



Microsoft 365 Communication and Collaboration Advantages

WRITTEN BY | Richard Harbridge, Boris Boitsov, & Kanwal Khipple

eBook

YOU WILL LOVE THE WAY WE WORK. **TOGETHER.**

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Why choose Microsoft for Digital Communication and Collaboration?	5
The Quality of Your Digital Communication and Collaboration Applications.....	6
Microsoft Teams as your workstation.....	8
Keeping everyone connected	8
Time saved	9
Facilitate basic HR and IT-related inquiries.....	9
Applied Communication and Collaboration benefits	9
Yammer as your breakroom.....	11
A new look and a more precise focus	11
More 'breakroom' elements	12
SharePoint as an Intranet.....	13
Take advantage of a growing platform	14
Cloud-first features	14
On-premises VS online.....	14
What about a hybrid scenario?.....	14
Microsoft 365 Intranet and Digital Workplace Benefits	15
Access, Mobile & Responsive Design Benefits.....	17
Personalization Benefits	19
Pages, News & Site Management Benefits.....	20
Content Management Benefits.....	21
Search Benefits	22
Integration Benefits	23
Analytics & Reporting Benefits	24
Development Benefits	25
Advantages Supporting your Digital Communication & Collaboration	26
Microsoft 365 Innovation	27
Rapid scale & improvement.....	27
Improvements for end-users and easy maintenance	27



Getting a better app experience 28

Infrastructure Cost Savings 29

 A SharePoint Intranet Example 29

 No more upgrades 29

 Price bundling & pricing innovation..... 30

Ecosystem of Applications 31

Application integration – jump from one to another 32

 Rapid application switching 32

 Integrated contextual experiences 32

 Share to Yammer from SharePoint 32

 Better mobile experiences 33

A Lot More Resources and a Little About Us..... 34

About 2toLead 37

Awarded Experience, Here to Help 37

Top 3 Ways 2toLead Helps Customers 37



Introduction

When you begin looking for your first digital workplace solutions provider, or an update to an existing one, you should strongly consider the suite of applications you may already have at your disposal, Microsoft 365.

Microsoft 365 has been a cornerstone for users with office tools like Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. What might be new to you, however, is that Microsoft also provides premium intranets and a host of powerful workplace communication and collaboration tools that help you effectively engage your employees.

Applications like Teams have allowed companies to connect their workforce, helping them advance office collaboration to new heights. Tools like SharePoint have allowed companies to create powerful corporate communications platforms that keep employees in the know and provide them with the content that they need daily. Extensions like Yammer have given corporate communicators a social network that is able to connect employees to each other, drive engagement, and share important knowledge across the org.

With Microsoft 365, digital workplaces are more than just a medium for communication and collaboration. They become an inclusive ecosystem of tools that help your employees work at their most productive levels.



Why choose Microsoft for Digital Communication and Collaboration?

In this eBook, we will review the various advantages you have to gain when choosing Microsoft 365 as your Intranet or as your entire digital communication and collaboration platform.

We have divided these advantages into three categories:

1. Digital Communication and Collaboration Applications



2. Microsoft 365 Intranet and Digital Workplace Benefits

3. Supporting Microsoft 365 Advantages



The Quality of Your Digital Communication and Collaboration Applications

Microsoft is stacked with applications ready to help you accelerate your digital communication. Digital environments and interactions can positively impact employee morale and your entire organization's efficiency. The reason is simple; your employees will be more motivated and [less anxious](#).

Working remotely is one of the great perks of the digital age. While it provides many advantages, it does, unfortunately, come with a host of its own challenges. Recent global events and trends in digital transformation have created a lot more remote workers than ever before.

Buffer reported that **22% of remote employees** surveyed identified their **biggest struggle as collaboration and communication**, while **19% felt lonely and isolated**. Both are alarming statistics. Luckily, Microsoft 365 can help address these issues with Microsoft Teams, SharePoint, and Yammer.

Microsoft Teams as your workstation

Teams is a perfect example of Microsoft innovation at work. It combines video conferencing and collaboration tools into the ideal workstation. However, the innovations do not stop there. Microsoft Teams is also a powerful platform for your digital workplace. It continues to push the boundaries on communication and collaboration through apps, connectors, and customization capabilities.

If you have not already, it has never been a better time to join its **145 million daily active users** in improving the way digital communication and collaboration happens.



Jeff Teper
@jeffteper



#MicrosoftTeams now 145 million daily active users 🙏
💜 - thank you to customers, partners, and team

4:27 PM · Apr 27, 2021 · Twitter Web App

132 Retweets 48 Quote Tweets 772 Likes

Keeping everyone connected

Microsoft Teams brings employees together on the departmental and organizational level. An optimized environment is easily customized, and the integration possibilities are extensive.

A few ways Teams keeps you connected:

- Teams and Channels can be built at whatever level suits your organization and departmental needs.

- Tabs within Channels allow departments, or groups within departments, to set up an environment with all the tools they need for the job at hand – all just a click away.

When your team is working in harmony, you will see a rise in productivity and time saved.

Time saved

Not only can Microsoft Teams help you bring departments together to work effectively in a Team/Channel, but the lack of need to jump from application to application saves critical time for employees. Scaling that time for every employee across your organization can quickly add up to millions of dollars in cost savings per year.

Projected Benefits, according to Forrester's "New Technology: The Projected Total Economic Impact™ of the Microsoft Teams Platform" report, productivity savings from using Teams over three years are between **\$8.8M and \$21.7M**. This increase in productivity is due to the platform's ability to **shave off 15 to 25 minutes per user's day**, on average.

Facilitate basic HR and IT-related inquiries

While Microsoft Teams leading to better communication and collaboration should enable more camaraderie and co-learning, there will always be a need for basic HR and IT related questions to be answered.

Rather than spending needless hours or minutes searching, or interrupting colleagues with personal questions, adding in a chatbot to automatically answer general IT and HR-related questions can help you achieve another big win.

Projected Benefits, according to Forrester's "New Technology: The Projected Total Economic Impact™ of the Microsoft Teams Platform" report, chatbots can **reduce the burden on Help Desk and HR requests by 10% - 15%**.

Applied Communication and Collaboration benefits

There are so many departmental scenarios, needs, and pain points that Teams can address. The possibilities for different configurations of the application are endless. One of the examples mentioned in Forrester's report related to the healthcare sector highlights the following:

This innovative use of Microsoft Teams **saved physicians and nurses between 30 and 90 minutes per day** by streamlining processes and eliminating inefficiencies. In a year, those same physicians and nurses will **save between 65 and 108 hours using the application.**

Yammer as your breakroom

Since most of the buzz has been around Microsoft Teams, you might be wondering, "is Yammer still relevant?" Absolutely, and it has advantages you will want to leverage on your journey to a more social digital workplace. Yammer is a great place to have social interactions between colleagues without adding more clutter to your Teams channels. Instead, save those conversations for Yammer.

Yammer

Connect with your communities

In today's fast-paced business environment, finding the right materials at the right time is critical to increasing productivity.

Yammer can improve organizational quality and performance by tapping into your most valuable resource—your people.

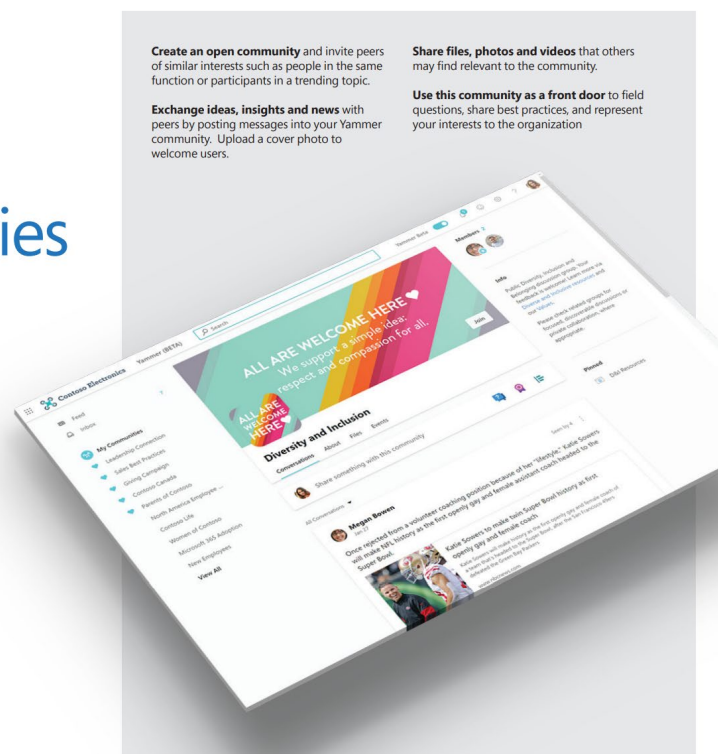


Figure 1 - Take a look at [the Yammer lookbook!](#)

A new look and a more precise focus

Yammer had a challenging road to finding the right place for its community-based platform, but 2020, or #YearOfYammer, brought about many incredible improvements

to the application and a more precise focus. Yammer is a brilliant application to build communities - on or off-topic. Its fresh look and feel embraces social media-like aspects, something that works incredibly well.

More 'breakroom' elements

Yammer communities are a fantastic opportunity to push individuals to embrace their unique interests and bond with others that have similar ones in your organization. These communities should have a champion that is passionate about the subject to ensure discussions keep flowing. Since these are subjects the defined 'champion' is interested in, it should be reasonably easy for them to ensure everyone stays engaged without taking up too many additional work hours.

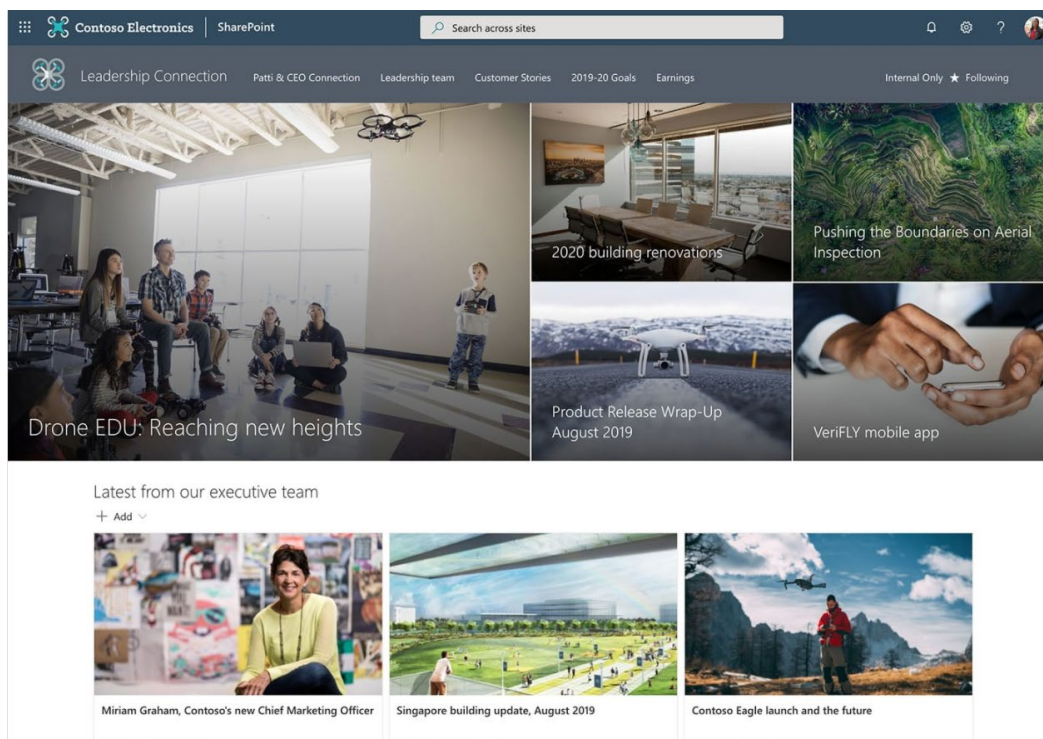
Depending on your organization's size, you may prefer to lean on Microsoft Teams for such breakrooms. However, Teams has become the home base for many organizations, and moving to another application might just be what your employees need to feel like they are taking a break. Integrating Yammer conversations in Microsoft Teams is also possible and can be the right solution if you want to separate work and social elements but stay in one application.

While creating non-work-related environments may sound intrusive to your employees' workdays and productivity, a happy workforce is proven to deliver better results. With so many suffering from lack of socializing, giving employees an outlet to discuss and share personal interest is more important than ever.

If non work-related topics do not fit your organization, keeping the communities slightly work-related may work as well.

SharePoint as an Intranet

For over a decade companies have been relying on SharePoint for their Intranet. A strong indicator of its relevance is how many times the application has been the foundation for the Neilson Norman award, the equivalent of winning a Grammy in the Intranet space. We are proud to say that some of our colleagues have been awarded that very award for their work on a SharePoint Intranet.



While many have relied on it as the foundation for their Intranet, SharePoint has taken things up a few notches, enabling advanced capabilities for engaging with your employees. Their modern UI/UX is as simple to use as a Square Space website, and as easily configurable. If you are not already using SharePoint for your Intranet, you should know their users have doubled year-over-year, and it is for a good reason.

SharePoint is at the heart of Microsoft 365's digital workplace solutions and even the backbone for some. Its purpose includes improving the overall employee experience and engagement through effective communication and collaboration. Fortunately, SharePoint's purpose aligns with Microsoft's commitment to a better digital workplace, and the results have been outstanding.

Take advantage of a growing platform

There are a few reasons why powering or running your Intranet on SharePoint supplies significant advantages. SharePoint's cloud-first features and ability to help you scale rapidly drive its innovation. This sets your Intranet on a path to continuous growth and improvement.

Cloud-first features

Cloud-only features will only be available to organizations that use the cloud platforms or integrate Microsoft 365 with their on-premises solutions. Innovation is bundled with SharePoint Server for on-premises SharePoint environments.

On-premises VS online

These SharePoint releases are based on the innovation that happens in SharePoint Online and Microsoft 365. In many cases, you may wait several years before a SharePoint cloud-based feature is available on-premises.

For example, the last version of SharePoint Server was feature locked, based on the innovation/code and testing cycles, at the start of 2018. That means that, in 2021, SharePoint 2019 is closer to 3 years old when it comes to innovation and improvements in SharePoint Online.

What about a hybrid scenario?

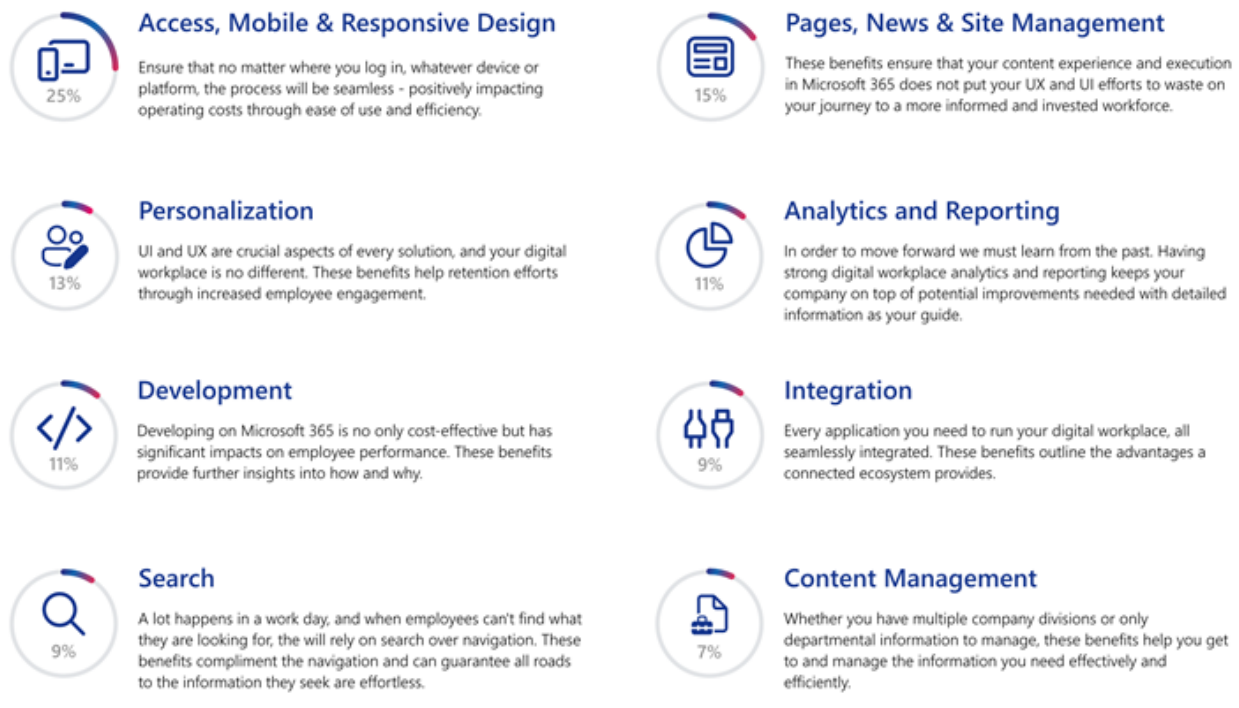
Some SharePoint Online features may never be available for On-Premises. SharePoint Online connects to Azure enabled services like Video Streaming, Deep Analytics/Insights, or Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence capabilities. These capabilities might not be as richly available in a hybrid configuration, or some elements may require added licensing. However, you can expect that innovation is both cloud-first and sometimes cloud-only.



Microsoft 365 Intranet and Digital Workplace Benefits

Each of the identified benefits has been proven, based on industry experience, to impact the business significantly and deliver considerable value. These benefits, identified as having a high estimated impact, should be prioritized, and a plan should be put into place to track and realize them.

While no particular digital workplace area is inherently more important than another, Microsoft and its 3rd party ecosystem do provide stronger benefits in some categories than others. We have organized the benefits, their impact, and alignment with key digital workplace categories:



Access, Mobile & Responsive Design Benefits

What follows are the key benefits of SharePoint and Microsoft 365 Intranet's as they relate to access, mobile and responsive design.



Reduce the costs in making your Intranet responsive by design by leveraging the out of the box experience in SharePoint Online or when extending it via best practices, [samples and code](#) that is readily available.



Help **Firstline workers save 140 minutes per week** from improved tools and information. (Based on Forrester TEI reports).



With easy on-the-go access, the **SharePoint mobile app helps keep your work moving forward** by providing quick access to your team sites, organization portals and resources, and the people you work with. You can see site activities, get quick access to recent and popular files, and view and arrange lists on your team sites.



Save highly mobile workers and employees 24 minutes a day accessing systems and information.



[PowerApps](#) can dramatically accelerate how business mobile and tablet apps are built, reducing **time to build the solution from weeks or months to minutes** and empowering a new category of app creators.



Use the Delve mobile app to **see what you and your colleagues are working on across Microsoft 365**. Based on who you work with and how you work together, Delve suggests documents that are relevant to you.



Out of the office doesn't mean you have to be out of touch. **Use the Yammer mobile app to stay on top of conversations**, post updates, and collaborate with your team no matter where in the world you are.



Instantly access all your team's content from a single place where messages, files, people, and tools live together. The Microsoft Teams mobile app gives you access to a modern chat-centred workspace in Microsoft 365. This can be leveraged for Intranet content authors or a great place to discuss and share Intranet content.



Keeping corporate data secure on mobile devices is a top priority. Microsoft 365 helps you meet this challenge by providing built-in security plus a set of tools to manage access to data across phones and tablets.



Employees can securely and responsibly access the Microsoft 365 Intranet anywhere, at anytime and on any device without a VPN. With built in and integrated multi-factor authentication that supports rapid login from apps, biometric sensors, Windows Hello and more.



Setting up and managing your policies is simple. You can apply device-specific security policies to ensure that data is synced and accessible only on authorized phones and tablets. What's more Microsoft supports app management policies and the protection of your data across enterprise apps.



Reduce the risk of data leaks and increase control. When you need to wipe Microsoft 365 data from selected devices, you can do it remotely and safely.



Reduce major security risks such as **reducing the likelihood of a major data breach by 1% to 5%.** (Based on Forrester TEI reports).



Being able to interact with the Intranet from any mobile device or tablet is made possible through responsive design and a great set of mobile app experiences.

Some organizations may want a more streamlined experience or one that works for all users, even those not licensed in Microsoft 365. For these users and organizations, it is worth exploring Microsoft 365 integrated offerings that provide a richer mobile Intranet experience than what the SharePoint mobile app provides today.

Personalization Benefits

What follows are the key benefits of SharePoint and Microsoft 365's powered personalization.



Simplify and improve employee experiences by presenting information (top navigation links, news, quick links and more) relevant to particular groups or users within the organization. Out of the box SharePoint has audience targeting for content, roll ups, and even things like the navigation experiences.



Developing richer personalization is made easier by leveraging SharePoint's audience capabilities, its deep permission control, rich AD integration and industry best practices for Microsoft 365 development. This offering is particularly compelling when coupled with AD groups based on dynamic membership.



Many vendors have additional personalization features that enable more user control and subscription-like models. What's more, some even have invested further in ensuring the data you target (such as AD attributes) is always up to date and reliable.



Enable a new level of organization, personalization, and access to all of the apps and services that matter to them from anywhere in your digital workplace by leveraging the Microsoft 365 app launcher and the Microsoft App Bar.



The App Launcher, App Bar, SharePoint Home, Office Home and many other Microsoft 365 experiences provide quick access to personalized and dynamic navigation to get back to recent documents, sites, and work you have been performing.



Keep staff connected with real-time updates on system alerts, personal reminders, and communications (new emails, group likes, etc.) from anywhere in your digital workplace by leveraging the Microsoft 365 notification bell/pane.



Aggregate and keep employees informed on activities that are important for them to know by accelerated custom development and Microsoft 365's integration capabilities (Power Automate & Azure Logic Apps).

Pages, News & Site Management Benefits

What follows are the key benefits SharePoint and Microsoft 365 powered pages, news and site management can provide.



Enable rich page authoring experiences that provide content contributors re-usable and configurable controls, components, sections, and design/templating support.



Many vendors significantly improve the experience with even more management and re-usable templates or more components/widgets.



Enforce quality is maintained with a highly configurable set of publishing and approval features via both built-in publishing and Power Automate capabilities.



Ensure security and compliance by leveraging SharePoint's comprehensive permission management and Microsoft 365's information protection and lifecycle management capabilities.



Simplify site creation and consistency in design using site templates, site designs, headers, footers, and site branding/theming and more.



Provide improved self-service site creation and site lifecycle by building on the SharePoint platform using industry best practices while also providing options and approaches for extending this model to tailor it your organization's needs.



Vendors can improve this experience with even more powerful design capabilities that make it easier to configure templated branded sites and to update/leverage more accessible site templates that might require less technical skills. They can also often improve the request, provisioning, and lifecycle process around sites.



Improve user engagement and participation with liking, commenting, easy sharing, and other key capabilities in pages, news, and sites. This can be further enriched with pre-built integration between Yammer, Microsoft Teams, and Microsoft Stream.

Content Management Benefits

What follows are the key benefits of SharePoint and Microsoft 365 powered content management.



Help users filter through incredible amounts of information available to them and manage information growth with rich and comprehensive metadata capabilities in SharePoint Online that allow content to be tagged, enforce metadata integrity and validation.



Ensure compliance and improve corporate business processes that relate to the management of information by leveraging automated workflows, content lifecycle management, and compliance capabilities built into SharePoint Online and Microsoft 365.



Harness the knowledge and expertise of your organization, empowering everyone to make more informed decisions and take action faster with Project Cortex and Microsoft 365 as it applies advanced artificial intelligence (AI) to empower people with knowledge and expertise in the apps you use every day. Connect content in Microsoft 365 and external content to manage your information and streamline processes with advanced security, compliance and automated workflow.



Ease and speed of sharing with a consistent and intuitive sharing experience (in Windows 10, SharePoint, Microsoft Teams, Outlook and more), easy external sharing (guest/anonymous or named), link sharing (internal and external), reporting on what has been shared, enforcement of a password for access if desired, expiration of access, request files, and more all add to save individual's time getting hold of information and sharing information.

Search Benefits

What follows are the key benefits of SharePoint and Microsoft 365 search.



Help users find content faster based on their profile, the sites, and files they recently viewed or searched for, and based on popular searches within your organization by leveraging SharePoint Online and Microsoft 365's industry-leading search capabilities.



Provide predictive and intelligent search experiences to users across the applications they already work in such as the Office suite, Microsoft Teams, SharePoint, Edge Browsers, Bing Searches and even Windows devices. Bringing the Intranet's search to where users are as one more way Microsoft 365 enables you to bring the Intranet to the user.



Increase discoverability and engagement of your enterprise content and data across systems by bringing them into the Microsoft Graph and Microsoft Search. The connected content can also direct users to the best experience or application while providing unified search.



Reduce silos and places users have to search when an organization has a considerable SharePoint Server footprint by leveraging SharePoint's hybrid and federated search capabilities.



Assist users performing searches by providing recommendations, suggestions, and predictive assistance by leveraging Microsoft 365's industry-leading search personalization.

Integration Benefits

What follows are the key benefits from SharePoint and Microsoft 365 powered integration.



Provide more ways to surface, connect, and provide a unified employee experience by leveraging Microsoft 365 and SharePoint which natively supports integration with Outlook, Teams, Yammer, Microsoft Stream, Planner, Project Online, Dynamics Online, Office Online and much more.



Reduce employee application switching costs by ~15-25 minutes per day providing time back to drive more value and impact. (Based on Forrester TEI reports).



Connect and amplify the impact of leadership messaging, corporate communication and your existing Yammer social network by leveraging Microsoft 365 and SharePoint's built-in integration with Yammer.



Connect Intranet news and key pages/experiences in Microsoft Teams with built-in integration to bring the Intranet (and all of its value) to users where they are and increase engagement, reach, and productivity.



Simplify collaboration, adapt to continuous organization changes, simplify day-to-day tasks to increase productivity, and maximize time and resources with over a hundred popular services and systems in Power Automate.

Analytics & Reporting Benefits

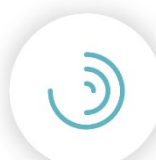
What follows are the key benefits from SharePoint, MyAnalytics, Workplace Analytics, and Microsoft 365 powered analytics.



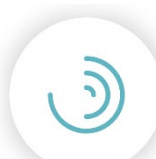
Enable employees to more rapidly view recent or important site activity, important document activity or the usage of their important documents by leveraging Microsoft 365's built in collaboration analytics.



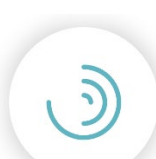
Improve insight, understanding and employee engagement on key pages, sites, news articles, and documents. Microsoft 365 provides site and hub site analytics that help simplify the reporting process and strengthen a sense of ownership by giving content publishers direct feedback on performance.



Provide users insight into two of the most important factors in personal productivity: how they spend their time and who they send it with leveraging Microsoft 365 MyAnalytics. Details about time spent in meetings, who they are losing touch with or working most with (including reading rates, response times, and more), email behaviour, focus hours, and after hours work all let employees know exactly where their time is going.



Discover opportunities to optimize business processes, identify patterns that lead to success, measure the impact on business outcomes through a continuous cycle of discovery and change, identify and promote the right skills and behaviours to meet organizational goals, develop careers, and grow new leaders by leveraging extended insights with Microsoft Workplace Analytics going beyond traditional Intranet analytics and reporting.



Make it easier to change habits and harmonize work and life with personalized insights, and recommended actions for individuals, managers and business leaders with Microsoft Workplace Insights (across Microsoft Teams, MyAnalytics, Workplace Analytics, Productivity Scoring and more).



Enhanced analytics and reporting with an extensive ecosystem of partners who provide unified reporting across other key enterprise systems along with your Intranet and Microsoft 365, provide improved depth or detail in reporting, or recommended actions for content authors and Intranet leaders.

Development Benefits

What follows are the key development benefits from SharePoint, Microsoft 365, and Microsoft Power Platform.



Vendor costs can be displaced or reduced based on the use of existing Microsoft 365 functionality, new innovation in the suite, Power Platform or Microsoft 365 developed solutions.



The average cost to develop solutions is 70% less and significantly faster when leveraging existing frameworks and pre-existing integrations with Power Automate, Power Apps & Power BI. (Based on Forrester TEI reports).



Processes can be automated, improved and digitally enabled easily with the Microsoft Power Platform, Microsoft 365, Microsoft Lists, SharePoint, Microsoft Teams, Planner, and more.



Streamlined business processes reduce the time it takes to develop a new product by 14.18 days and saves 12,500 hours per year in distribution activities. (Based on Forrester TEI reports).



Save significant time when building on the Microsoft 365 platform and when using the Microsoft Power Platform. Application testing for 50% of the apps in a portfolio are reduced by 75% (Based on Forrester TEI reports).



Leveraging reports, solutions and experiences in Power BI have been proven to improve time-to-decision for decision makers by 15.6% (Based on Forrester TEI reports).

A person is pointing at a computer screen in a meeting. The screen displays a video call with a person. The background is a blurred office setting with a desk, a lamp, and some plants. The text is overlaid on the image in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Advantages Supporting your Digital Communication & Collaboration

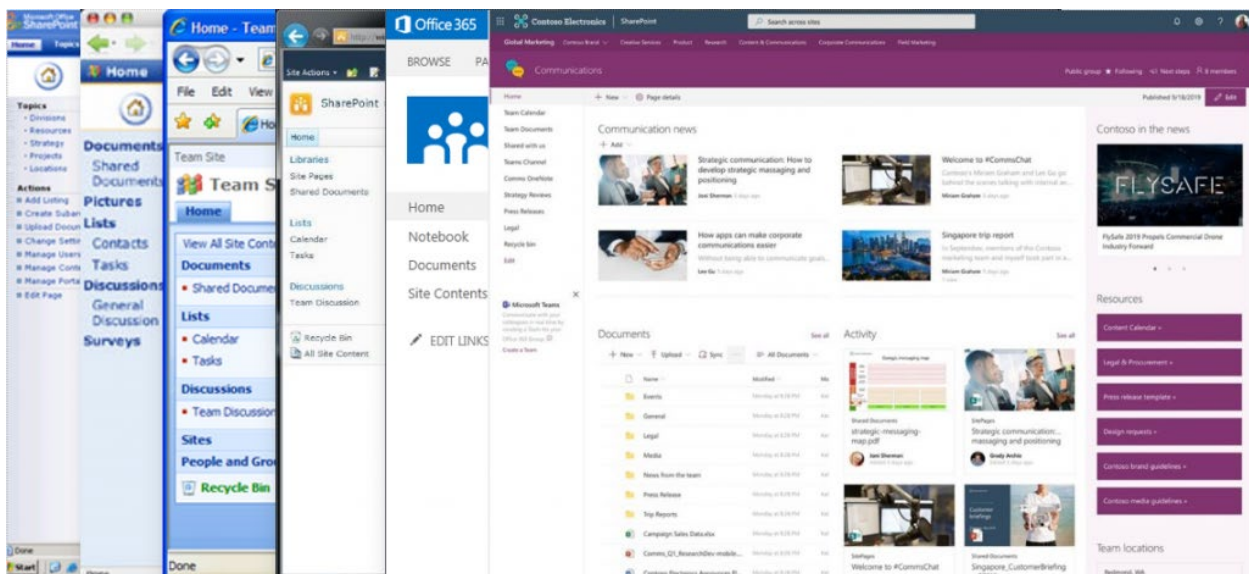
Microsoft 365 Innovation

Microsoft continues to push boundaries across its product line, and the pandemic only accelerated this process. From **SharePoint hitting over 200 million active users**, to the Microsoft Teams hitting **145 million daily active users**, organizations are primed to reap the benefits of Microsoft's countless innovations.

In the last two years alone, Microsoft has successfully **launched 636 updates**, is currently **rolling out 237**, and **has 597 in the pipeline** – at the time of release.

Rapid scale & improvement

Cloud innovation enables rapid scale and solution development. Storage, improvements to encryption and security, and new integration opportunities are delivered consistently by the team. This development is all in service of, and based on, customer and industry feedback.



Microsoft SharePoint | Generations of Innovation

Improvements for end-users and easy maintenance

While many improvements are being made behind the scenes that enable new scenarios, they are often represented through improvements for end-users using your Microsoft Office 365 powered Intranet.

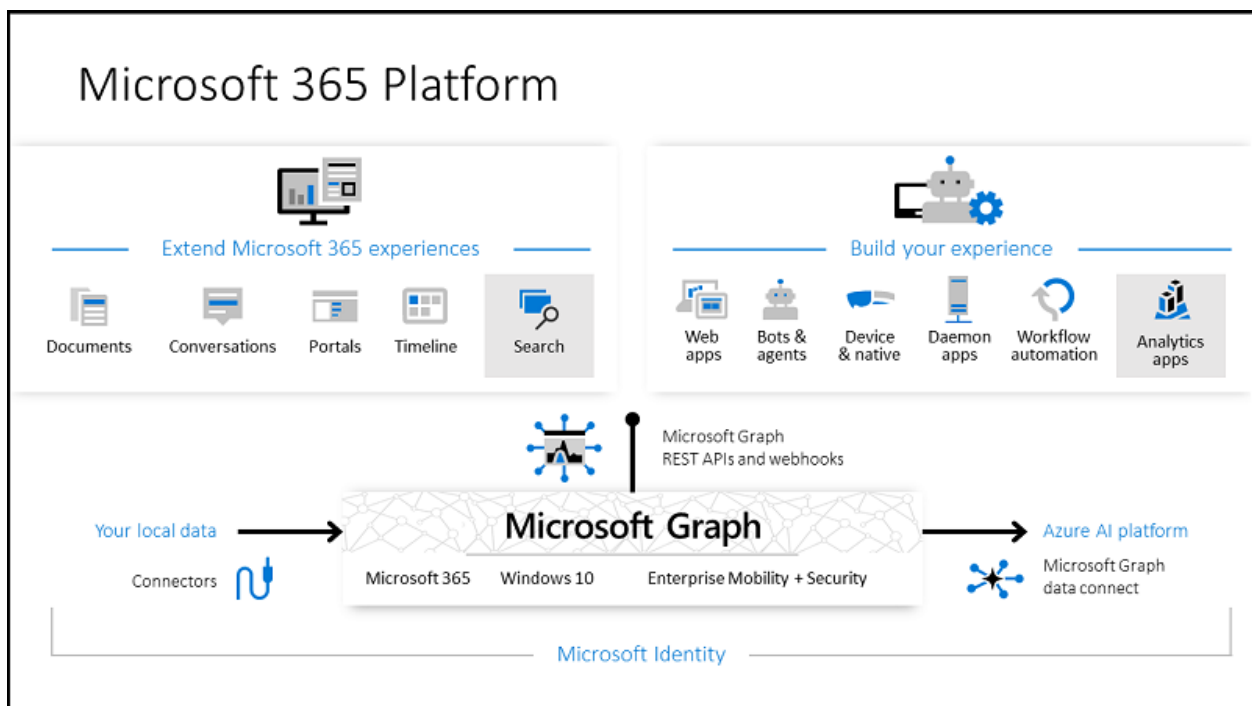
Not only are you getting SharePoint improvements, but you are also receiving Microsoft Azure improvements at an incredible scale and thorough quality assurance. Example:

Consider mobility support with an Intranet powered by Microsoft 365 versus an on-premises intranet.

Getting a better app experience

New Portals that connect and integrate with your company's Microsoft 365 Intranet will provide a better app experience. These experiences rival those developed by an on-premises Portal team. The AI enrichment and algorithms that help organizations succeed are based on Microsoft 365 digital patterns of work captured in the Microsoft Graph.

Microsoft Graph, Microsoft Graph data connect, and Microsoft Graph connectors facilitate data access and flow.



Microsoft Power Platform provides incredible performance and flexibility for rapidly designed, integrated, tested, and deployed solutions that even non-technical employees can deliver. You could even consider innovation from a management perspective. It's powered by Microsoft 365's MDM, security and compliance capabilities, which are often shared across everything from Dynamics to Project Online.

Infrastructure Cost Savings

Moving your business to SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) can automatically reduce operating costs. Moving your business to Microsoft 365 as your SaaS provider can save your company money in many ways.

Millions of users are familiar with Microsoft technology and have used it at one point or another. This makes the learning curve a lot shorter when learning a new application and saves your company countless hours.

One of the most significant ways Microsoft 365 saves your organization money is by providing access to their entire suite of applications for a low cost, rather than having to purchase or pay for a variety of applications.

A SharePoint Intranet Example

Suppose you are using SharePoint Server to host your Intranet. In that case, there are significant costs associated with maintaining a highly available SharePoint farm for your Intranet on-premises, especially when hardware investments are necessary. It also requires a team with knowledge and specialized skills to support infrastructure and applications. This information applies to any scenario where you have legacy or on-premises hardware, or a provider hosting your Intranet.

No more upgrades

Once you are effectively leveraging Microsoft 365, or Office 365, and SharePoint Online, there are no significant upgrade costs, cycles, and no new version of Office to purchase. Your portal can use new features and updates as they are released. This will allow your company to save on costs while staying competitive.

While you will save by not requiring any further upgrades, this does not mean there is no cost every few years associated with optimizing your Intranet, Digital Workplace, and Knowledge Management experiences across the organization. However, it does mean that your investment's focus will be on activities that drive more value instead of infrastructure or technical upgrades.

Here are some examples of how you might generate more value with additional resources or investments:

- Optimize and guide user adoption and engagement

- Improve employee engagement and productivity with training and education
- Enhance employee experiences and usability
- Automate or optimize business processes with forms, workflows, and apps
- Provide better document and records management
- Pay per user per month with Microsoft 365

Microsoft and Office 365 licensing plans are based on assigned active users. This pricing model enables you to pay based on the platform's usage and adjust your user count based on changes in your business. What's more, Microsoft has many different licensing options and licensing packages so you can apply the right user licensing on a differentiated per user basis.

Price bundling & pricing innovation

Microsoft 365 bundles the recommended capabilities you would leverage for a modern Intranet or Digital Hub with your Digital Workplace in-suite pricing, including additional capabilities your organization most likely already needs.

Some of these additional capabilities include but are not limited to:

- Messaging & Calendaring with Exchange Online & Outlook
- Improve Communication through Microsoft Teams, Yammer & SharePoint News
- Work Management with Planner, Enterprise Video using Microsoft Stream
- Enterprise Workflow leveraging Power Automate
- Enterprise Apps and Forms with Microsoft Lists and PowerApps
- Enterprise Social with Yammer

Microsoft's commitment to digital innovation is incredible and was recently on display at Microsoft Ignite 2020. Their video highlight of the event provides a glimpse at how far their solutions have come and how strong their plans for the future truly are.

Here are some of the possibilities that come to light with suite pricing and packages:

- Many new web parts and controls for your Intranet (quite a few of which integrate other services/systems that are popular)
- New and improved authoring tools/experiences with easy accessible templating
- Rich pre-integrated experiences allow you to bring your Intranet or Digital Hub to where users work (Microsoft Teams, Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, and Excel)
- More ready-built integration templates and processes in Power Automate that you can easily leverage across your Intranet and Digital Workplace

- Advanced capabilities like automatic transcript creation and indexing of video and media assets with Microsoft Stream can improve the ways your organization's videos can integrate within your Intranet
- Improved and rich people cards that show up whenever you see someone's name. These aren't just showing profile data, but LinkedIn information, recent documents, or other useful insight across your digital workplace
- Topic cards, recommendations, and insights provided by artificial intelligence, user behavior, curated expertise, and a deep, dynamic, and connected knowledge network
- And much, much more

The features and functionalities offered in Microsoft's suite pricing continue to improve. Many new capabilities will continue to add value for your organization and can augment other costs. Excellent examples of features that get underestimated are Mobile Device Management, which it currently includes, and the considerable security, lifecycle management, retention, and information protection capabilities that can be used with your Intranet. These improve security posture, compliance, and privacy protection.

Ecosystem of Applications

The Microsoft 365 or Office 365 ecosystem of applications makes it easy to integrate your existing technology with the stack, switch between apps, create an integrated experience and bring your workplace on the go with mobile features.

You can liken the experience to one found as a consumer of Apple's ecosystem. The difference is that since Microsoft 365 is a business solution, it can also easily configure to fit your specific companies' look and feel and be built to fit your organization's needs.

There are an incredible number of other ways to measure and track the value Microsoft 365 provides with their Intranet software against your internal communication efforts. Users across the industry have exposure and have worked with SharePoint, Microsoft 365, and Microsoft Teams, which can significantly reduce the change management costs or the need to re-learn digital skills. This benefit applies to content authors of your Intranet or contributors across your organization.

Microsoft 365, or SharePoint Online, is the platform used by many winners of the prestigious Nielsen Norman Intranet Award, including the awards our team has won over the years. In some years, **80% of the winners use SharePoint Intranets.**

Application integration – jump from one to another

The number of vendors who support Microsoft 365 integration is staggering. It is arguably the most integrated SaaS service on the market today and is considerably easy to integrate with other SaaS or enterprise vendors. Whether you are looking to integrate with standard enterprise systems like your ERP, CRM, or HRIS, you have many options from first-party vendors.

List data in SharePoint is already integrated with many other systems in Microsoft. Often, you don't even need to tie your Intranet to the other system. Copying filtered data to secure places in your Intranet today and then surfacing that in the existing Intranet investments can be a significant win.

Rapid application switching

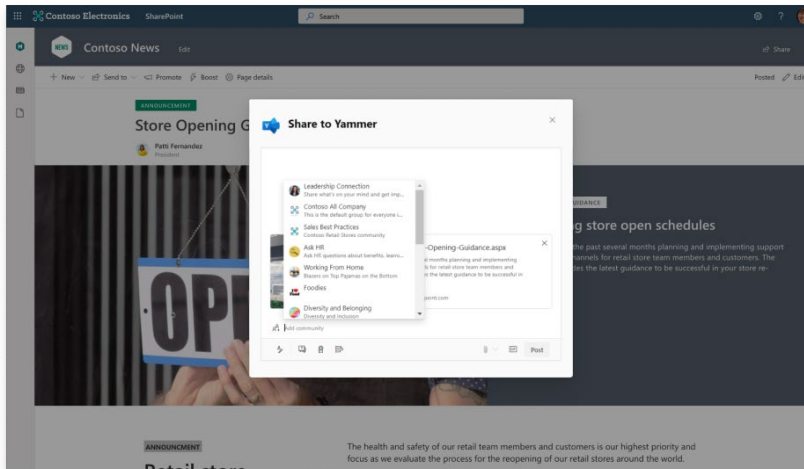
Doing things like ensuring users can quickly switch between Outlook and OneDrive for Business from SharePoint is much easier when powered or running on Office 365. Consider how easy a team member can trigger an instant message via Microsoft Teams from anywhere in your company Intranet where a person is referenced. Empowering not just email but the ad-hoc discussion can turn into recordings that can be exposed or connected to the Intranet in Microsoft Stream.

Integrated contextual experiences

Microsoft 365 also makes it much easier to integrate contextual experiences where they can add value based on where the user is interacting in your digital workplace. For example, consider how referencing a news post on your Intranet is easy to do out of the box in related digital workplace experiences, such as Microsoft Yammer or Microsoft Teams.

Share to Yammer from SharePoint

You could even take this further by customizing the news experience to highlight the number of times Teams or Yammer references a page/news post. Enabling users to see when related discussions go beyond the page comments themselves.



Better mobile experiences

Continued investments are being placed into responsive design pages (news) and sites. There is also an incredible wealth of mobile experiences targeted and work across platforms for Office 365 users. From OneNote to some of the new app experiences like Microsoft Teams and Modern SharePoint sites. When your Intranet is powered by Microsoft 365, many of these app and mobility experiences tie into how users can manage, author, or collaborate in an employee Intranet.

A person in a dark suit is seated at a desk, pointing their right index finger towards a large computer monitor. The monitor displays a video call with a man in a light-colored shirt. The background shows a desk with papers, a pen, a coffee cup, and a potted plant. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

A Lot More Resources and a Little About Us

We hope you have gained valuable insight from reading this eBook. For more information into Microsoft 365 digital workplace, download any of our free whitepapers and eBooks.

A few of our popular (and comprehensive) whitepapers:

Most Common SharePoint and Teams Sprawl Issues and How to Find Them

[This eBook](#) covers 8 of the most common sprawl issues organizations face today. These issues plague organizations everywhere, and solving them is crucial to increasing employee time and cost. Not only will you gain insight into the ways you can solve these issues, you will also learn why these issues matter to both IT and end-users.

Core eBook Topics

- Understanding Digital Workplace Sprawl
- The Most Common Sprawl Issues and How to Solve Them

Microsoft 365 Intranets: What You Need To Know

This [160+ page whitepaper](#) has everything you need to know to successfully leverage Microsoft 365 Intranets and Digital Workplaces and amplify internal communication and collaboration to new heights.

Core Whitepaper Topics

- Understanding Microsoft 365 Communication and Collaboration Tools
- Benefits of a Microsoft 365 Intranet and Digital Workplace
- Best Practices Across Technology, Design, and Leadership

SharePoint Migration

This [70+ page whitepaper](#) has over 100 different questions that your organization should be able to answer, your migration vendor should be able to answer, and your migration partner should be able to answer, along with essential insights you should consider.

Core Whitepaper Topics

- Business Drivers For Migration
- Migration Planning, Migration Strategy & Migration Roadmap Planning
- Risks To Success

Measuring the Business Impact & ROI of Office 365

This [60+ page whitepaper](#) outlines many key considerations around how to measure the impact Office 365 has on a business while also outlining how Office 365 provides effective reporting capabilities today.

What to expect

- Understanding & Aligning Business Objectives
- Business Impact & ROI By Office 365 Capability Mapping
- Business Impact & ROI Calculation & Measurement Examples

Driving Office 365 Adoption & Usage: What You Need to Know

This [70+ page whitepaper](#) outlines all of the key considerations when planning and improving Office 365 technology and end-user adoption.

What to expect

- Driving Adoption Best Practices
- Comprehensive Guidance On Building An Effective Adoption Campaign
- Adoption Activities Checklist

Many other great resources and samples can be found and are regularly posted on our resource site at <http://Office365Resources.com>.

About 2toLead

2toLead has been labeled as a generous Microsoft consulting company by its clients and employees. 2toLead employs trusted, passionate and experienced consultants who work hard to solve the most challenging business and technology problems that face our clients.

Awarded Experience, Here to Help

Whether you are reinvigorating your Microsoft 365 digital workplace or thinking about starting your journey, Microsoft 365 is a sure-fire way to improve digital communication and collaboration.

Microsoft 365 out of the box is already a massive step in the right direction, but the advantages can be astronomical with the proper guidance. We would love to be the consultants who help guide you to your optimal digital workplace. Our team is ready to show you that *"You will love the way we work. **Together.**"*

Top 3 Ways 2toLead Helps Customers



INCREASE ADOPTION by going far beyond just deploying things right and ensure your organization is being pro-active in getting the maximum value out of your technology investments.



IMPROVE EXPERIENCES & ENGAGEMENT by understanding where, how, and why users interact with your business while building world-class portals, social networks, and websites that your customers, partners and users love.



LEVERAGE THE CLOUD to reduce costs, improve business agility and capabilities inside and outside of your organization by leveraging cloud technology like Office 365 and Azure.

For more information:

- Visit our website at www.2tolead.com
- Follow us on [LinkedIn](#)
- Like us on [Facebook](#)
- Follow us on Twitter [@2toLead](#)

A portrait of Kanwal Khipple, a man with a beard and a blue turban, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is blurred, showing vertical lines of light and dark.

Kanwal Khipple

Kanwal, Founder & CEO of 2toLead, is a leading User Experience expert within the SharePoint industry, with experience in building award-winning portals and solutions that take advantage of Microsoft's Cloud platform (SharePoint, Microsoft 365 & Azure). Kanwal's drive for success as the Creative and Technical Lead on projects has garnered him as a recipient of the Neilson Norman award for Top 10 Intranets (2014 & 2015).

Kanwal's passion lies in continuing to push for user experience innovation when redesigning intranets for the majority of the largest brands in the world. He continues to preach on the importance of designing with usability as the primary focus. Kanwal's thirst to share knowledge has made him a prominent figure within the SharePoint community. Because of his passion and involvement in many community-driven events, including launching successful user groups in Canada and the USA, Kanwal has been recognized as a SharePoint MVP by Microsoft (2009 to 2020) and as a Microsoft 365 MVP (2014-2021). He's also co-authored a book on Pro SharePoint 2013 and Responsive Web Development <http://amzn.to/sp2013rwd>

Feel free to reach out to him if you'd like to discuss your project, want to run an idea by him, or just want to reach out to a friendly technologist.



<http://www.twitter.com/kkhipple>



www.Linkedin.com/in/KanwalKhipple



www.Slideshare.net/kkhipple



+1-416-888-7777



Kanwal@2toLead.com



Richard Harbridge

Richard is the Chief Technology Officer and an owner at 2toLead. Richard works as a trusted advisor with hundreds of organizations, helping them understand their current needs, future needs, and actions they should take to grow and achieve their bold ambitions.

Richard remains hands-on in his work and has led, architected, and implemented hundreds of business and technology solutions that have helped organizations transform - digitally and organizationally. Richard has a passion for assisting organizations in achieving more, whether it is helping an organization build beautiful websites to support great content and social strategy or help an organization leverage emerging cloud and mobile technology to better service their members or the communities they serve.

Richard is an author and an internationally recognized expert in Microsoft technology, marketing, and professional services. As a sought-after speaker, Richard has often had the opportunity to share his insights, experiences, and advice on branding, partner management, social networking, collaboration, ROI, technology/process adoption, and business development at numerous industry events worldwide. When not speaking at industry events, Richard works with Microsoft, partners, and customers as an advisor to business and technology, and serves on multiple committees, leads user groups, and is a Board Member of the Microsoft Community Leadership Board.



<http://www.twitter.com/rharbridge>



<http://www.Linkedin.com/in/rharbridge>



www.Slideshare.net/rharbridge



+1-416-300-3678



richard@2toLead.com

A portrait of Boris Boitsov, a young man with short brown hair, smiling. He is wearing a dark blue suit jacket over a white button-down shirt. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with greenery and a building.

BORIS BOITSOV

Boris has a mission to constantly deliver exceptional work and to never shy away from big challenges. With a background in molecular genetics, management, and technology innovation he works with customers to develop better technology strategies, prioritized business objectives and clear requirements.

As a senior consultant aligned with Communications, Media and Technology, Boris delivers high-tech solutions and software to a variety of companies and industries. He's helped design and deliver innovative sales origination software for frontline Financial Advisors, tested and deployed novel public transportation fare-payment systems, and helped create cloud-based CRM solutions for Commercial Leasing and Investing organizations.



<http://www.twitter.com/BorisBaitsov>



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/boris-baitsov-2575a062>



Boris@2toLead.com

JUST THE BEGINNING

We have **helped over 100 organizations** build stronger Digital Workplaces.

With the guidance of our **Multiple Microsoft MVPs & Neilson Norman Award Winners**, we would love to show you how we can elevate your organization's.

Your journey to a better digital workplace starts with a **Free 2-Hour Assessment**, with no obligations or commitments, of your digital workplace.

[THE NEXT STEP TOWARD STRONGER
COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION](#)



YOU WILL LOVE THE WAY WE WORK. TOGETHER.