your teams do, productivity soars. Consider this: new employees will only have to log in to and learn one new program instead of six, and they won't have to toggle between apps. With fewer passwords to remember and fewer blockers, your team can focus on what matters most: their work. And IT doesn't have to worry about managing multiple services or shadow IT.

Ultimately, all teams should be able to collaborate across distances. With a complete voice and online meeting solution, virtual teamwork is as easy and engaging as it is in person.

Teams also enables visual communication between teammates. They can easily share pictures and video, whether for clarity, emphasis or simply a light-hearted response. Need some face-to-face contact? Users can launch a video call from a conversation in seconds.

## The connection between unified communications systems and increased operating income:[2]

Successful adoption:  +19.2%

(operating income)
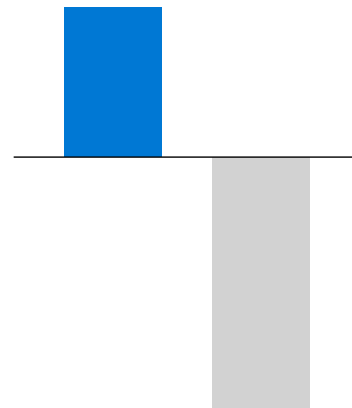
Unsuccessful adoption:  -32.7%

(operating profit)

[2] 'Are Workers Ready for the Workplace of the Future?', 2016, Information Age.

Chapter 02.

Be more productive through better integration

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Because it's a part of the Microsoft 365 set of collaboration tools, it's a part of what we already do. It's an essential hub where the conversations happen. It opens possibilities for connection and collaboration that we never thought were possible before."

Domnick Parretta, Managing Partner,
Valorem

Chapter 02.

Be more productive
through better integration

Chapter 3.

# Customise features for every team

Every team is unique and needs a shared space to work together – one they can reshape and call their own, whether they are inside or outside the organisation.

And no two teams work alike. Your sales team may use chat to share updates on leads and website analytics, while your customer service department might rely on quick calls to resolve customer request tickets.

Your tools need to account for your teams' unique needs with hubs that are customisable.

Teams should be able to pull preferred tools into their hub and have multiple conversations and work threads, as well as pin important files for easy reference. Intelligent communications including automation, notification settings and chatbots can provide additional support to ensure everyone has what they need.

Microsoft Teams enables threaded conversations within a channel to keep conversations organised and key stakeholders informed. Work that has traditionally required an in-person meeting happens in the channel instead.

# 62% of global employees agree that artificial intelligence assistance could make their jobs easier.[3]

[3] 'Dell & Intel Future-Ready Workforce Study Global Report', 2016, Penn Schoen Berland.

**62%**

Chapter 03.

Customise features
for every team
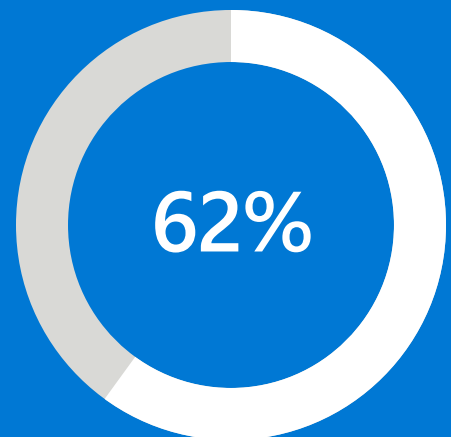
It also enables users to customise and automate their chats with dozens of first-party chatbots and third-party app integrations.

Chatbots can instantaneously improve employee efficiency. Instead of relying on an employee to pull data or retrieve an alert or email, chatbots alert teams when an action is needed or a report is ready.

Giving employees the ability to customise their chatbots and teamwork hubs means they can receive alerts and notifications as they want. Integration with third-party apps means the work you used to set aside time to complete can come directly to you.

Who-bot is the embedded assistant in Teams.

Chapter 03.

Customise features
for every team

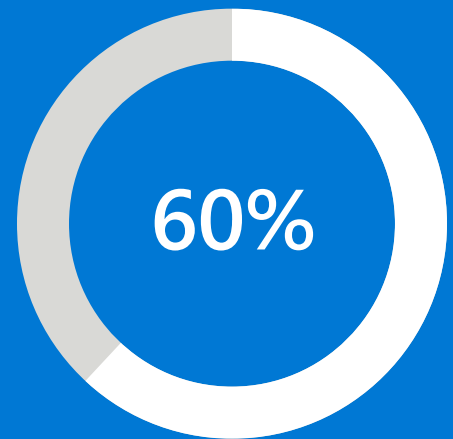Chapter 4.

# Work with confidence

When collaboration is needed, employees will find a way. Whether company-approved or not, workers will still use instant chat solutions, shared document spaces, and more – giving rise to shadow IT, management complexity and security risks. Your IT managers are probably on the alert for tools that don't hold the same security and compliance standards as the rest of your business applications, but some unauthorised tools might still slip through.

However, it is possible to provide secured solutions without putting an additional burden on your IT team. Microsoft Teams provides industry-leading security and compliance capabilities, with data encryption for at-rest and in-transit data in company cloud storage and email. You benefit from the Office 365 hyper-scale, enterprise-grade cloud: it's the capabilities you're used to, with security, privacy and trust built directly into the service. Compliance leadership with regulations, such as EUMC and HIPAA, multi-factor authentication and secure guest access, help protect sensitive company information from multiple angles. Plus, because everything is from one vendor, IT won't have to worry about another set of security and compliance issues – or another possible breach point.

# Nearly 60% of IT pros believe sensitive files/information should not be shared via group chat apps. [4]

**60%**

[4] 'Business Chat Apps in 2017: Top Players and Adoption Plans', 2017, Spiceworks.

Chapter 04.

Work with confidence

Chapter 5.
# Let's chat

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**This is exactly what we've been waiting for. This is how we think the world of tomorrow will work."**

Jason Warnke, Managing Director, Internal IT, Accenture

Once you know what to look for, choosing the right tool can reinvigorate your entire collaborative process.

**Checklist: What to look for in your teamwork tools:**

✔ Unified communication.

✔ Business application integration.

✔ Customisation and scalability for teams.

✔ Easy search for files, content and people.

✔ Automation.

✔ Ease of use for employees and IT.

✔ End-to-end security.

**Chapter 05.**

**Let's chat**

# Explore Microsoft Teams to see how the right tool can lead to increased productivity for diverse teams.

What are you waiting for?

Get Microsoft Teams, now available in a free version.

**Try Teams now**  ›