



Industry: Asphalt Construction & Materials, Environmental Services, Chemical & Fuels

IT Users: 4,000+

Solution Overview:

- Planning and adoption assistance for Microsoft Teams
- Microsoft Teams Deployment
- User Adoption
- Skype for Business Retirement

Products & Services:

- Adoption & Change Management Workshops
- Planning Sessions, Deployment Services
- Product Training
- Discovery Sessions
- Data Assessment, Security

Microsoft Teams Changing the Shape of the Modern Workplace

Interlink Guides a Global Asphalt Construction Company in their Migration to Microsoft Teams

Communication and collaboration are revolutionizing the way people work. When changing the communication channels within an organization, the organization itself will have to change — that is how important collaboration has become in today's modern workplace. The workplace today is more global, uses more contractors and freelancers, supports workers on the go, and has more remote workers. To keep up with these trends, in 2017 Microsoft introduced Microsoft Teams.

There's a major shift coming up for companies using Skype for Business, and whether they're ready or not, Microsoft Teams will be taking over. Microsoft has officially announced the retirement of Skype for Business Online. After July 31st, 2021 the service will no longer be accessible and from now until that date Microsoft will focus on adding new features only to Teams. Upgrading from Skype for Business to Teams is more than just a technical migration — it's a complete transformation in how users communicate. Many organizations make the mistake of thinking that collaboration is all about playing well with others and keeping them in the loop. It's way more than just that — it's a creative process. There are a few different steps in order to collectively shape the road towards a new future.

That's why one of Interlink's clients, a global construction and materials business, came to Interlink looking for Teams migration guidance. With Skype for Business retiring, they knew they needed to make the move sooner rather than later. They agreed to share their story and thoughts here, but as an organization have a policy against third-party publicity, so we cannot use their name.





“We came to Interlink because we had a history of successful services with them, starting in 2015. Their guidance and experience always prove to be valuable,” says the company’s Director of Strategic Technology.

For this client specifically, Teams was a big move. The entire company employs more than 5,000 people across 3 of their core industries: Transportation Materials, Environmental Services, and Specialty Chemicals and Fuel Products. Users are located in more than 170 locations and continued as expected to grow. With a company this size, seamless collaboration is crucial to their successful business model.

“With Teams, we have collaboration across our entire organization,” he says.



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DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC TECHNOLOGY

ALIGNING THE PIECES

There are a lot of pieces to consider when migrating to Teams — strategizing change, planning, the technical implementation, and end-user adoption. Interlink can help with every step of this migration process and works to find the ideal upgrade approach. Interlink is able to assist clients in the technical aspects of the upgrade as well as the planning beforehand, and encourage end- user adoption through training and Teams Customer Immersion Experiences (CIE).

For this client, Interlink was involved from beginning to end of the migration — starting with planning and strategizing sessions, to data assessments, the actual Teams deployment and lastly end user training and adoption workshops.

“For this project, we were seeking Interlink’s guidance and experience. We needed guidance to ensure we properly retired Skype; migrated data to Teams; and setup governance and security within Teams. We needed to leverage Interlink’s experience to prepare training, live demos and strategies to succeed with adoption,” he says.



PLANNING & STRATEGIZING

Teams introduces more capabilities than Skype in a brand-new client, so it’s important to ensure proper security, governance and end-user adoption into Teams planning.

“Office 365 is our primary collaboration suite of tools. Teams replaces Skype but also added new collaboration options,” explains the company’s Director of Strategic Technology. “Our cost is not reduced but Teams removes any business pressure on the IT Team to adopt similar tools like Slack or Google Hangouts.”



Microsoft Teams may look like a simple chat client but there are many aspects across data, communication, and collaboration capabilities that can produce a fair amount of data. The data generated within Microsoft Teams can provide a ton of value — but for a legal, security, and compliance aspect it's important to spend some time planning the deployment to meet these specific needs.

Once this client expressed interest in deploying Teams, Interlink engaged in a Teams Deployment Planning Workshop to help them develop a clear vision of specific organizational needs as they relate to Microsoft Teams. Interlink acted as a mentor through this process to determine the best path for their Teams deployment. An Interlink consultant was on-site with the client for the user-facing workshops, enabling them to work with IT, stakeholders and other business user groups on a plan for user engagement, governance, and training in addition to content management. The deployment planning write ups will be executed remotely. Following the onsite engagement, the client was then provided with documents detailing the topics below for a deployment plan and road map.

- ✓ Vision
- ✓ Considerations
- ✓ Decisions impacting deployment plan
- ✓ Backup and Recovery
- ✓ Site Architecture and Content Deployment as it relates to their current SharePoint Sites vs Sites associated with Microsoft Teams and Groups
- ✓ Governance recommendations and Best Practices; including guidelines around when to use Teams, Groups, or Sharepoint



INTERLINK WORKED WITH MICROSOFT ON OUR BEHALF TO DEVELOP A POWERSHELL SCRIPT TO CLEAR THE TEAMS AND BROWSER CACHE, WHICH RESOLVED ANY ISSUES FOR EFFECTED USERS."

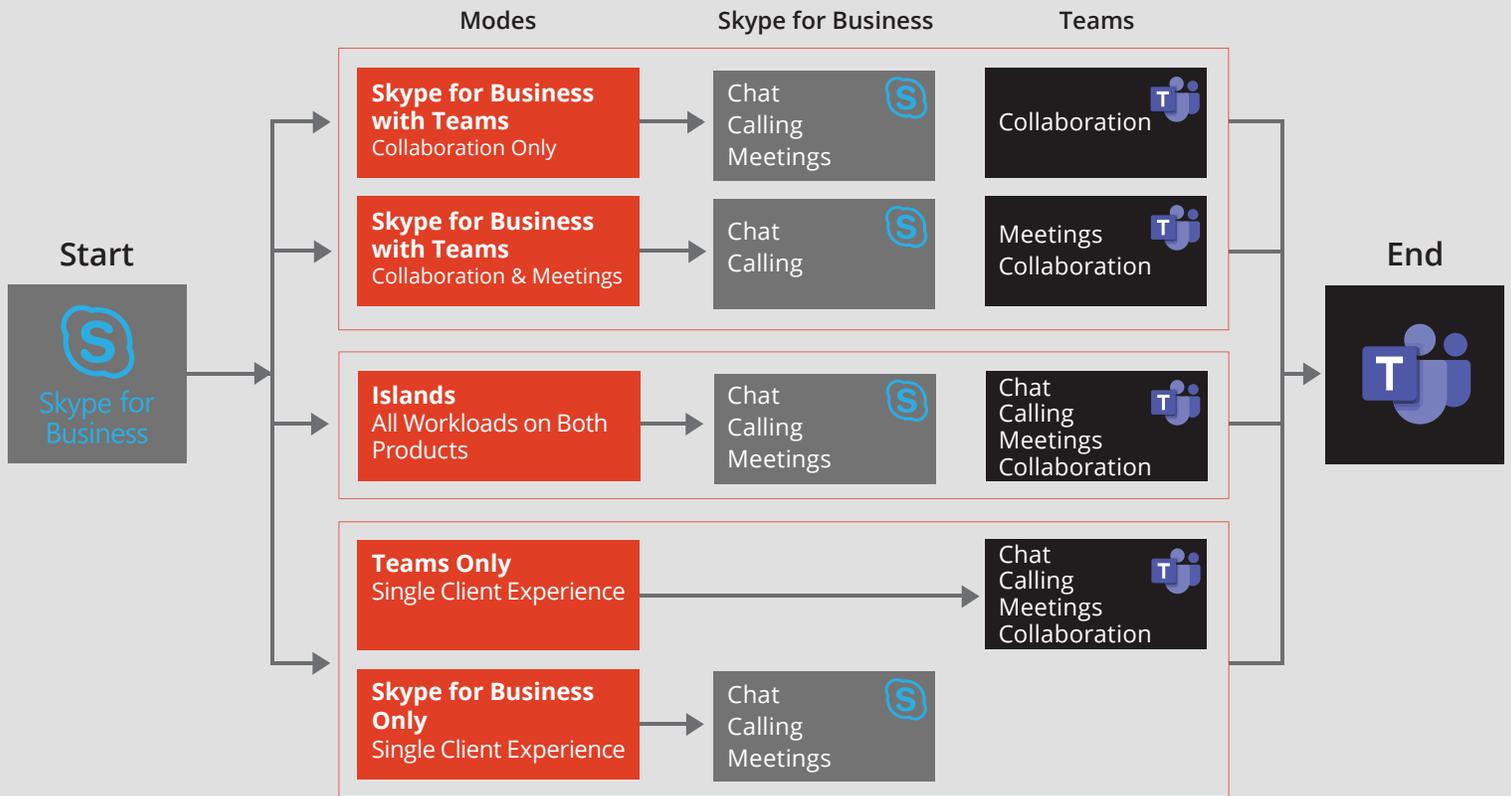
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC TECHNOLOGY

ALIGNING THE PIECES

After Interlink and their client spent time focusing on planning, the next step was to deploy Teams in their organization. When first implementing Microsoft Teams into any business, there are multiple options for deployment (see chart on next page). With an intention to make the transition easier, Microsoft has options to gradually introduce Teams and its features to the rest of an organization. Interlink presented each of these options to the client.

After careful considerations and weighing the pros and cons of each option with Interlink, the client decided to first start in Islands Mode. Islands Mode enables users to run both the Skype for Business and Teams client side by side. Users choose which client to use for chat or meetings. At the time, the client hoped this would be the ideal option, in order to ease the transition for the rest of their organization.

"The largest issues we experienced derived from running our Office 365 tenant in 'mixed mode' prior to a full conversion to Teams only. Our Teams pilot users and other early adopters saw issues collaborating with Skype users and other recently converted Teams users. Interlink worked with Microsoft on our behalf to develop a PowerShell script to clear the Teams and browser cache, which resolved the issue for effected users," says the company's Director of Strategic Technology.



From Skype for Business to Microsoft Teams Migration Options

Interlink worked with the client to also implement Teams governance with updates to the Teams configuration. This was largely based on the best practices and decisions made during the planning engagement. The main points for implementation were:

- ✓ Deploying Teams for the IT Department (Shared Services)
- ✓ Creating a Team deployed for each group within IT
 - IT Team (ITSS)
 - DR Site
 - Service Desk
 - DBA
 - Network Applications
- ✓ Transitioning legacy IT SharePoint sites into Microsoft Teams
- ✓ Building Teams for each business unit
- ✓ Completing the deployment to all users

ADOPTION & CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The next following step for this client was engaging Interlink to help drive the adoption of the Teams application. This step is crucial to a successful implementation and should be an ongoing process. A main aspect of project failures is due to poor change management planning and little to no end-user adoption — when employees don't understand new technology or why it is being imposed, they tend to reject it. Creating desire through adoption training and planning can help employees to understand how these Teams can help them in their daily workday and make things easier — therefore, the organization can make the most out of its investment.



Interlink began the adoption process by facilitating sessions designed to create excitement and engagement amongst the end user base prior to the deployment. Interlink executed a Teams Roadshow that included multi-day, multi-sessions to provide more options for users to be able to attend, both virtually and on-site at the client's innovation center. The Teams Roadshow involved two pieces — preparation and delivery.

Roadshow Preparation

- ✓ Meeting with the client's team to review internal governance, security and rollout plans for Teams
- ✓ Providing feedback on rollout plan for Teams and incorporate rollout plan concepts into roadshow content
- ✓ Performing onsite practice sessions at the client's location to refine content and delivery to meet the client's goals

Roadshow Delivery

- ✓ Performing two days onsite with two sessions per day
- ✓ Teaching Sessions completed in 1 hour, allowing for an additional hour and a half for questions and discussion
- ✓ Sessions were recorded and uploaded to Office 365 Stream for future use and onboarding

The Roadshow enabled employees to experience the value of the Teams and how it will impact their daily work schedules. Interlink helped the client discover the most important or valuable capabilities specific to their organization, and then illustrated the different ways to use the new capabilities — specifically how it can streamline processes, make work more productive, easier and/or efficient. Interlink worked with the client for months after the deployment with multiple adoption workshops. This way the client could continue to define “new champions” within new lines of business. Teams Champions are educated and skilled users that know the benefits of Teams and can act as a resource and advocate for the rest of the organization. With an organization this size, continued workshops and training are an important part of the Teams implementation. The client is starting a new adoption training cycle beginning in 2020 to broaden engagement from different user bases.

INTERLINK'S CONTINUED SUPPORT

After the primary project with multiple pieces, this client chose to sign on with Interlink as a Managed Service Client.

“The successful work by Interlink is one reason we now have an Office 365 managed services agreement in place with them,” says the company's Director of Strategic Technology.



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Specifically, this client uses Interlink for Office 365 Enhanced Tenant Admin Support, which includes Teams, SharePoint and all Office 365 application. With this support, Interlink helps the client with continuous support in enhancing, maintaining, and providing guidance for what is deployed within their Office 365 tenant. This agreement provides a ton of value for the client.

- ✓ Roadmap development for future growth and expansion of SharePoint use
- ✓ Rely on experienced, Microsoft certified professionals for 24/7 support
- ✓ Broad skill sets are available to cover anything from design to site architecture to custom development
- ✓ Interlink Best practices utilized from an experienced firm that sees multiple environments
- ✓ Leverage monitoring to proactively resolves issues before they cause down time
- ✓ Escalate Microsoft issues to the top support talent at Microsoft quickly

THE INTERLINK ADVANTAGE

The client continues to find new use cases for Teams every day. They continue to leverage Interlink for guidance and planning. Teams is an ever-evolving tool and the client allows their users to uncover their own use cases in how they optimize Teams and feel comfortable with it. Their team is always bringing in new ideas on how Teams can further benefit their organization as a whole.



CONTACT US TODAY

to learn more on how Interlink can assist your organization with Microsoft Teams Planning, Deployment, or Adoption.

