DRAGON
INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Manage Teams and Groups

with Office365

Office 365

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As Steve Jobs once said, “Great things in business are never done by one person. They’re done by a team of people.”

He was right. All good managers understand the importance of finding a group of individuals who aren’t just skilled and motivated, but who work well together too.

Teamwork has been a core component of staff training courses and management programs since the term “Professional Development” was first coined back in 1857. Since then it’s been the subject of countless training videos, staff away days and flip-chart brainstorming sessions.

Even those who roll their eyes at the idea of team building exercises usually come away with something positive. When we form bonds and find common ground with the people we work with, we achieve more.

It’s human nature to want to share ideas and work together. Some of best loved movies, from The Wizard of Oz to Top Gun, have revelled in the importance of finding great buddies who can help us achieve mutual goals. We’re a social species who have depended on co-operation and task sharing ever since we invented the first tools and learnt how to make fire.

The trouble is, as humans have evolved, we’ve become more isolated in the process. Our current reliance on mobile devices means we can work, shop and communicate without ever having to leave the house.

The modern team doesn’t have to be based in the same office – or even the same country. Flexible working is now an expectation rather than a perk, and 77% of workers say they actually get more done when they’re out of the office.
This new, digital way of life is brilliant in lots of ways, but with so many people working remotely it can be a challenge to keep track of who’s doing what.

Enter Microsoft Teams, a chat and collaboration platform that’s part of the wildly popular Office 365 suite (120 million subscribers and counting).

Teams was created to embrace all the wonderful things about the digital revolution and make it easier than ever for groups of people to collaborate on tasks. It integrates seamlessly with other Microsoft services and comes free with an Office 365 subscription package, so there’s no need to worry about additional costs.

It’s full of features that appeal to millennials who have grown up with social networking and smart technology, along with plenty of sensible tools to help the rest of us keep up.

Why Microsoft Teams is a game changer

The software combines a chat function with voice and video calls, along with the ability to collaborate on files and projects on the go. It enables users to set up chatrooms for different teams and workflows, with clearly threaded conversations and updates.

If you're thinking "So far, so WhatsApp group", think again. Teams is much more than a chat hub, because it has been specifically built to work in tandem with the rest of the Office 365 suite.

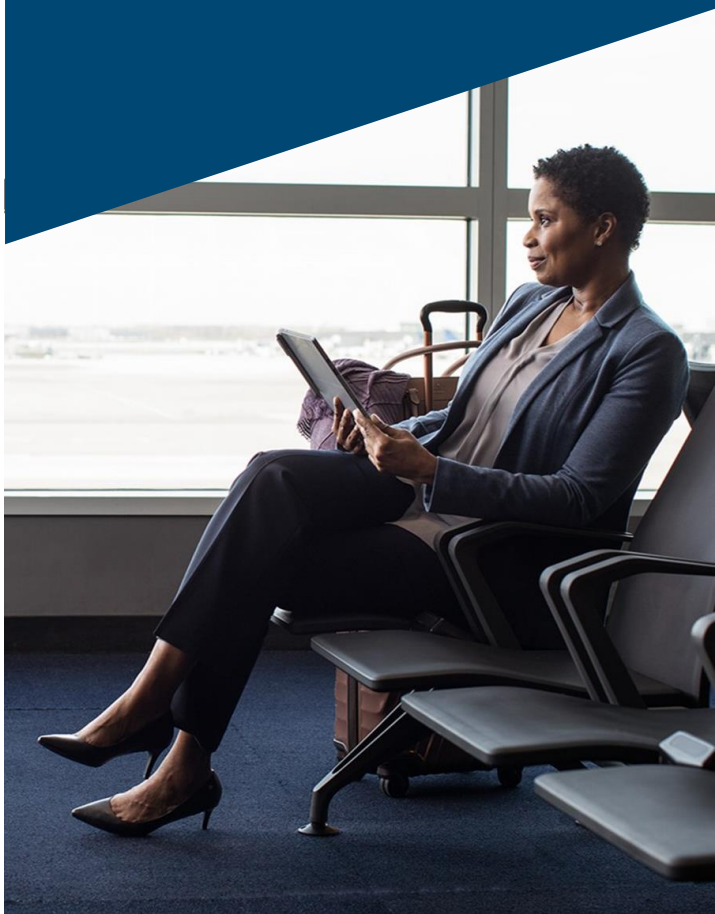
Any document you need from Word, Excel, One-Note, PowerPoint etc. can be instantly shared between core team members and stored remotely in the cloud. All edits, comments and updates happen in real time, so there's no more searching for notes or trying to find out who last had access to that all-important document.

Microsoft Teams is all about helping people work together to achieve their goals. It gives users the power to storm through projects and plans without having to be tied to their desks, updating and checking things off as they go.

Here are just a few of its features >>

Online meetings

Schedule and hold conference calls, webchats and message streams with anyone you like, both inside and outside of your organisation. You can share files, desktops and even organise instant transcription and minutes, so all your important notes and actions are recorded and sent to everyone concerned.



Live broadcasts

Gone are the days when we had to worry about how many people can squeeze into the boardroom. With live broadcasts it's easy to hold seminars, deliver training and make announcements to up to 10,000 people at a time.

Teams and Channels

Add team members to specific groups and assign people to tasks with just a few clicks. Each team has its own subsections, known as Channels, and there can be multiple Channels relating to different tasks within every team.

Conversations

The central point where all teamwork is recorded, Conversations are established using @mentions in a similar way to Twitter and Instagram. Users can easily see conversations and workflows they've been tagged in, along with colour coded highlights to show the importance of each task. GIFS "likes" and emojis are also used to add emphasis and echo familiar social media apps..

Files

Create, upload, share and edit files all from the home screen, with full access to all the main Office apps. Team discussions can be quickly established according to different files, with everything neatly contained in easy to read threads.

Key benefits of Microsoft Teams in a nutshell

- One easily accessible, central hub
- Full integration with all Office 365 apps and Azure Active Directory
- Customisable for each organisation
- Enterprise grade security
- Free to Office 365 subscribers

Office 365 Groups – because teams only succeed with the right people

You might also hear people talking about Groups in Office 365, but don't expect to find this bit in the list of available apps.

Groups isn't a piece of software, it's a collection of people. In the same way you'd manage email distribution lists in Outlook, you can now organise resources like calendars, emails and documents for different groups of users.

Groups can be set up in for a variety of apps including Outlook, SharePoint, Planner, Teams and Yammer, without having to worry about manually assigning permissions. When you add someone to a Group, they're automatically given permission to access the files and tools within it.

You can create private and public groups based on how sensitive your information is. Public groups are great for things like planning the Christmas party, whereas sensitive information like staff salaries should be limited to a few key personnel in a private group.

Whether public or private, groups can only be accessed by people who have been specifically invited - so you don't have to worry about your information being available to all and sundry.

How to set up and manage Microsoft Groups

Setting up a group is easy and just takes a few simple steps.

1. Choose a group name and a brief description.

2. Select a classification (this will be based on the different options and departments within your specific organisation).

3. Set the privacy level. By default, all Groups are automatically set to Private, so if you want to open it up to the whole company you'll need to change it.

4. Start sending messages direct to members' inboxes.

Microsoft Teams is a powerful tool for today's diverse, flexible workplace. If you haven't already discovered its collaboration enhancing powers, now's your chance to give it a try!

It's totally free to existing Office 365 customers, and even if you're not there yet expect to be pleasantly surprised about how much moving to the cloud will save you. The whole Office 365 suite of products has been developed to help businesses save money and boost productivity, so what have you got to lose?

Contact us today for a no obligation assessment and demonstration.

Office 365

For proven, trusted IT systems support to keep your business trading profitably

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