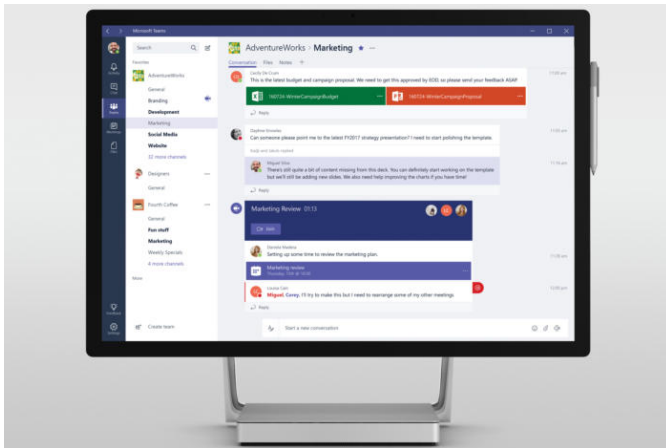


Microsoft Goes After Collaboration With Teams

Written by Marco Attard
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Microsoft announces an own take on collaboration services such as Slack-- Teams, a "chat-based workspace" integrated in the entire Office 365 productive suite, including OneDrive and Skype.



Teams allows groups within a company to divide into subgroups, before further division into individual channels. It runs on the web, Windows, Mac, iOS and Android, comes complete with file sharing, voice and video chat, and comes as something of an alternative for Microsoft's own Skype for Business.

The software shows a series of threaded conversations (as opposed to a chatroom), and allows users to organise conversations according to topic. An Activity tab gives a bird's eye view of all ongoing conversations inside a team, and all users can check shared documents or direct messages live using Office Online. Skype infrastructure takes care of voice and video calling, with group calls, screen-sharing and more.

Microsoft also provides a pair of bots for use inside chats and messages-- T-Bot (an automated help system) and WhoBot (helps find other people inside a team).

Teams will be available free to Office 365 Enterprise customers from Q1 2017. It is currently going through a beta program with support for 70 external connectors and 85 bots.

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