

Five Reasons your IT Team Will Benefit from a Collaboration Suite



As an IT leader, you are constantly anticipating and responding to the evolving technology needs of your business. As a result, you may be under pressure to evaluate, understand, and eventually adopt varied “best-in-breed” solutions for your team members. Some employees may be actively asking for new tools or even be taking it upon themselves to install them to address specific needs they have. Others may be fatigued and sceptical of learning to use yet another new app or solution.

While it’s important to understand everyone’s needs, ultimately, your employees need to be able to collaborate and communicate securely, wherever and however they work. Everyday, they are sharing files, working remotely, and exchanging knowledge across departments—and the tools they use need to reflect this. Fragmented, stand-alone solutions cause headaches for your employees and your IT team. Point solutions present a variety of problems including: increased costs and complexity, holes in security and compliance, limited ability to scale, and diminished productivity. Your IT team will be responsible for overseeing the maintenance, security, and administration of tools from a variety of vendors which will take valuable time away from key technology programs. Even without the complexity of managing dozens of independent programs, the potential for high-level information overload is enough to push anyone past sanity.



“So how do you deliver the best of modern collaboration, while reducing the complexity challenges? Use a platform that seamlessly blends as many of these features into a single user experience as possible.”

Alan Lepofsky
Vice President and Principal Analyst,
Constellation Research

¹ “Why Your Organisation Should Buy a Collaboration Platform Instead of Best-of-Breed Solutions,” 2015, Constellation Research, Inc.



The solution? An all-encompassing suite of collaboration tools that enable productivity more effectively than fragmented point solutions. When your team has the tools it needs to succeed and the tools seamlessly work together, everybody wins. Not only will employees be more productive, but your IT team will feel confident knowing every tool is supported and secure. A Constellation Research report notes that “platforms excel at providing a common set of attributes” that can be appreciated by both IT administration and end users with limited technology backgrounds.¹

¹ “Why Your Organisation Should Buy a Collaboration Platform Instead of Best-of-Breed Solutions,” 2015, Constellation Research, Inc.

Using an all-encompassing collaboration suite saves time, money, and sanity.

Employees will be able to more easily collaborate, communicate, and share because all their tools will be on one platform—improving search capabilities and eliminating the need to switch between various programs. Your IT team will be dealing with one vendor for implementation—rather than dozens—resulting in far fewer requests for general support, updates, training, and password resets.

When you adopt a suite solution with comprehensive productivity and collaboration tools, your employees will have everything they need. They will be able to experience how easily the solutions work together, enabling seamless collaboration across departments. With Microsoft Office 365, you and your employees can feel confident in a suite that contains some of the best tools on the market, like SharePoint.

Curious about what else an all-encompassing solution can do for you? Review five key reasons to move to a collaboration suite for your productivity needs.



REASON 1

Save time and increase productivity

The ability to quickly access information and communicate seamlessly from anywhere using any document or tool enables teams to work faster and smarter. With employees and departments working across different floors and offices (or even across the world), sharing ideas and staying in sync becomes simpler with a productivity suite. A hybrid deployment gives IT the flexibility to store content on-premises and in the cloud, while users can easily access content regardless of where it is stored.

With hybrid server systems like Microsoft SharePoint, your organisation's files can be stored and shared securely and at any time. By storing content through Office 365 and connecting your on-premises SharePoint environment services (built with Office Graph and Microsoft MyAnalytics), employees can identify the files they have access to, find relevant connections, then directly share and discuss these files with their teams on Yammer. When programs seamlessly connect, there's no extra work or time wasted.



According to IDC, collaborative applications in the cloud enable employees to work across departments, locations, and organisational boundaries with ease.¹ That's not only great news for local teams looking to improve productivity, but for remote workers or "road warriors" who are on the go more often than they're in the office. According to a Forrester report on the cost savings of collaborative solutions, once companies adopt collaboration software, highly mobile road warrior employees can save about one hour per day after three years of implementation.²

¹ "Worldwide Content Collaboration Software Forecast, 2015–2019," 2015, IDC

² "The Total Economic Impact of Microsoft Office 365: Enterprise Customers," 2015, Forrester Research



“ We have to address the workplace preferences of different generations of employees who expect to be mobile, connected, and productive anytime, anywhere, on any number of devices. That’s exactly the work environment supported by Office 365.”

Deborah Youmans,
Senior Manager of Collaboration Development,
Booz Allen Hamilton

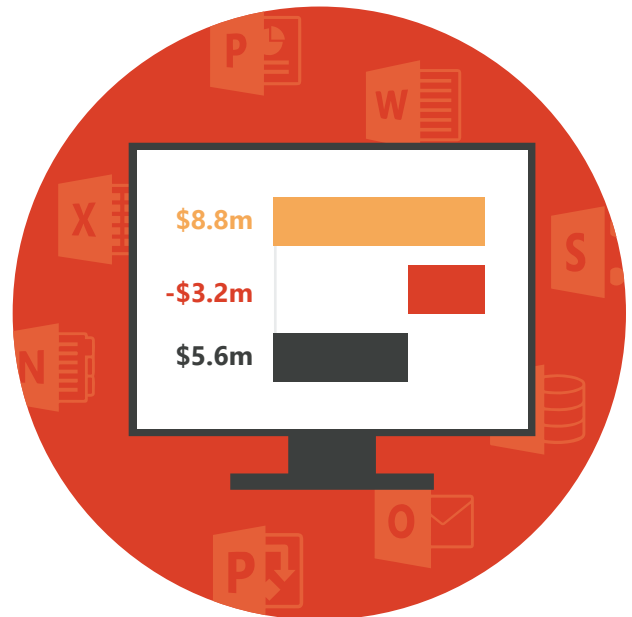
REASON 2

Lower costs and reduce complexity

Collaboration tools are meant to help us, but the licensing costs, service fees, IT resources, and employee downtime can add up. You might be trying to save your company time and money by adding more productivity tools for employees to access, without realising the hidden costs. Combining multiple collaboration tools into one suite can save a staggering amount of money.

By using a single vendor's common set of APIs to create applications that extend information and functionality across one platform, Constellation Research notes both licensing cost and updating time drastically go down. "Platforms offer a single contract instead of having to deal with multiple vendors. This usually results in a much lower overall price than adding together services from multiple best-of-breed solutions. It also removes the administration burden of dealing with multiple renewals."¹

In fact, Forrester Research revealed that, when switching to an all-encompassing platform, organisations can see total benefits of \$8.8 million. On average, total costs only reach \$3.2 million over three years, resulting in a net present value (NPV) of \$5.6 million.²



Switching to an all-encompassing solution can result in:

- \$8.8 million: total benefits
- \$3.2 million: total costs
- \$5.6 million: net present value_(NPV)

¹ "Why Your Organisation Should Buy a Collaboration Platform Instead of Best-of-Breed Solutions," 2015, Constellation Research, Inc

² "The Total Economic Impact of Microsoft Office 365: Enterprise Customers," 2015, Forrester Research

“ Our operational teams take advantage of SharePoint to aggregate information into one view instead of having to access multiple systems.”

Allen Chang,
Manager of IT Innovation and Technology,
Air Canada



Average consolidated total cost of a data breach in 2015 was \$3.8 million—a 23% increase from 2013.¹



REASON 3

Ensure end-to-end security and compliance

With the risk of data breaches continually on the rise, your security team is likely apprehensive about your company's information security posture. And you should be.

Hackers are more prolific than ever, damaging organisations' financial stability, reputation, and employee relations. Additionally, threats can originate from within, when an employee unknowingly puts an organisation at risk, by clicking on malicious links or sharing sensitive information externally using an unsecure app.¹

Using a suite of collaboration tools isn't just more simplistic, it's also more secure. You'll know where your organisation's data is stored, who has access to it, and what methods of security and compliance are protecting it, Constellation Research's Alan Lepofsky explains. "Also, when you tie together multiple tools, information flows back and forth from one vendor to another, rather than staying under the control and governance of a single source."²

¹ "2015 Cost of Data Breach Study", 2015, IBM Corporation

² "Why Your Organisation Should Buy a Collaboration Platform Instead of Best-of-Breed Solutions," 2015, Constellation Research, Inc.



Microsoft's Office 365 platform has built-in safety and privacy features that are available across devices, giving your business peace of mind when it comes to security. You can create management policies and settings to help control who has access to Microsoft Office 365 and its various programs for supported mobile devices. With Mobile Device Management, standard with Office 365 Enterprise, you can also perform selected wipes on any lost or stolen personal devices or company-owned devices. Additionally, Exchange Online Advanced Threat Protection scans all of an organisation's incoming and outgoing email for sophisticated attacks, unsafe attachments, and malicious links.

“Microsoft has worked with us to provide assurances that we are working in an environment that minimises business risk. They are clearly focusing on information security in the cloud.”

Michael Waters,
Director of Enterprise Information Security,
Booz Allen Hamilton



REASON 4

Scale at your own pace

Implementing a suite solution can seem overwhelming. After all, preparing your IT team to get employees up and running can seem like a daunting task, but Microsoft Office 365 lets you move at your own pace. With a suite of tools available to implement, you decide whether to migrate employees over in groups or by program. For example, as many or as few teams as needed can start a video conference or online meeting using Skype for Business, while collaborating on files using OneDrive for Business. The ability to implement a steady rollout enables your team to work at their own pace, allows you to save costs, and increases productivity by helping your business adapt to new streamlined solutions over time. Additionally, FastTrack from Microsoft provides customers with hands-on support to drive deployment and adoption at their own speed.

For Microsoft customer Air Canada, an immediate rollout of all solutions in the suite was not a possibility for its

27,000 international and very mobile employees. In the first stages of the Office 365 migration, Air Canada worked with Microsoft Consulting Services to deploy Active Directory and Office 365 ProPlus, then migrate to Exchange Online and deploy Skype for Business and SharePoint Online. Soon after, Yammer was rolled out across the company (starting in only one branch of the company and growing from there), and employees began using OneDrive for Business.

This full deployment took place within the first 10 months of Air Canada's engagement. Manager of IT Innovation, Allen Chang, credited the Microsoft Consulting Services team for bringing together "multiple outsourcing vendors and getting them to work together to meet [the deployment] schedule."¹

¹ Microsoft Customer Stories: Air Canada

“ Out of approximately 22,500 employees, 21,000 moved 6 terabytes of data to OneDrive for Business in eight months. Sharing information to drive innovation has reached an all-time high at Booz Allen.”

Joseph Atwell,
Technical Architect,
Booz Allen Hamilton



REASON 5

Control the back end

IT's biggest question often remains: This sounds great, but can I manage this transition and maintain this platform with my existing resources? The answer is, yes. With automatic updates and ease of use, IT sees added time-savings when working with just one vendor for migration. With Microsoft Office 365 as your suite of choice, you also get a team of experts to assist you at each step in the process.

Air Canada's Manager of IT Innovation and Technology, Allen Chang, found that implementation moved much faster with Microsoft Office 365, noting they'd only be able to manage simple patches and upgrades if they tried to match the pace. "With Office 365," he noted, "we get the improvements and we can just focus on developing applications to take advantage of them."¹





With simplified programs and a recognisable user interface, employees rely less on IT for infrastructure. With Office 365 Groups, employees can create their own groups and aliases to quickly collaborate and connect, without IT input. And high autonomy means improvements for the business overall.

Likewise, cloud-based software update implementation enables your IT team to focus on work outside of product updates. Constellation Research notes that collaboration platforms can release new software versions more easily, several times per year, versus single tools releasing updates once every several years.² This frees your IT team to prioritise business operations, instead of spending their days updating applications.

“Microsoft is constantly introducing new capabilities and more storage. We would submit feature requests, and they seemed to be there the next time we used a program.”

Allen Chang
Manager of IT Innovation and Technology,
Air Canada

² “Why Your Organisation Should Buy a Collaboration Platform Instead of Best-of-Breed Solutions,” 2015, Constellation Research, Inc.

Your business deserves the best, and disparate point solutions just won't deliver the services you need when paired together. Choosing to implement a suite of collaborative tools can satisfy both your early adopters and those resistant to change, all while keeping the asks of your IT department manageable.

With a single infrastructure to saving your business and employees time, money, and sanity, Microsoft's Office 365 suite of tools is the simple solution to help your company's employees work together, with ease. Communicate and share files across Yammer and OneDrive for Business, create a content management repository within SharePoint, set up online meetings with Skype for Business, and send and receive secure emails through Outlook and Exchange.

Curious about what Office 365 can do for your organisation?

Take a guided tour today to explore the latest in-product experience and features including key collaboration capabilities across the suite.

<https://resources.office.com/landing-guided-tour-test-drive>