

Microsoft Teams adoption strategy prepares employees for a new culture of work

As Microsoft considered the internal rollout of Microsoft Teams, the Core Services Engineering and Operations (CSEO) organization knew that it would have to be different. Even though Teams would be replacing the messaging and communications functionality that employees had relied on Skype for Business to provide, Teams is much more than a revised, rebranded version of Skype for Business. It's a modern communications and collaboration hub enabling channel- and team-based threaded conversations (both public and private), support for live and streamed events, external application integration, file-sharing, and real-time collaboration. And it's all done through a single integrated user interface that operates consistently across devices.

Teams is inclusive and open, designed for a world in which five generations of workers are teaming up to work together and as much as 80 percent of an individual's time is spent engaging in some form of collaboration. It's also designed for a fluid, modern workplace in which more than 70 percent of workers will, by 2020, be working remotely.

Despite the clear benefits of using Teams in this new reality, CSEO knew the upgrade would be a heavy lift. Microsoft was deprecating a key tool that employees depended upon—Skype for Business—and asking them to embrace a tool that would change the way they interacted and engaged with each other and the world.

How did Microsoft manage what was fundamentally a cultural transformation?

At the same time the technical upgrade was occurring, CSEO leaders asked individuals from different areas within its End User Engineering Services group to come together as a virtual team to focus on change management and adoption. This adoption team, whose size and composition swelled and shrank in response to evolving demands, developed and executed a multipronged transformation program focused on:

- Identifying timelines and milestones
- Determining training needs and channels
- Developing suitable training materials
- Cultivating executive sponsorship and evangelists

The adoption team also developed a comprehensive, data-driven listening strategy. This would enable it to quickly identify and build upon successful efforts—and to revise or abandon those that had not worked well. Additionally, the adoption team incorporated processes for keeping CSEO leaders abreast of evolving activities and efforts.

While Microsoft employees had known that Teams would eventually replace Skype for Business, change-management efforts to prepare employees for the upgrade did not begin until early 2018—more than a year after early versions of Teams had been made available for employees to try. By the spring of 2019, the adoption team had succeeded in getting more than 200,000 employees and vendors to adopt Teams as their primary communications and collaboration platform.

This case study is part of a series on how CSEO deployed Teams across Microsoft. To learn specifics about the upgrade, read the technical case study "[Upgrading to Microsoft Teams from Skype for Business at Microsoft](#)." To learn about the Teams meeting experience, read the business article "[Enabling simplified, modern meetings with an integrated Microsoft Teams solution](#)" and the technical case study "[With Microsoft Teams Rooms, comes a globally scalable modern meeting experience](#)."

Developing a change management plan for cultural transformation

One of the adoption team's first efforts was to develop a change management plan that addressed adoption over time and across the enterprise. Key issues to be addressed included:

- When groups would upgrade
- What resources needed to be developed to support that upgrade
- What channels would best create awareness and drive enthusiasm
- What messages and programs needed to be rolled out at different points along the upgrade timeline

The adoption team addressed each issue accordingly.

An organizational approach to adoption

When Microsoft encourages employees to adopt new product releases, it often makes the releases available on a geographic basis. But because Microsoft Teams itself operates as a communications and collaboration hub for teams—whose members, in the case of Microsoft, maybe anywhere in the world—the adoption team lobbied for upgrading by organization rather than geography.

Because this would be a different approach to rollout, the adoption team understood that they would have to work closely with key organizational influencers. The core adoption team expanded to include members of CSEO's End User Services Engineering team who established relationships with personnel in the offices of each Microsoft Executive Vice President (EVP). These individuals worked closely with the members of each EVP's organization, including the chiefs of staff, executive administrators, communications leads, and others.

This opened a channel through which the adoption team members could provide each organization with relevant information, updates, and timely content. It also facilitated the movement of relevant feedback from each group to the developers in the product engineering organization who were actively building and improving the Teams product.

These interactions helped the team understand each organization's business needs and prioritize a rollout plan in a way that was most supportive of those needs (e.g., not upgrading sales teams during year end closing or finance teams at the start of a new quarter when they were closing the previous quarter's books). These interactions also enabled Microsoft to delay the upgrades of certain organizations that relied heavily on features that were not yet fully realized in the still-evolving product.

See "[Upgrading to Microsoft Teams from Skype for Business at Microsoft](#)" to learn more about how Microsoft determined the order of Teams rollout at Microsoft.

A phased adoption of Microsoft Teams within work groups

When Microsoft Teams became generally available to employees, in March 2017, Microsoft ran Teams and Skype for Business side by side in what is known as *Islands mode*. For the next 16 months, employees could explore Teams and become familiar with its collaboration features and improved meeting audio/video quality. They would continue to rely on Skype for Business for PSTN calls. In October 2018, individual work groups within Microsoft would begin switching over to *Teams-only mode*. This cut-over would take place in phases, with different groups cutting over according to the priority schedule worked out with the EVPs and their team leaders.

To drive adoption with this phased approach in mind, the adoption team developed training and evangelism campaigns. They supported those campaigns with a communications and channels strategy designed to deliver key messages to employees at critical transition points.

Refining adoption plans using metrics and a data-driven listening strategy

To ensure that the messaging, training, and adoption programs were succeeding, the adoption team developed metrics and a data-driven listening strategy that would provide insights into the effectiveness of these programs. The strategy included use of the following:

- Programs to monitor and analyze key communications resources within Microsoft (such as Yammer and selected corporate resource portals) for issues and shifts in employee sentiment as it related to Teams
- Mechanisms for tracking who installed Microsoft Teams, who signed up for training, and who attended training
- User surveys

Using analytical tools already present within the Office 365 admin content pack, the adoption team created a Power BI dashboard with which they could capture these insights and monitor the success of the programs.

See “[Upgrading to Microsoft Teams from Skype for Business at Microsoft](#)” to learn more about how Microsoft used metrics and listening systems to improve the adoption of Teams.

Engagements designed to drive adoption and enthusiasm

To create an understanding of the benefits of Microsoft Teams—and to create enthusiasm among employees for this new way of working—the adoption team needed content that could be delivered to employees at different stages of the adoption journey. Accordingly, they developed a training program that would teach employees both how to use Teams to perform their current tasks and how to use it as a hub for teamwork. They focused on training employees to think and work *differently* to achieve better results.

The Art of Teamwork training

The adoption team developed what came to be known as the Art of Teamwork training program. The Art of Teamwork consisted of two courses—a 100-level introductory course and a 200-level intermediary course—in which team members introduced the key concepts of Microsoft Teams. They provided practical guidance on how—and when—to use different features of this collaboration and communications hub.

- The 100-level Art of Teamwork course helped employees become productive with Teams. It focused on conceptualizing work in new and different ways. It also addressed questions such as when to engage others using the chat and channels features of Teams, and when to engage others using traditional tools such as email and Yammer. Explaining the value of Teams as the hub for daily work, the central space for engaging team members, and the value of increasing work transparency, was a critical goal. By the end of this hands-on training session, users had a much stronger conceptual understanding of how, when, and why to use Teams.
- The 200-level Art of Teamwork course extended the material presented in the 100-level course by showing trainees how Teams could enhance the business process within different organizations. Trainers examined how Teams could be used effectively in any scenario, but also offered four distinct outlines for how the following organizational types might set up Teams and channels: sales, engineering, operations, and event management. This helped team owners understand how they might set up a team and how they could move business processes and people to Teams.

The team’s early sessions were delivered live around the Redmond campus, where they strategically chose buildings located close to key building clusters. Once they had launched the in-person sessions, they began delivering online sessions that employees could join from wherever they were in the world. They also began offering sessions multiple times per week in different time zones, with trainers in the Redmond location as well as one in Singapore and one in the UK. This enabled them to reach many more of their users around the globe.

Both 100- and 200-level training courses provided live demos of Teams so employees could see it in action. Instructors highlighted the “delighters”—the small and large features of Teams that would make employees more productive (and often let them have fun at the same time). They highlighted best practices and practical-use cases, while leaving plenty of time for Q&A at the end of a session to address employees’ specific questions and concerns.

The effect of these programs was soon clear: The Art of Teamwork training program had a significant impact on adoption. Those who took the training embraced Teams functionality more quickly than those who did not. Even more significantly, further analysis of adoption indicated that training even *one* person in an organization had a positive effect on adoption *throughout* the organization. Training just one person on a team positively influenced, on average, six additional people who had not otherwise been trained to take advantage of Teams.

White Glove training engagements

The adoption team members kept the Art of Teamwork training broad to meet the needs of the largest audiences. Since there was often little time after a standard training session to address questions relating to individual teams’ specific business scenarios, the adoption team developed what came to be known as White Glove training engagements.

White Glove training engagements were customized to meet the needs and questions of groups who wanted a deeper level of training or who wanted to cover scenarios specific to their business needs and processes. The team also delivered customized White Glove training to Microsoft executives whose schedules didn’t allow them to attend Art of Teamwork sessions but who wanted to understand how Microsoft Teams could be used to support the activities of their organization. They also tailored engagements to meet the needs of individuals responsible for executing their organization’s specific business processes in Teams.

Over time, demand for White Glove training expanded. Eventually, the team engaged the Productivity Studio, an entity within CSEO that partners with organizations across the company to help solve complex business problems through custom solutions. The Productivity Studio established a formal training request/intake process through which they gathered information about the specific kind of training that the requester needed, shared that information with the trainers, and then scheduled a White Glove training event onsite or through an online webinar.

The Teamwork Champions program

In addition to the Art of Teamwork and White Glove training programs, the adoption team implemented another program: the Teamwork Champions program.

The idea behind the Teamwork Champions program was to recruit early Microsoft Teams enthusiasts and provide them with both resources and reasons to train users and evangelize the benefit of Teams within the groups and organizations they could influence. Early on, the adoption team identified a group of 20 enthusiasts who were active in answering questions about Teams on Yammer and who had expressed interest in Teams by opting in to an early-adopter program called Elite. The adoption team reached out to these individuals to see if they would be interested in deepening their understanding of Teams and helping to promote the Art of Teamwork training within their work groups.

For many enthusiasts, the opportunity to promote a technology about which they feel passionate is its own reward, but the adoption team felt that an even sweeter package would be more effective in encouraging the evangelism they wanted to ignite. They created physical and digital swag, including badges that employees could use in their Office 365 profile pictures (see Figure 1), to showcase affiliation with the Teamwork Champions program. They also created a private Teamwork Champions team *within* Teams. This private team provided the Champions with an exclusive forum in which to confer with other Champions, ask questions of the adoption team, get answers, and share ideas and success stories. Additionally, the adoption team coordinated a monthly call in which the Teamwork Champions could engage directly with the adoption team and members of the Microsoft Teams Engineering Group. When something new was about to happen in Teams, the Teamwork Champions would always be the first to know.

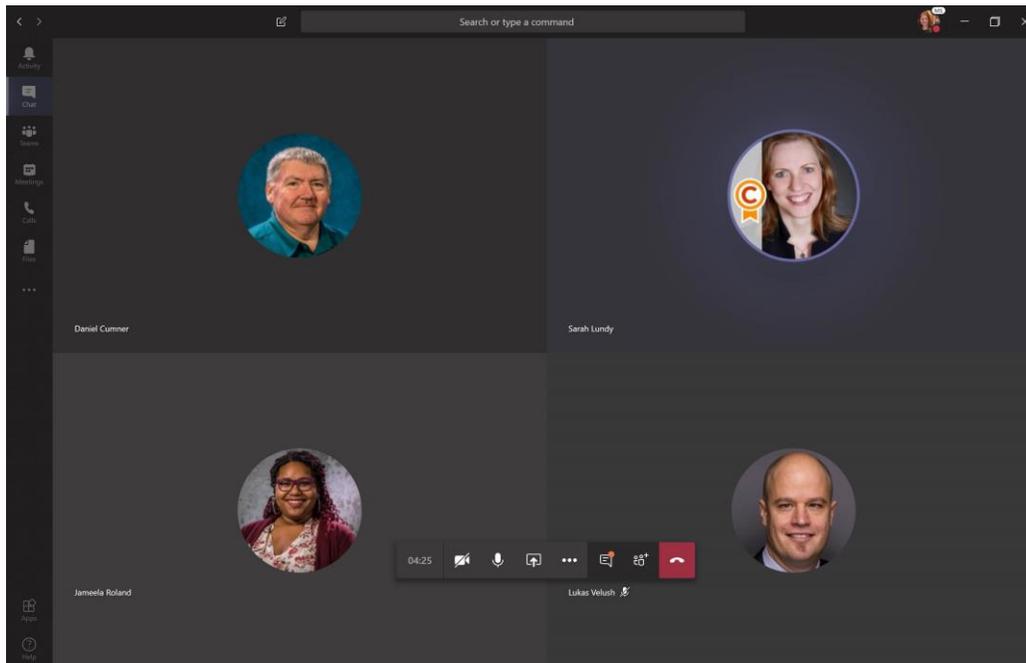


Figure 1. In this Teams meeting, a digital badge in the profile picture makes the Teamwork Champion instantly recognizable

In exchange for this, the adoption team asked prospective Teamwork Champions to actively engage in the Teams Yammer group and Champions community, to schedule monthly office hours to answer questions from colleagues about Teams, and to run one or more Art of Teamwork training sessions each month for their organization. The adoption team provided “Train the trainer” sessions weekly and created a turnkey package of materials for Champions to land both the 100- and 200-level Art of Teamwork training.

When the adoption team launched the Teamwork Champions program in February 2018, they were hoping to recruit as many as 75 Teamwork Champions by the end of the year. After recruiting the initial 20 Champions, they added a page promoting the Champions program on the IT intranet, CSEWeb. They also began mentioning it in the What's Next blog and on the Microsoft Teams Yammer channel. At the same time, the adoption team found that the newly empowered Teamwork Champions were not shy in their evangelism of both Teams and the Teamwork Champions program. By the end of 2018, instead of having 75 participants, the Teamwork Champions program had more than 1,000—in 158 buildings and 57 countries/regions. Teamwork Champions across the globe were evangelizing the benefits of Teams, helping users and groups in their facilities learn new ways of working. They engaged with the broader Microsoft community in blog posts, Yammer discussions, and every place imaginable to promote the value of this new approach to collaboration and communication.

The contribution provided by the Teamwork Champions cannot be overstated. Today, more than 1,400 individuals are involved in the Teamwork Champions program, and in buildings where Teamwork Champions are present, the adoption of Teams proceeded more quickly and more extensively than in buildings that had no resident Teamwork Champion. The Champions' ability to promote the benefits of Teams, their infectious enthusiasm for the product, and their willingness to provide onsite classroom training and one-on-one tutelage have amplified the efforts of the adoption team in measurable and palpable ways.

Communications designed to drive awareness and engagement

The adoption team took advantage of existing cultural traditions and resources within Microsoft to drive awareness and engage with employees. The key messages about Microsoft Teams and its benefits were developed by the Teams product-marketing group. Their work informed many aspects of the adoption team's approach for creating awareness about Teams and its benefits. Figure 5, which appears later in this section, highlights the rollout of various communications campaigns up to and after the cut-over to Teams.

CSEWeb

CSEWeb is a site on the Microsoft intranet where employees can go to reach support channels or find self-serve information about the technologies used at Microsoft. The adoption team built a page on CSEWeb dedicated to Microsoft Teams (Figure 2) that became one of the principal channels through which they conveyed information about the product, the Art of Teamwork training program, the Teamwork Champions program, and other news.

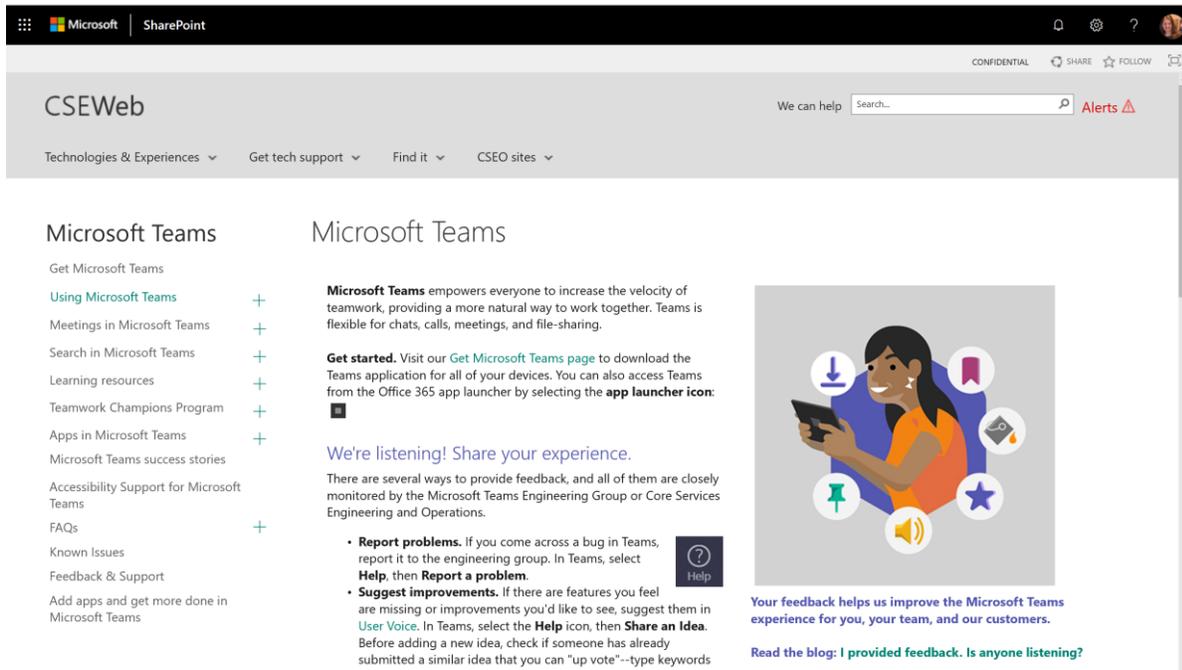


Figure 2. The CSEWeb page for Microsoft Teams

The adoption team used CSEWeb to drive awareness about Teams through the following:

- Announcements and updates
- Instructions for installing the desktop and mobile apps
- Learning guides, videos, and training
- Frequently asked questions
- Known issues
- Information about feedback and support channels
- Links to related blogs

Because there is a longstanding tradition of turning to CSEWeb for information, it made perfect sense to use the site as a foundational element for driving adoption. The adoption team made sure that the site’s Teams page always reflected the latest updates and information as it related to the Teams product and programs.

The What’s Next blog

The Microsoft What’s Next blog (Figure 3) covers many aspects of technology at Microsoft. It acts as a forum for discussing product evolution and strategy, as well as the benefits to users of adopting new Microsoft technologies. As another part of its communications and outreach strategy, the adoption team chose this as a core channel through which they announced details about the upgrade from Skype for Business to Microsoft Teams. Thereafter, they continued to use the blog to engage Microsoft employees and inform them about the evolution and rollout of Teams.

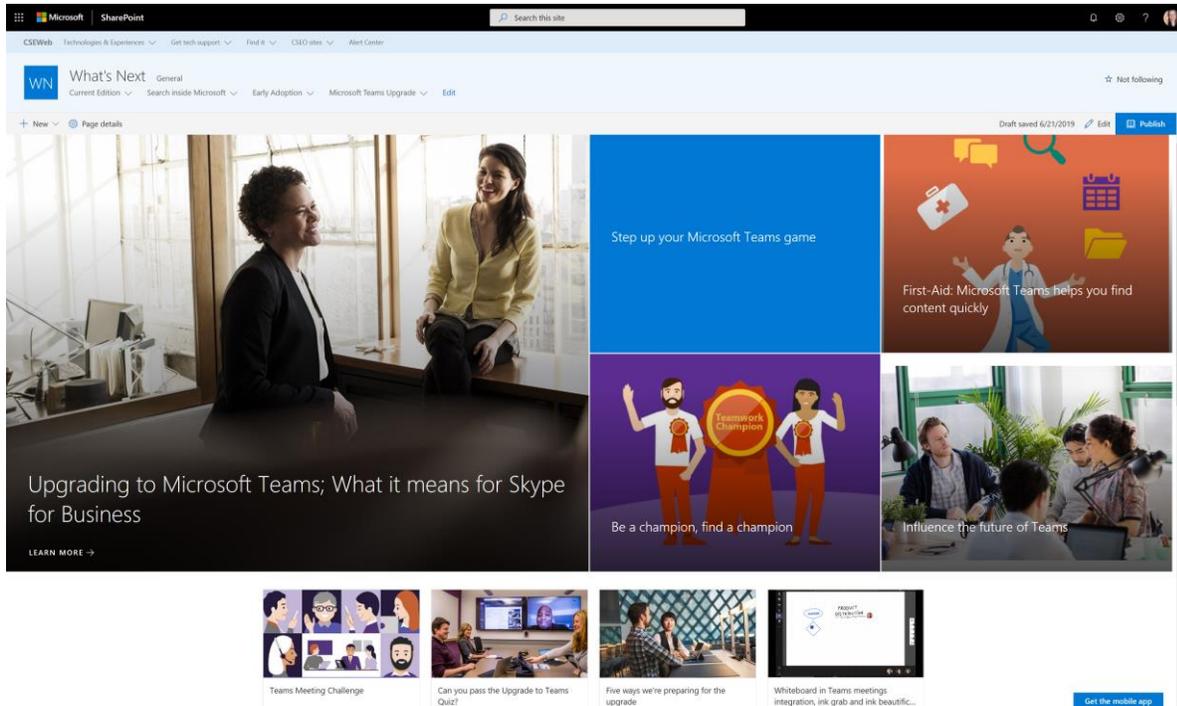


Figure 3. The Microsoft What's Next blog

Yammer

Microsoft has long used Yammer as a means of holding corporate-wide conversations on a broad range of topics. Where CSEWeb operates passively (that is, employees must actively visit CSEWeb to discover new content), Yammer operates actively, pushing new content and conversations throughout the company.

The adoption team used Yammer to engage employees in several ways:

- As a conduit for direct questions: The Microsoft Teams Yammer group enables employees to ask questions directly of both the CSEO team and the product group—on everything from how-tos to complicated customer IT pro questions.
- As a marketing channel: The adoption team promoted new readiness content and training, blogs, events, new features, key messages, and other news. The promotional posts on Yammer typically pointed to deeper content on CSEWeb or the What's Next blog. The team also embedded learning videos directly in Yammer posts.
- As a support mechanism: Employees encountering difficulty with Teams could open helpdesk tickets in the Yammer support channel and work with support personnel directly through Yammer chat.
- As a discussion channel: Because the Microsoft What's Next blog is built on Microsoft SharePoint and integrated with Yammer, the conversations about blog posts take place in Yammer.
- As part of CSEO's unified communications strategy: Whenever the adoption team sent an email to employees having to do with the upgrade to Teams, a link in that message would enable recipients to ask non-support questions and provide feedback through the Ask CSEO Yammer channel. Per longstanding CSEO policy, all email communications from CSEO must include a link to the Ask CSEO Yammer channel so that employees can get in touch with the CSEO organization managing a technology change.

Utilizing the Teams Yammer group, the adoption team was able to push content throughout the company—about new blog posts, success stories, training videos, and much more. The responses to a given Yammer post also flowed actively through the company, which often spawned new questions and conversations about Teams. Naturally, this furthered awareness and expanded interest in the product and the rollout.

Members of the adoption team, the Product Engineering Team, and the Teamwork Champions constantly monitored the conversations on Yammer. This was done as a way to engage with the user community directly, and to learn about issues or

concerns that might need to be addressed through training or a messaging campaign. The adoption team also developed blog posts, training videos, and other materials in response to ideas and conversational threads.

Digital and physical signage

To further promote awareness about Microsoft Teams and Teams-related events, the adoption team took advantage of digital and physical signage installed within Microsoft facilities and on campuses. They used the flexibility of digital signage to present employees and site visitors with different messages in different locations at different times. This enabled them to make timely campus- and location-specific announcements. When the adoption team began providing the Art of Teamwork training sessions on the Redmond campus, for example, they promoted the sessions with general digital signage about the tour. In advance of each session, they used targeted digital signage inside the buildings where the sessions were held. The adoption team also used the same content and visuals in Yammer posts (see Figure 4) and other communications.

Additionally, the adoption team drove excitement about Teams by using banners, posters, and other physical signage at large Microsoft campuses around the world. Signage had been used when Teams first became available for employees at GA (long before any employee felt a pressing need to learn to use the product), and the adoption team used it again ahead of the upgrade to Teams (when employees *would* need to learn to make the most of the product). On a day when an Art of Teamwork training session would be taking place, the adoption team placed banners outside the meeting room where the session would be held. The physical signage highlighted key messaging around the benefits of Teams and pointed readers to the CSEWeb page for more content and training.

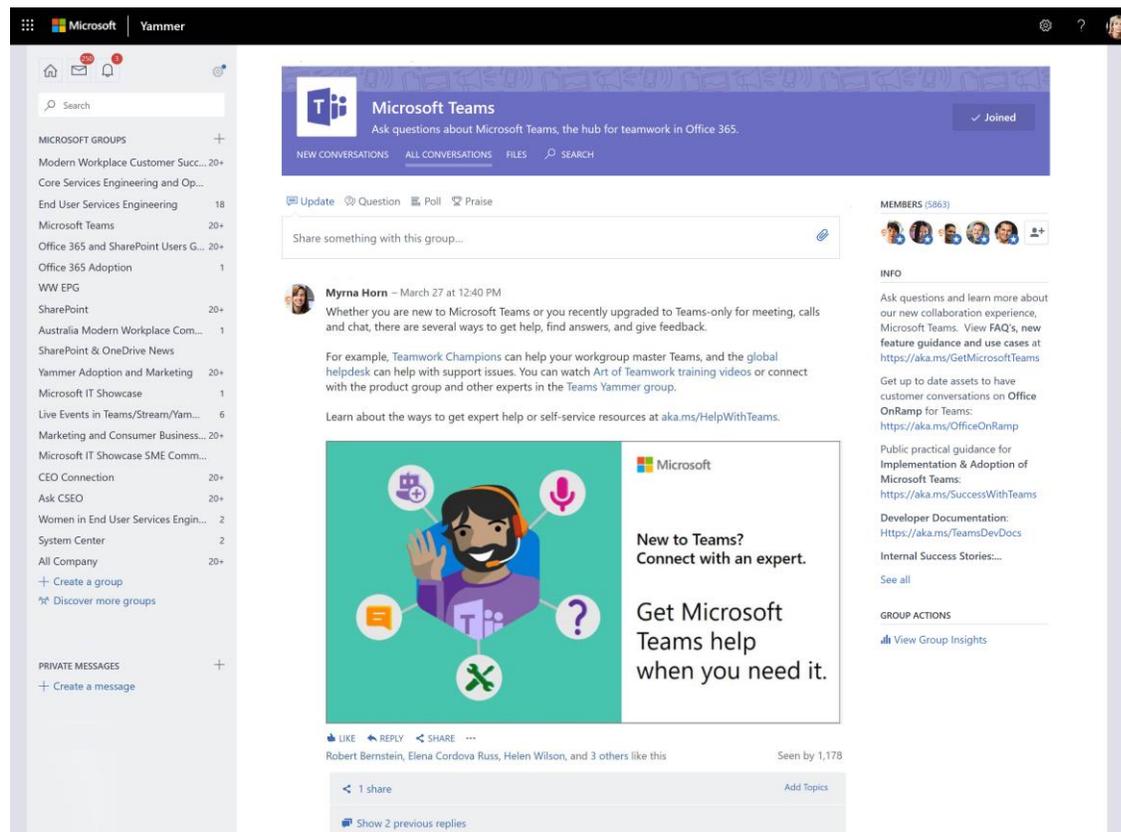


Figure 4. Digital signage was also used as illustrations in Yammer posts

Email

To minimize inbox bloat, traditional email was used sparingly to communicate information about Microsoft Teams. Email went out primarily to accomplish the following:

- To alert employees in buildings where training sessions would be taking place.

- To alert organization members in the weeks and days counting down to an announced Teams-only cut-over date. Emails were templated and sent out on a specific timeline to ensure a smooth transition and to enable users to opt out of the cut-over if there were some reason they couldn't move on the announced date.

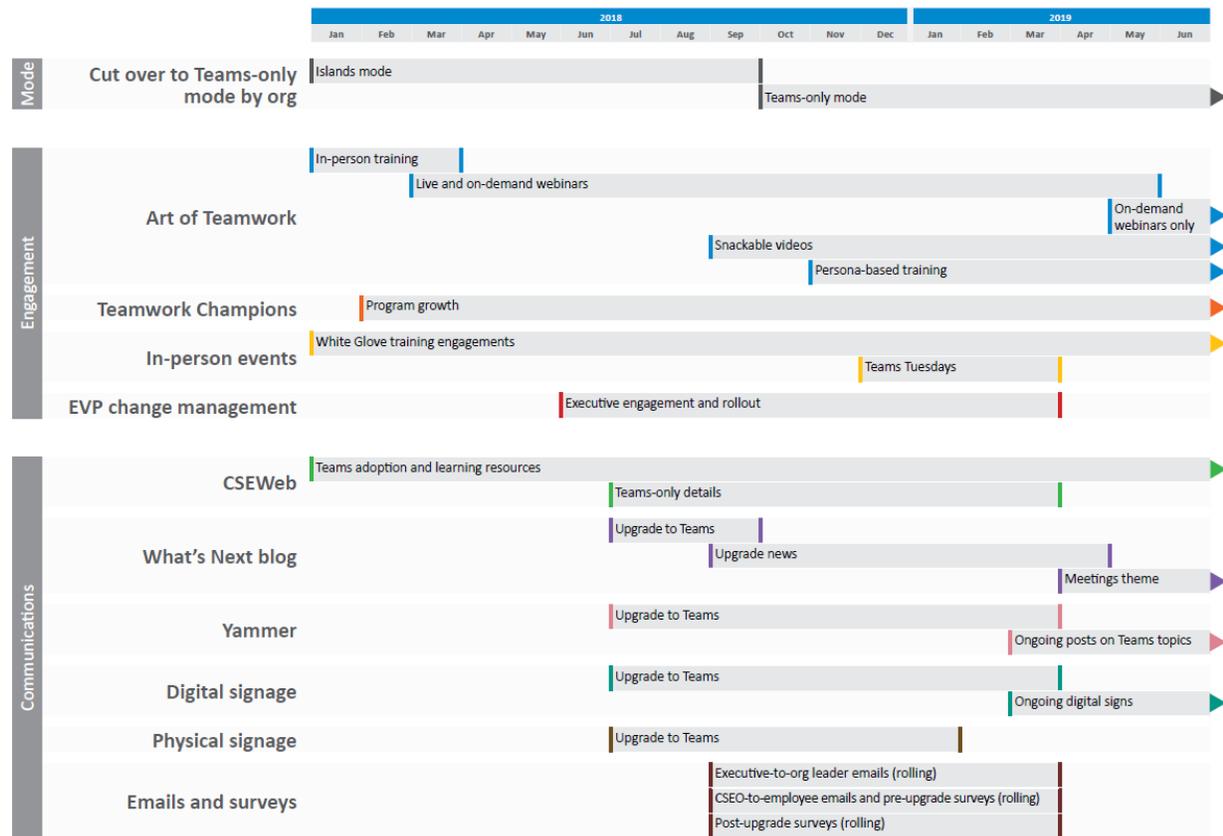


Figure 5. The adoption activities timeline

Monitor, measure, and adjust as needed

As noted previously, the adoption team developed a data-driven strategy to determine the effectiveness of their adoption efforts. They built a set of engagement and adoption metrics to gain critical insights:

- Who attended the Art of Teamwork training sessions
- Who worked under the same manager as the attendee of the Art of Training session, but did not attend themselves
- The activity of users in buildings where Teamwork Champions are located

Using data from the Office 365 tenant admin center, the team created a Power BI dashboard (Figure 6) that helped provide insight into the effectiveness of training and Champions programs, as well as the adoption rate of key features related to the upgrade to Microsoft Teams. By looking at parity-function usage for attendees and “users under the same direct manager,” the team determined that on average, for every one user trained, six other users had increased usage in the key function areas. Analyzing Teams telemetry and metrics in the dashboard, the team could assess its month-to-month progress and determine whether these efforts were effective.

Readiness and usage

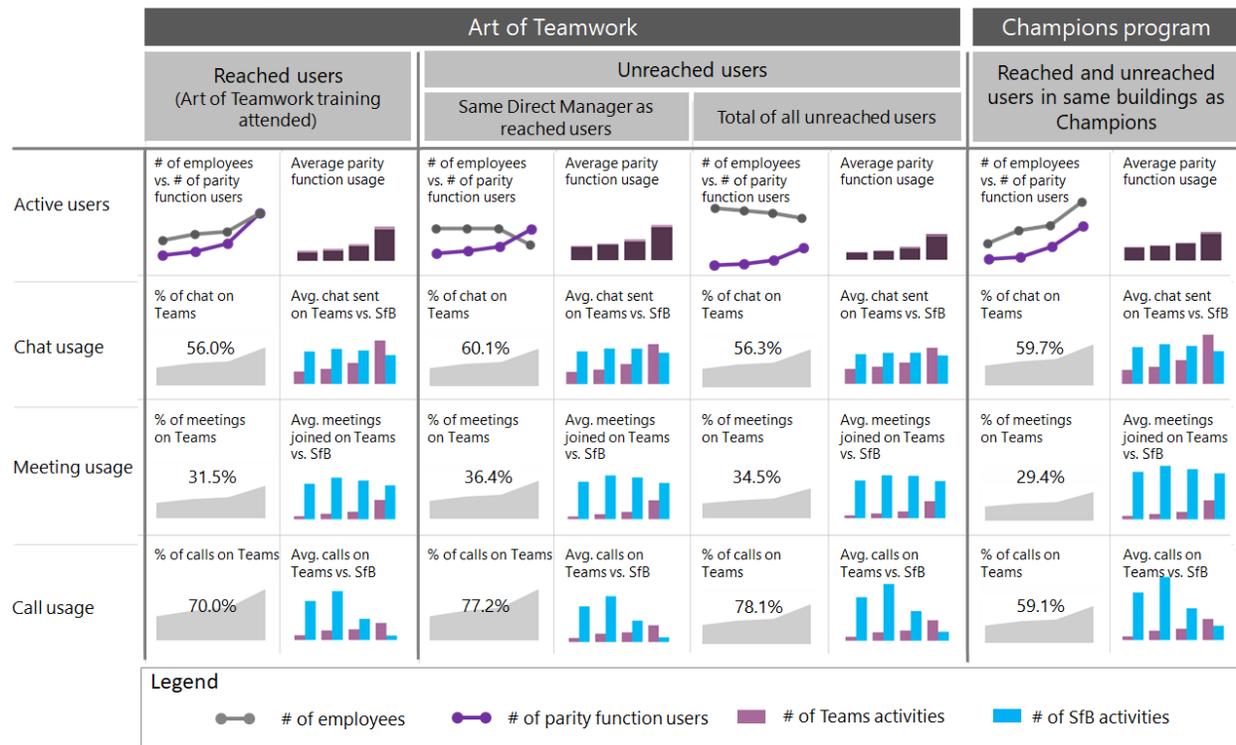


Figure 6. The adoption team used a Power BI dashboard to visualize the impact of Art of Teamwork training on adoption. These pre-upgrade metrics are used for illustrative purposes only.

Members of the adoption team gained still more insight by creating user feedback surveys that they distributed at numerous touchpoints—including after Art of Teamwork training, after White Glove training sessions, and before and after the Teams upgrade. The team analyzed this input to discover needs in the experience, potential new areas to cover in training, and additional opportunities to engage users to help them on their transition journey.

Managing all the moving pieces

All this data and user feedback facilitated effective management of the overall approach to the Microsoft transition. The data told the adoption team when and where they were (or were not) having successes—in key usage metrics, in training effectiveness and program effectiveness. Where efforts were not having the desired effect, the team could drill into the data and seek clues as to how they might modify the approach, messaging or channel to achieve the desired results. Where their efforts were producing the desired results, they could drill into the details to understand why those things were working.

With these insights, the adoption team could modify its timelines, adjust its awareness campaigns, and revise its efforts to increase Microsoft Teams adoption. Furthermore, by implementing changes quickly—particularly in response to user feedback—and by highlighting those changes through the What’s Next blog, the CSEWeb page, and other awareness channels, employees could see that the team, and CSE more broadly, was actively listening to user community input and responding as quickly as possible.

Evolving the engagement effort

At a high level, this ability to review campaign-progress data provided an opportunity for the adoption team to operate in an agile manner, with a release, review, revise, and repeat approach to driving Microsoft Teams adoption. The team discovered that certain efforts worked in unexpected ways, so they quickly evolved programs to foster those successes and they took steps to address any shortcomings as quickly as possible. These are some of the modifications that evolved over time:

Persona-based training

Sharp-eyed personnel on the adoption team noticed that executive administrators (EAs) within Microsoft were critical to the adoption of Microsoft Teams by executives within the organization. Furthermore, they could see from the data that when executives adopted Teams, the organization adopted Teams. They quickly realized, because EAs routinely manage their executives' calendars and meeting schedules, they had significant influence on the overall uptake of Teams in their organizations. When the EAs adopted Teams to manage their executives' calendars, this helped move the executives themselves into Teams and so passed on to their direct reports, helping them make a point of engaging via Teams to stay in the loop. Conversely, when EAs hadn't been trained—or appeared to be struggling with features of Teams—there could be a slower adoption of the product, both by the executive and by that executive's direct reports.

To foster the uptake of Teams by the EAs, adoption team personnel created another Art of Teamwork course, a second 200-level course designed specifically around the persona of an EA and the workstreams essential to their daily tasks. Executive administrators taking this course gain insights into how they could best use Teams to support their own work as well as their executives—which in turn has the desired effect of promoting Teams adoption by their executive's direct reports.

Based on the success of this type of persona-based training, the adoption team is currently working on other persona-based training modules.

Multimodal training

The adoption team captured the Level 100 and 200 training programs on video and made them available as training that could be consumed on-demand. The team then promoted the availability of these videos on the awareness channels already established (the Microsoft Teams page on CSEWeb, Yammer, and so on). (The timeline in Figure 5 depicts when these on-demand webinars became available.)

Initially the adoption team thought that the video versions of these training programs would be consumed primarily by those who could not find time in their schedules to attend a live Art of Teamwork training session. What they learned, though, was that there were quite a few employees who preferred a recorded session. People like to learn in different ways and the adoption team quickly understood they could make it easier by releasing different types of programs to meet users where they were, in the manner in which they liked to learn.

Snackable content

The success of the Art of Teamwork training programs prompted the adoption team to expand the types of content they made available online. Knowing that some people preferred to take a few minutes at a time to understand scenario-based guidance, the team began producing short videos—three to five minutes in runtime—to provide tips and answers to frequently asked questions. These videos could be accessed on Stream, through CSEWeb and What's Next blog links. As usage questions arose—for example, how does one search for older content in Microsoft Teams?—the adoption team responded by creating short, engaging videos that provide the answers. (The timeline in Figure 5 shows when the snackable videos became available.)

Accessibility considerations

The data collected by the adoption team indicated that most employees had a strong positive response to the Art of Teamwork training. However, it also indicated that employees who relied on the assistance of screen-reader technologies were consistently less positive in their assessments. While Microsoft Teams itself was built to be compliant with Microsoft Accessibility Standards (MAS), the adoption team members learned that the visually assistive technologies themselves added a layer of complexity that the Art of Teamwork training itself had not initially taken into consideration.

In response, members of the adoption team leveraged the Art of Teamwork framework to develop a modular training series specifically designed for users working with screen-reader technologies. The Teams-focused content of these training modules cover the same functionality and workflows, with the added layer of using Teams with screen-reader technologies.

Teams Tuesdays

As the cut-over clocks ticked down toward the day when groups would be moving to a Teams-only mode (see Figure 5), the adoption team created a new engagement campaign that came to be known as Teams Tuesdays. As illustrated in Figure 7, this was essentially a feet-on-the-street effort in which adoption team members held events—always on a Tuesday—in different buildings at different Microsoft facilities. Physical signage and messages in strategic Yammer groups would announce the

location of a Teams Tuesday event. The team members running the events would answer questions, promote local Teamwork Champions, hold Teams Trivia Contests, and award prizes to winners—all with the aim of engaging employees and promoting awareness of Microsoft Teams. The Teams Tuesdays program covered 11 campuses in the Puget Sound area and received much positive feedback from users.



Figure 7. Engaging employees on Teams Tuesday

Lessons learned

Driving cultural change in an organization as large and as distributed as Microsoft poses huge challenges, particularly when that cultural change is being driven by a small team. But the adoption team's efforts to foster a new way of working and to move users to a new hub for collaboration and communications have proven successful. In the two years since Microsoft Teams was first made available for early adopters to explore, more than 200,000 Microsoft employees and vendors have been moved into Teams-only mode. Most of those who have not upgraded have retained their existing systems because of regional regulatory matters.

Numerous lessons learned and best practices—related to engaging users, training teams, and raising awareness—have emerged from these efforts to drive adoption.

Engaging users

- Executive sponsorship is critical to adoption. Because Microsoft Teams enhances collaboration and communications within a team, adoption success can be facilitated by engaging the head of the team. A simple message from a manager or leader within an organization saying that they're using Teams for their communications and meetings can be a powerful cue to the members of that organization that they should use it as well.
- Engaging an executive's administrative assistant furthers the effectiveness of executive sponsorship. The EA generally controls the executive's calendar and communications. This ensures that any of the executive's direct reports who want to participate in the executive's meetings and calls will themselves become adept at using Teams.
- Create a product champions community to increase the momentum of user adoption. Early on, Microsoft engaged employees who were clearly passionate about using Teams. Their passion and their ability to influence and teach others played a crucial role in generating excitement for Teams—not just among the immediate peers of these champions but also within the facility in which they work.

Training

- Microsoft Teams training programs had both direct and indirect benefits. Employees who took or watched the Art of Teamwork training programs were more adept at working with Teams and quicker to adopt all the communications features that they had previously relied on Skype for Business to provide.

- After even one user in a team had received training in Teams, data showed that other members under the same direct manager, not formally trained in the use of Teams, began to use Teams more frequently and were faster to master Teams features than the group of individuals who did not attend training. On average, one trained user positively affected the adoption of Teams among six untrained users.
- It's important to become aware of *what* people do within an organization and *how* they use technology to meet their goals. In trainings, the team found greater success when employees learned how they could use Teams to accomplish their goals—not just how the chat or channels functions worked.
 - Create prescriptive guidance around best practices, tips and tricks, and how-to scenarios that people can access at any time. The team learned how important it is to evolve help and training offerings in response to questions and issues that arose. For example, the “snackable” videos have proven helpful at Microsoft.
- In delivering the Art of Teamwork training and in listening to the conversations taking place about employees' experience of Teams, it was discovered how important it is to understand the working styles and technological sophistication of users—to tune the messaging, training, and engagement with users appropriately.
 - It's important to present users with new methods of directing their attention and gauging their productivity in a less structured workspace.
 - Employees already accustomed to using communications and social media tools such as Yammer, Slack, Twitter, and Discord may intuitively understand the benefits that Teams delivers. In contrast, employees who do not use such tools may find the transparency of some communication tools within Teams noisy and confusing. Change managers need to know their audiences and prepare training that meets users where they are.
 - It can be helpful to show users how to set up notification strategies and help them learn what kinds of conversations and posts to follow and prioritize. New users also benefit from instruction that helps them understand which tools are most appropriate for various types of communication, and for communicating with different audiences at different times (the public or private chats in Teams vs. Yammer posts or traditional email, for example).
- The team learned how important it is to develop multimodal training options from the start. No one training mode will suit all users. Some learn best by reading, others through video or audible training, and still others through hands-on training.
- Finally, the team found that simply having a product that conforms to accessibility guidelines is not enough. It's critical to develop training programs from the perspective of users requiring assistive technologies. Users who rely on screen-reading technologies, for example, will require training that takes into consideration the presentation of Teams in those technologies.

Raising awareness

- When creating a communications plan to encourage adoption, the team found it valuable to target messaging by audience segment. They also found it useful to take advantage of all available communication channels when reaching out to audiences.
- Adoption and enthusiasm increased when the team proactively answered key questions about Microsoft Teams, including:
 - What's in it for the users? Why should they make a shift from critical communications tools with which they are already familiar? What difference will Teams make to them?
 - What are the advantages of using Teams—for individuals *and* groups?
 - During the transition from Skype for Business to Teams, which applications should they use when?
 - How does Teams work with Office 365 Groups?
- As the adoption drive progresses, the messaging must evolve. The story changes as users grow more adept at using Teams, and the team managing the transition needs to re-evaluate and iterate to ensure the delivery of the right messages at the right place and time.

Fostering a cultural change across the enterprise

Driving the adoption of Microsoft Teams at Microsoft involved nothing less than driving the adoption of a new culture and a new way of working. To succeed, the adoption team knew they had to change minds as well as habits.

Key to the success of this endeavor was the active engagement of a relatively small number of people who came together from different parts of CSEO to form a virtual team focused on change management and adoption. This team engaged directly with key executive sponsors throughout Microsoft. They developed critical training and evangelism programs, a channel strategy for

engaging employees and communicating key messages, and feedback and monitoring mechanisms through which they could objectively determine whether their activities were achieving the desired outcomes. They doubled down on those that worked and continuously pressed forward.

Ultimately, the results speak for themselves. Within 15 months of formally commencing the drive to Teams, the adoption team could rightly claim to have changed the way more than 200,000 Microsoft employees and vendors collaborate and communicate. As a consequence of certain local regulatory requirements, a small number of employees remain in Islands mode—utilizing Teams for collaboration with limited reliance on Skype for Business for communication—but for the majority of Microsoft employees, Teams is now the de facto communications and collaboration hub.

While the data from surveys and Teams-only usage metrics provides clear and compelling evidence that employees are embracing and even enjoying this new way of working, the work of the adoption team continues. The journey ahead for the team involves helping employees integrate business processes into the hub at deeper levels to experience even more of the extensibility and productivity gains that Teams offers. As they continue their efforts, the adoption team will build on the best practices they've already developed, adding additional guidance and support to help employees embrace an entirely new culture of work.

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