

# 5 ways to unblock organizational collaboration for nonprofits



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To be able to drive greater impact and deliver more services, today's nonprofits need to be more collaborative than ever.

As organizations grow more geographically distributed, your staff, volunteers, and donors spend an increasing amount of time collaborating in online meetings and conference calls, and exchanging email.

Unfortunately, many nonprofits are facing a perfect storm of aging, disconnected, and unsecured technologies that makes collaboration difficult, time-consuming, and vulnerable to security breaches. These organizations are under tremendous pressure to find a solution that's secure, reliable, scalable, and cost-effective on a wide variety of devices. The solution must also meet the needs of an increasingly mobile group of users within the organization as well as donors, volunteers, and board members.

**The solution lies in strategically breaking down collaboration blockers so that teams can work together with ease.** To accomplish this, many nonprofits are turning to collaboration suites that allow internal staff and external groups to communicate and collaborate through a single platform. To understand how collaboration tools can work for your organization, let's examine how to overcome the five biggest blocks.



## COLLABORATION BLOCK

### Setting up team tools and access is a pain

Many projects spring up suddenly, and the team comes together organically over time. Along the way, someone must figure out how the team will communicate, plan, and track progress, and where they will store files. Someone must also be tasked with adding and deleting members and maintaining access to all the team assets throughout the life of the project. Often, teams end up with a disparate set of tools and rely on a single team member who has the access and knowledge to use them.



## THE SOLUTION

# A chat-based workspace everyone can access

One of the biggest time-wasters for teams is looking for “stuff.” That includes files, tools, contacts, and conversation threads. Imagine how much more effective everyone would be if they had instant access to everything they need, right in [Office 365](#).

You can help your team members gain that access with [Microsoft Teams](#). Using Teams, group members can quickly find what they’re looking for, using powerful, integrated search capabilities and built-in access to SharePoint, OneNote, and Planner. Because every document shared in Teams is saved to the cloud, team members are always working on the latest version. Decisions made are easily found in chat history, without having to search very far.

Team members often get stuck in a holding pattern waiting for the feedback and approval they need to move a project forward. They try to set up conference calls, but back and forth

scheduling burns up time. When they finally do get on a call, complete their edits, and send out the revised versions, they’re often stuck waiting for approval. All that changes when they can quickly contact decision makers on team or private chat, or in an online meeting, and can co-author and share files to secure approval right away. Integrated notifications and side-by-side chat while viewing a document, enable on-the-spot editing and finalizing materials.

With communication tools like IM, and voice calling and video conferencing, team members are just a few clicks away. Plus, Microsoft Planner makes it easy for your team to create new plans, organize and assign tasks, share files, chat about what you’re working on, and get updates on progress. Built for Office 365, Planner ensures that all team discussions and deliverables stay with the plan and don’t get locked away in disparate applications.



## COLLABORATION BLOCK

### Meeting inefficiencies

It seems hard to believe that users in many organizations, whether working onsite or remotely, still have to struggle to gain access to and participate in virtual meetings. But that is the reality. All too often, call connection is poor, or someone gets stuck trying to sign in, or can't access a shared screen to see a key piece of content. Meetings are routinely interrupted and delayed.

These meeting inefficiencies discourage team members from working together and create an unacceptable barrier for nonprofit organizations that rely increasingly on members who are separated by geography or work on the go.



## THE SOLUTION

# Reliable virtual meetings for a few or many, on any device

Empower project teams to conduct better meetings by providing them with a single meeting application that “plays nice” with the rest of your productivity software.

**Microsoft Teams** in Office 365 helps make meetings more efficient with rich video calls, live broadcasts, and the ability to share content, collaborate in real time on files, and record meetings if needed. With Teams, your staff can communicate through shared screens, messaging, voice calling, and video conferencing. They’re free to work from anywhere, on desktops or mobile devices, with an Internet connection.

With everything on one platform, workers can stop worrying about technology complications and focus on being productive.

### **With Microsoft Teams your organization can:**

- Reduce travel using audio, video, and web conferencing with anyone inside or outside your organization.
- Boost meeting efficiency with features like scheduling assistance, note taking, desktop sharing, uploading files, and chat messaging.
- Reach out to large groups of potential donors or volunteers in real time with live broadcasts.



## COLLABORATION BLOCK

### Working in silos

All too often, team members are so focused on their work that they're not always aware of information and best practices in other parts of the organization. For example, a team might spend months developing ideas for a fundraising campaign, only to find out another team in the organization has been working on something similar. Each team could have leveraged the other's work or the teams could have been combined so some members could have been freed up to work on other projects.

There's never a shortage of work for nonprofit staff, so it's frustrating for them to realize that their time and resources aren't being spent in the most productive way.





## THE SOLUTION

### A social network for work

Bring the open, conversational nature of a social network into your organization and put it to work. With an enterprise social tool, staff, volunteers, and directors across your organization can find and take advantage of collective intelligence on topics relevant to their projects. Many workers are familiar with social networking in their personal lives, and bringing the tool to the workplace is a powerful and efficient way to enable collaboration.

Microsoft Teams is designed to enhance teamwork across your integrated Office 365 suite. So, no matter what your staff is working on, whether they're on a call or on the road, they can always reach each other and share and find files instantly. With the social

technology tools in Microsoft Teams, your staff can use their preferred device to share best practices, discuss ideas, and even crowdsource answers from team members around the globe.

#### **With Microsoft Teams, you can:**

- Foster open discussions with group chat.
- Tap into collective knowledge that includes notes, websites, and apps.
- Crowdsource ideas and share best practices across the organization.
- See likes, @mentions, and replies with a single tap.



## COLLABORATION BLOCK

### Lack of version control

Imagine you've created a draft presentation of a great new fundraising idea and are ready to get feedback from the rest of your team. The hard part—bringing the idea to life—should be over. But, the feedback and revision process can often be the most exhausting part of the project. Emailing the file and waiting for revisions take a lot of time. And, after all that you end up with multiple edited versions of the same document to consolidate. After several revision rounds, it might not even be clear which document is the final version.

#### **Without real-time file sharing, project workflows are compromised by:**

- Sharing attachments via email that wastes time.
- Multiple revision rounds that lead to endless versioning of a document.
- Misplaced, lost, or overwritten files.



## THE SOLUTION

# Secure cloud-based file collaboration

It's time to take your collaboration to the cloud. Cloud-based tools from Office 365 empower your staff, directors, and volunteers to collaborate efficiently, from anywhere on mobile devices, or desktops. Working in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, or Excel, you can coauthor in real time with the rest of the team—all on a single version of the file saved to the cloud. You can store and share your files in OneDrive, which is included in Office 365. That means you and your team can always work from one central file that's accessible to all authorized users and is always up to date.

Multiple team members can add comments and revisions to a single file and know that, if needed, they can always access or revert to earlier versions automatically saved in the cloud. No more version control or merging edits to worry about.

### **With Office 365, you and your team members can:**

- Access documents anywhere, whether online or offline.
- Collaborate in a single document that's always up to date.
- Seamlessly share large files.
- Use built-in chat functionality to discuss edits within a document.
- Control permissions of contacts inside and outside the organization.



## COLLABORATION BLOCK

### A disorganized, inconsistent set of apps

People are accustomed to downloading apps to their phones, and many take the same approach in the office—resulting in a hodgepodge of applications that all do different things, require different credentials for signing in, and may not deliver the security and compliance the organization requires.

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**Organizations use an average of 730 cloud-based applications.** But, these apps may come with security or productivity risks. An estimated 90.8% of apps in use aren't enterprise-ready.<sup>1</sup>

1. "April 2015 Cloud Report", 2015, Netskope



## THE SOLUTION

### A productivity suite

When it comes to collaboration, one size doesn't fit all. Workers need the flexibility and broad capabilities of an all-in-one suite. Office 365 delivers a holistic collaboration solution that meets the needs of multifaceted teams with a full range of applications. With the right tools at their fingertips, workers can collaborate in a variety of different ways. Whether they need an answer to a quick question over chat or want to tap into the collective knowledge of the organization with Teams, Office 365 has the tools to meet their needs.

#### With Office 365, you and your staff can:

- Bring the team together for real-time collaboration, calls and meetings with Microsoft Teams.
- Create, share, and find content with Office 365 applications and OneDrive.
- Be assured your assets are backed by Office 365 security and compliance standards regardless of which application they use.
- Run applications with ease with the 99.9% uptime guarantee in Office 365.
- Easily work across multiple applications with a single sign-on approach.



Clear away your organization's collaboration blocks with a powerful and flexible productivity suite.

Whether your staff needs convenient real-time communications, the ability to co-author files, or reliable, protected email, Office 365 delivers a powerful, integrated experience. All the collaboration tools in the suite integrate seamlessly, so your staff, volunteers, directors, and other users will have the flexibility and confidence to work in ways that are most comfortable for them.

Your organization will have an all-in-one solution, backed by Microsoft enterprise-grade security and reliability. You'll also have confidence and peace of mind, knowing your staff have the tools they need for superior collaboration.

If you think your nonprofit may be struggling with any of these blockers, [\*\*test drive\*\*](#) Office 365 and see how it can help your organization collaborate more effectively to do more good.



[\*\*Get started now\*\*](#) to see how Microsoft can help your organization accelerate your mission.