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The Hybrid Imperative

Embracing the Opportunity: Microsoft's Approach to Hybrid Work

Actionable Steps to Get Started Today



# 1. The Hybrid Imperative



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Over a year into the pandemic, digital adoption curves aren't slowing down, they're accelerating. And this is just the beginning. We're at an inflection point as decisive as last year's sudden shift to remote work: **the move to hybrid work**. Leading out of a crisis is different from leading in one – and the shift to hybrid won't wait.

The pandemic has fundamentally transformed the way we work, do business, and meet customer needs – everything. This past year has also taught us that so much more can be done remotely than we ever thought possible. Flexible work is here to stay.

Everything becomes more complex, not less complex, in hybrid work. As Microsoft moves to hybrid, we're sharing what we're learning at scale from around the world to help customers make the shift."

Satya Nadella



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But the shift to hybrid work is not just a pull forward of remote work. It's a pivotal moment that requires asking new questions: What should be done remotely? How do we bring people back to the workplace safely? How do we empower everyone to thrive when people are working from home, in the office, or at a worksite – and everywhere in between? How will we adapt as every business process and customer interaction becomes digital, and commerce and e-commerce converge? In short, how do we make hybrid work, work?

The shift to hybrid work is a **strategic business opportunity for every organization** – one that requires a new operating model. Every leader will need a strategy to activate the whole organization in the move from defense to offense to gain competitive advantage and address the urgent opportunity now. From HR, to IT, to marketing and sales, to manufacturing – every function will need to come together to reimagine how to empower employees, engage customers, optimize operations, and transform products.

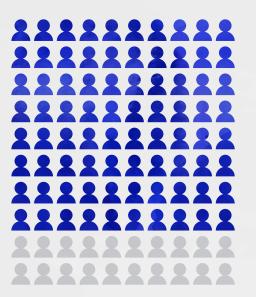
In this guide, we'll share what we're learning across People, Places, and Processes as Microsoft transitions to hybrid work – and the keys to success we've discovered along the way.

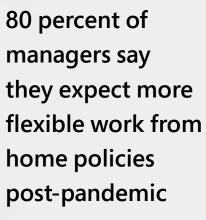


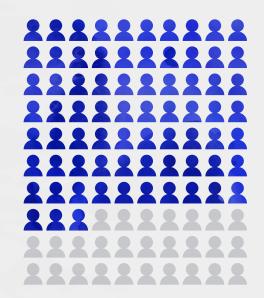
### **Evolving employee expectations**

Employee expectations have changed, and there's no going back. Flexibility and hybrid work will define the post-pandemic workplace. We need to let go of the idea that we can expect people to work together during certain hours and all in one place.

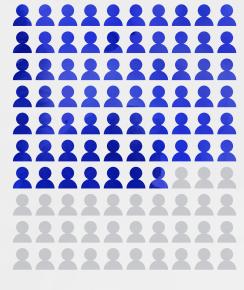
The data is clear: Employees want the best of both worlds. 73 percent of workers want flexible remote work options to continue, while 67 percent are craving more in-person time. And 80 percent of managers say they expect more flexible work from home policies post-pandemic. See the 7 key trends every business leader needs to know about the shift to hybrid work.







73 percent of employees want flexible remote work options to stay



67 percent of employees want more inperson work or collaboration post-pandemic

Source: Microsoft's annual Work Trend Index, March 2021.



It's not only employee expectations that have fundamentally changed; customer expectations have, too. Curbside pickup once seemed novel, but now it's expected. Customers will want to enjoy both the conveniences they've grown used to and the in-person experiences they have missed — all within operational constraints. It won't be easy, but the opportunity for every business is to get this mix right."

Judson Althoff, Executive Vice President of Worldwide Commercial Business at Microsoft Corporation



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# Embracing the Opportunity: Microsoft's Approach to Hybrid Work



We created this guide to share what we're learning at scale – across People, Places, and Processes – as Microsoft transitions to hybrid work, to help every organization make the shift.

### People

- Hybrid work is inevitable. Create the culture to enable it.
- Empower managers to lead the shift.
- Make Viva your Employee Experience Cloud.
- Build a listening system.
- Help people learn and grow in the flow of work.
- Combat digital exhaustion from the top.
- Embrace flexibility to attract and retain new and diverse talent.



### **Places**

- Bring people back to the workplace safely.
- Design for the people not in the room.
- Transform your physical spaces into intelligent, cloud-powered services.

### **Processes**

- Use Teams to transform your business.
- Move everything to the cloud as quickly as you can.
- Digitize every business process from operations to sales.
- Mandate zero-trust security from cloud to edge.



# People

At Microsoft, we've embraced flexibility as a principle to give our more than 160,000 employees around the world greater choice in when, where, and how they work. Our flexible work policy gives employees the option to work from home up to 50 percent of the time (or more with manager approval), as well as flexibility in their work schedule and work location. It's a big shift – and we're leaning into our growth mindset culture and taking a 'learn it all' approach as we adapt to the new reality.

The pandemic has reinforced what we already know: work is about so much more than just getting things done. Empowering people to thrive in a more flexible work world requires rethinking the entire employee experience – from safety, to how you create culture, to attracting and retaining talent.

A <u>new study</u> from Microsoft China sheds light on how employees are adapting to hybrid work in markets where employees have already returned to the workplace. It's in early days, but our internal research suggests that the benefits of flexible work policies are real, with three days of work from home per week being optimal.





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# Hybrid work is inevitable. Create the culture to enable it.

You need a plan and policies that put you on the path to extreme flexibility and help you build digital empathy into every aspect of your culture – from global guidelines to team-level meeting norms that help everyone feel included and engaged. Here's how:

- Set clear flexible work policy that gives people choice in how, when, and where they work. As noted earlier, at Microsoft employees have the option to work from home up to 50 percent of the time but every organization's approach to hybrid will be unique. The key is to align as an organization on a policy and principles to enable flexible work, and to determine what decisions you will make centrally and where you'll empower local decision-making.
- Empower managers and leaders to adapt the global policy to fit their diverse business needs and team expectations.

- Create explicit norms to embrace flexibility. As one example, develop company-wide norms to create inclusive meetings from configuring meeting rooms to optimize for remote participants, to encouraging onsite participants to join Microsoft Teams as soon as they enter the room, so remote participants don't miss out on the informal banter crucial to rebuilding social capital and connection. Internally, we're also testing a new calendar functionality in Outlook that allows meeting organizers to extend food and beverage offerings to every participant, onsite or remote, to help everyone feel included. Get our Tips & Tricks for inclusive meetings.
- Leverage our <u>Hybrid Flexibility Guide</u> which we created for Microsoft employees then open-sourced – to find sample team agreements, templates, and tools for hybrid work.



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# **Core scenarios**

This guide outlines the following core flexibility scenarios in a hybrid workplace.



Employee is requesting a change to their work site

- Work from home less than 50% of work time per week
- Work from home 50% or more of work time per week



Employee is requesting a change to their work location

- Relocate within the same country
- Relocate to a different country



Employee is requesting a change to their work hours

- Changing number of hours worked
- Requesting more schedule flexibility

Figure 1 Microsoft flexible work scenarios.

When planning for hybrid work consider work site, work location, and work hours.



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## **Empower managers to lead the shift**

Managers are critical to making hybrid work a success. Although we are continuing to invest in training for all employees, we are especially focused on <a href="mailto:employees">empowering managers</a> with the decision-making authority, tools, and skills they need to lead in this transition. Here's how:

- **Give managers the tools** to shape their team working model and empower them to make decisions including approving when individuals can work from home beyond the 50 percent corporate policy and authorizing new home-office equipment purchases.
- Create new team norms by encouraging managers to have conversations with their teams to develop team-specific or organization-wide norms such as "no-meeting" Fridays or using the "delay delivery" feature in Outlook so team members don't feel they need to respond right away.
- Encourage managers to "model, coach, and care" to create the culture that enables everyone to thrive in a more flexible work world.



# Make Microsoft Viva your employee experience cloud

The past year has shown that the digital experience of working for a company is the employee experience. Hybrid work is having a profound impact on employee wellbeing. It can no longer be about just short-term employee output. Microsoft Viva, our new employee experience cloud, enables organizations – including those with highly dispersed workforces – to focus on mission and culture and create a holistic employee experience.

Microsoft Viva brings together collaboration, learning, and wellbeing in the flow of work to create an integrated employee experience directly in Teams. Viva empowers employees to digitally access everything from internal communications to onboarding resources – right in the flow of work. It creates a persistent single entry point for employee engagement, integrates personal wellbeing insights and recommended actions, makes continuous learning a natural part of work and culture, and harnesses the organization's institutional knowledge to help people find the information they need.





There's no going back to the pre-pandemic world. Whether we like it or not, hybrid is going to rewire the operating models of most businesses over the next 12 months. The question is simply, will we just let that play out or will we take an active role in shaping the future."

Jared Spataro, Corporate Vice President of Microsoft 365







# **Build a listening system**

As remote work became the norm overnight, a new phenomenon emerged: **organizations gained a digital heartbeat**. As we shift to hybrid work, it's critical to continue to capture the signal across multiple channels.

At Microsoft, Workplace Analytics, part of Viva Insights, provides critical insights for managers and leaders to understand employee wellbeing and engagement.

And the combination of Viva Insights and Glint gives managers and leaders insights and recommendations to improve employee engagement and wellbeing. Daily polls enable us to keep a pulse on employee sentiment, and we have channels for employees to ask questions and share what's on their minds.

In a hybrid world everything is more complex.

You can't predict how the organization will respond. A recent snapshot of 775 enterprise customers that had adopted a mix of onsite and remote work showed that 9 percent saw a significant increase in the number of meetings, chats, and email, while 5 percent saw a significant decrease in the same period.

Listening is an urgent priority for leaders.

Research shows that leaders are out of touch with employees and need a wake-up call. Frontline workers without decision-making authority are 23 percentage points less likely than business leaders to say they are "thriving" right now. And 54 percent of all employees feel overworked.





In today's world of remote and hybrid work, it's not sufficient to only encourage self-care. We need to innovate and leverage technology to help employees operationalize much-needed breaks into their daily routines."

Kathleen Hogan, Chief People Officer

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# Help people learn and grow in the flow of work

Last year we closed most of our physical Microsoft Stores, reskilling more than 2,500 of our Microsoft Store Associates for digital selling, equipping them to support customers of all types: consumers, small businesses, schools, and enterprises. Already, more than 200 of them have accelerated their careers in new roles at Microsoft as a result of this program.

Learning will be increasingly important and radically different in hybrid work. Organizations are ultimately about knowledge-sharing. How are employees learning from each other and from customers in the new reality? **Microsoft Teams** and **Microsoft Viva** help every employee learn in the flow of work.

Shrinking networks: Our analysis of collaboration trends also shows that while interactions with our close networks have strengthened during the pandemic, our interactions with distant networks have diminished significantly – putting innovation at risk. At a moment when more than 40 percent of the workforce are currently considering their next move, leaders must take steps to close the gap on the cross-team collaboration and spontaneous idea-sharing that's been driving workplace innovation for decades





# Embrace flexibility to attract and retain new and diverse talent

In a hybrid work world, embracing flexibility in how, when, and where people do their best work will be critical to attract and retain the best talent. At Microsoft, we've empowered managers and leaders to "hire from everywhere" for more roles, including some leadership roles that previously would have required candidates to relocate. New employees can stay in their communities while expanding their career options, and Microsoft gains access to better and more diverse talent – a win-win. We're also investing in communities like <u>Atlanta</u>, <u>GA</u>, Reston, VA, Houston TX, and others – not only bringing jobs but developing "hubs" to nurture and grow talent over the long term.

The <u>data</u> is clear: the way we've been working over the past year isn't sustainable. Acting on insights gleaned from data and research, we're helping employees find sustainable ways to bring their best selves to work. Here's how:

- Use data in Workplace Analytics, part of Viva Insights, to
  give managers and leaders anonymized insights into team and
  organizational wellbeing helping to keep a pulse on things like
  meeting overload and weekend work.
- Proactively engage teams at risk of burnout to help them develop more sustainable work practices and habits to promote employee wellbeing.
- Encourage people to take breaks between meetings. The back-to-back meetings that have become the norm over the past year aren't sustainable. Research from our Human Factors Lab shows that taking even short breaks between meetings can have a big impact. New settings in Outlook automatically shorten meetings by 5, 10, or 15 minutes and can be implemented individually or company-wide.

There will be ebbs and flows in how spaces are used. Our mantra is data and agility."

Scott Weiskopf,
Director, Center of Innovation,
Microsoft Real Estate & Security



# **Places**

We can no longer rely solely on shared physical location to collaborate, connect, or build social capital. But spaces and places are still important. We're social animals and we want to get together, bounce ideas off one another, and experience the energy of in-person events.

At Microsoft, we're designing spaces and places that bridge the physical and digital and that can evolve with employee needs.



# Bring people back to the workplace safely

Keeping employees safe is our first priority. From strengthening security protocols to promoting safe practices at work, here are some best practices to protect employees in the transition to hybrid work:

- Use Microsoft Power Platform to build no-code/low-code apps that enable employees to do everything from health checks to reserving meeting space. Microsoft employees use Power App's HealthCheck to attest to their health and wellbeing at "badge in" before entering a worksite.
- Return to the workplace safely and with confidence using
   Microsoft's Return the Workplace solution, built on Power
   Platform, for location readiness, access control, and workplace care management.





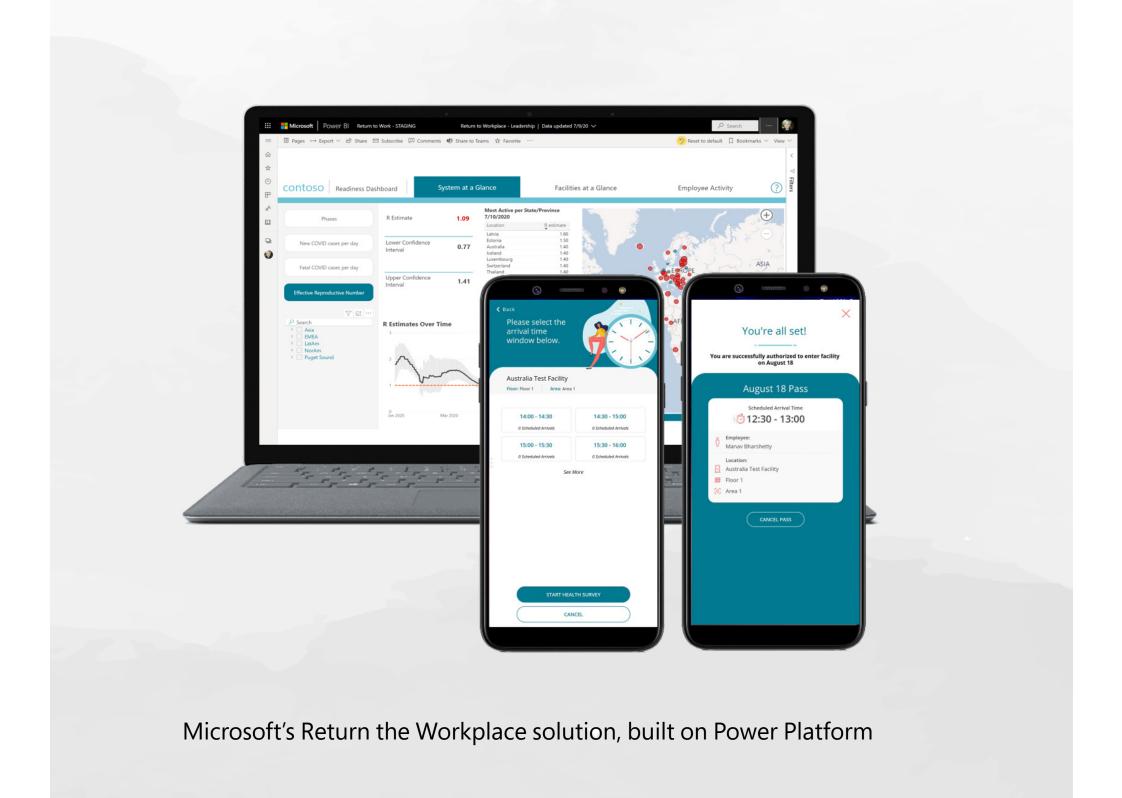
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Healthcare organizations can use <u>Microsoft Vaccination</u>
 <u>Management</u> to manage the end-to-end process from screening and scheduling, to administration and follow-ups, to bringing people back to the worksite safely with confidence. We're working with the <u>Vaccine Credential Initiative</u> (VCI) on SMART standards so people have verifiable, secure access to their vaccination records.

- Use **Power BI** dashboards to analyze data from multiple inputs across public and internal sources to determine how many people should be allowed at a worksite and when.
- Equip buildings, meeting rooms, and other spaces with **privacy-sensitive occupancy sensors** to monitor capacity.
- Provide a single travel-booking portal where all employees book and manage work travel to know where people are in the world should an emergency occur.
- Create wayfinding tools for worksites using <u>Azure Maps</u>, so employees can easily find their way to meetings, offices, and other services.

- Enable employees to easily and safely book workstations and touchdown spaces right in **Outlook**.
- Empower employees to work securely during non-standard hours by equipping spaces with additional cameras and sensors, security staff, and access measures.







You have to match the physical environment with the digital environment — and of course, the culture. It doesn't matter if you're in manufacturing or banking. Every organization operates differently, but it's the physical, digital, and culture of the company coming together to create the experience you need for your employees to be productive, creative, and innovative."

Michael Ford, CVP of Global Real Estate & Security



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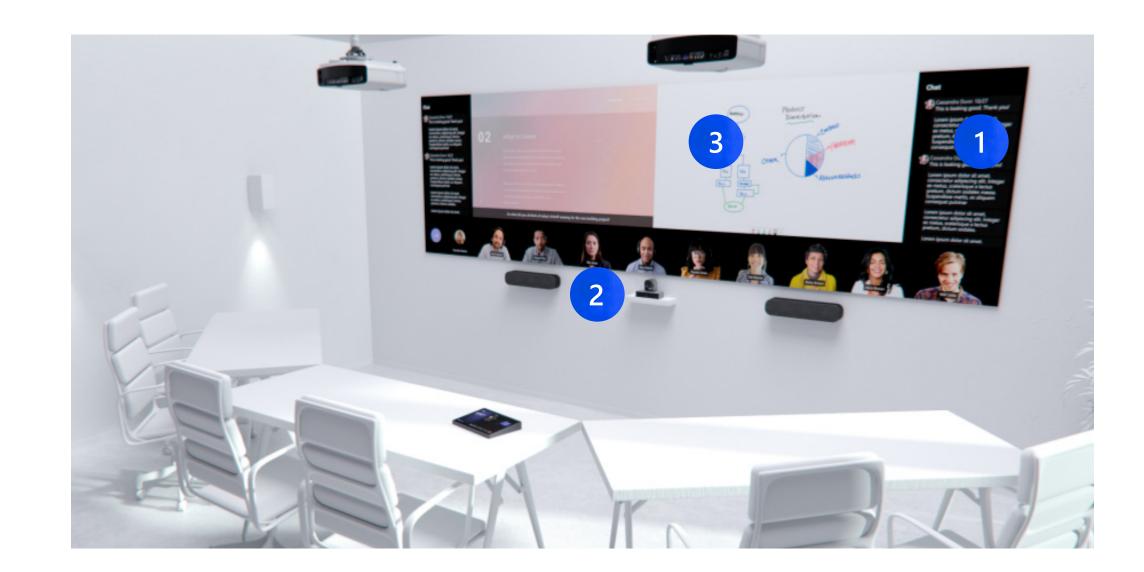




# Design for the people not in the room

With <u>Microsoft Teams Rooms</u>, we're turning the remote experience on its head and bringing participants "into the room," so everyone feels like they have a seat at the table and can be seen, heard, and participate – from anywhere. Here's how:

- Intelligent cameras optimize the view by framing the people in the room or following the active speaker.
- Inclusive features like live captions, live transcription, raise your hand, live reactions, and chat help people follow along and offer opportunities to chime in nonverbally or without interrupting the speaker.



- 1 Large screen placement for inclusivity
- Camera and microphone placement optimized to identify who is speaking while maintaining eye contact
- 3 Everyone can see and participate in whiteboarding sessions

- Microsoft Whiteboard provides a shared digital canvas, fostering collaboration and co-creation. Participants in the room can ink directly on a <u>Surface Hub 2S</u> or from their phone or laptop to draw and brainstorm with colleagues, wherever they are.
- Intelligent capture uses a content camera to capture, focus, resize, and enhance analog whiteboard images and text so that remote attendees can clearly see brainstorming in real time, even when someone is standing in front of the whiteboard.
- We're enhancing **Teams Rooms** to deliver a meeting experience where everyone is fully represented, and where connections feel natural and immersive. This includes intelligent speakers that let everyone know who said what in the room, as well

- as making meeting chat, notes, and action items visible next to the content on the screen so that people can engage with all aspects of the meeting.
- Microsoft Mesh, our new mixed reality platform, will enable people to interact holographically with others, with true presence and in a natural way.
- <u>Surface</u> devices and accessories, plus a <u>broad range</u> of Microsoft Teams-certified third-party hardware, enhance meeting experiences in personal workspaces.

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# Transform your physical spaces into intelligent, cloud-powered services

None of us knows what our real estate portfolio will look like in a few years. To stay nimble, organizations will need to digitize every space and place to make the right decisions and investments as needs evolve over time.

At Microsoft, we're embracing "facilities-as-a-service," using Workplace Analytics, Azure Digital Twins, and Azure IoT to build the "brains" of our smart buildings of the future. Here's how:

- Anonymous badge-in data (location data) maps building-level occupancy over the course of a day, week, and month across all our facilities.
- Workplace Analytics, part of Viva Insights (activity data), provides insights into meeting room activity and usage patterns at the aggregate level.
- Privacy-friendly sensors (usage data) detect objects and movement to build data sets on space occupancy, and provide real-time insights on how meeting rooms, focus zones, and common spaces are being used on a day-to-day basis and how utilization patterns are changing over time. We correlate activity data with usage data to understand the optimal balance between focus space and collaboration space. This data directly informs the choices we make: When usage data showed that we were using small

- rooms for about 80 percent of meetings but they made up only 50 percent of our floorplan we adjusted plans to reconfigure space.
- We're creating a "smart building" ecosystem with Azure Digital Twins

  (ADT) and Azure IoT starting with our Redmond, WA, campus. Our

  Digital Integration Platform (DIP), built on Azure Digital Twins, Azure IoT,

  Azure Maps, and Azure Time Series Insights creates a digital twin of our

  buildings and spaces. DIP provides real-time operational and activity data;
  integrates building subsystems, devices, and sensors; analyzes signals;
  provides command and control capabilities and can be customized to
  meet the unique needs of our subsidiaries around the world.
- Using open standards, we're integrating **DIP** with our device ecosystem. An early example is VergeSense: people-counting sensors connected to DIP in our Puget Sound, WA campus and new campuses in Israel and Costa Rica. These sensors enable employees to get real-time information on how crowded a cafeteria is or to find less busy spaces to work. Realestate operations can monitor building density for cleaning, adherence to COVID-19 safety standards (building load), and related scenarios.



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Hybrid meetings aren't a new phenomenon, but the remote experience taught us the power of symmetrical presence in the workplace. The New Hybrid will be one where all participants are full participants, fully enfranchised, with full presence in meetings and the workplace."

Bill Buxton,
Partner Researcher at Microsoft



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# **Processes**

Every business process will need to be transformed in the shift to hybrid work. Seize the opportunity.





# Use Teams to transform your business

From developer productivity to shift-scheduling for frontline workers, Teams is the organizing layer for all the ways people work, learn, and collaborate. It's central to both the synchronous and asynchronous collaboration and communication required for flexible work. But Teams is more than a collaboration app – it's changing how companies do business.

We're creating an entirely new category of **modern collaborative applications**, using Power Platform to build custom apps, bots, and workflows directly within Teams.

Teams has more than 145 million daily active users. In markets where employees have returned to the workplace – including Australia, China, New Zealand, South Korea, and Taiwan – Teams usage has continued to grow.



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At Microsoft, we're using Teams today to transform how we do business:

- Last year, we took our global customer events digital with **Teams** and **Teams Live Events**. Going digital enabled us to reach hundreds of thousands of people across the globe an increase of 10x up to 30x in participation while dramatically reducing per- attendee acquisition costs. At Microsoft Ignite in March, we delivered a million hours of online training, skilling, and certification exams. And Teams break out rooms and chat enable us to network and engage with customers and increase satisfaction.
- Microsoft Store Associates are using Teams as a virtual showroom to demo products and provide personalized shopping experiences

   generating a roughly 10 percent increase in customer satisfaction and higher sales conversion.

- Microsoft Store Associates are using Teams and Dynamics 365,
   Power BI, and Azure to share customer feedback with engineering teams creating a tighter feedback loop between frontline employees and engineers to better meet customer needs.
- Our technical specialists are using Teams to bring their deep expertise to three times as many customers through **virtual demos**.

Organizations of all sizes in every industry are using **Power Platform** in **Teams** to transform their business. **American Airlines**, for example, highlighted in its Q1 2021 earnings call the cost savings it's driving by using a Power App within Teams to help its frontline workers manage critical gate operations. And German automotive company **ZF** is using **Dataverse for Teams** to automate human resources and finance processes.



# Move everything to the cloud — as quickly as you can

Every organization is on its own journey to the cloud. But the faster you get there, the faster you can adapt to the new hybrid reality. Cloud readiness is the reason that Microsoft was able to move to <a href="mailto:remote work">remote work</a> virtually overnight with limited impact on employee productivity. Moving everything to the cloud enables more flexible ways of working. Here's how:

- Manage identities. Microsoft's hybrid cloud environment enables every employee to be productive and secure. Every user who accesses the corporate network receives a primary account synced to Azure Active Directory (Azure AD) whether they are an employee, partner, or supplier.
- Manage devices. Like many organizations, we manage a
  wide range of devices at Microsoft, including Windows, Mac,
  Linux, iOS, and Android, and are moving to a fully cloud-based
  management environment.
- Empower developers to build productivity apps in the cloud using a co-management approach with Microsoft Endpoint Manager, integrating Microsoft Intune and Configuration Manager into a single console to manage all your endpoints and apps and take action to ensure they are secure and reliable.

Data is critical today and will be even more so as hybrid work evolves. You want to anticipate issues people might have to automatically resolve them. And you want to leverage data to make those experiences better. Reliance on Al and ML data is critical."

> Nathalie D'Hers, CVP of Employee Experience



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# Digitize every business process — from operations to sales

Every business process – from operations to sales to supply chain to finance – needs to be digitized. Here are just a few examples of how we're transforming business processes at Microsoft in the shift to hybrid work:

- We're using Power Platform Power Automate, Power BI, and
   Power Apps to automate order-to-cash, from contracts to billing.
- We're transforming our <u>inside sales team</u>, going 100 percent digital with <u>Microsoft Dynamics 365 Sales</u>, <u>LinkedIn Sales Navigator</u>, and Workplace Analytics (part of Viva Insights), enabling sellers reach

more customers, and get rich data and insights to bring the right expertise to customers at the right time. Al-powered daily recommendations in **Dynamics 365** suggest relevant content to sellers in real-time.

- We're using <u>Microsoft Cloud for Retail</u> to transform our Microsoft Stores ecommerce engine.
- We're investing in our Global Demand Center to drive increased lead generation and expand customer engagement digitally.





# Mandate Zero-Trust security from cloud to edge

As the corporate network is suddenly without firm borders, Zero Trust architecture is more important than ever. At Microsoft, we've moved away from a perimeter-based, VPN-dependent approach to security and embraced a Zero Trust model. This means we do not presume any identity or device is secure on any network – we verify it, and we do so while continuously monitoring network, data, and application security in the office, at home, and across devices. Here's how:

• In the office. Move all employees in the office off the corporate network to be fully cloud/internet first. This strengthens the "assume breach" approach and makes everyone more secure while providing a seamless and consistent experience from anywhere.

- At home. Ask all employees who continue to work remotely either full time or part time to run a test of their home network to ensure it is secure.
- Across devices. Require whether employees are in the office or remote that every device with access to corporate resources be managed using Microsoft Intune. In addition: require multi-factor authentication (MFA) for all users and leverage Windows Hello for Business and Azure Authenticator to provide a passwordless experience that end users love and IT trusts. Deploy a company-wide rollout of Microsoft Defender for Endpoint and Azure AD Conditional Access to enforce more granular security protocols based on user actions within the app they're using or sensitivity level of data they're trying to access.





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Embracing hybrid work will enable your organization to meet new employee and customer expectations, attract and retain talent, and gain competitive advantage. Building on our learnings, we've created quick start guides for business leaders to get started. Begin to make the shift to hybrid work today.

### Functional guides for business leaders:

- Human Resources
- Information Technology & Security
- Marketing & Sales
- Real Estate & Facilities
- Operations





# Microsoft solutions

Our portfolio of integrated customer solutions is built for the era of hybrid work – enabling organizations of all sizes in every industry to emerge from the crisis stronger and poised for growth.

### Flexible work

- Microsoft Teams
- Microsoft 365
- Windows Virtual Desktop
- Modern Windows 10 devices and Surface devices
- Microsoft Viva

**Cloud migration** 

Agile supply chain

Supply Chain Management

Dynamic 365

Commerce

Finance

- Azure laaS
- Azure SQL
- Azure App Service

# Product development

- Visual Studio Family
- Azure DevTest Labs
- GitHub
- Microsoft Teams

### Rapidly adapt and automate

- Microsoft Power Apps
- Microsoft Power Automate
- Microsoft Power Virtual Agents

### Business processes & workflows

- Microsoft Power Platform
- Azure IoT
- Microsoft 365
- Microsoft Teams
- Microsoft Viva

### Sales and service

- Marketing
- Sales and Customer Service
- Commerce
- Field Service
- Customer Insights
- LinkedIn Sales Navigator
- Microsoft Teams

### **Business insights and analytics**

- Dynamics 365 Customer Insights
- Microsoft Power BI
- Azure Machine Learning
- Azure Synapse Analytics

### Security

- Azure Active Directory
- Microsoft Threat Protection
- Azure Security Center
- Azure Sentinel
- Microsoft Information Protection
- Microsoft Insider Risk Management

