Taming Teams

Mastering Microsoft Teams Governance

MessageOps
A Division of Sirius

There has been an undeniable shift towards remote working. Indeed, the amount of people who work remotely at least once per week has grown by a staggering 400% since 2010. As such, multi-functional communication platforms like Microsoft Teams have become essential in today's working environment.

Whether your business is fully remote or operating in a hybrid scenario, whereby members of your team alternate days in and out of the office—your Microsoft 365 licenses are certainly earning their keep.

Unfortunately, this increase in Teams use can cause potential information governance issues. Managing a Microsoft Teams environment, particularly in large organizations, is not an easy task. In this eBook, we'll outline the issues that can occur should a business fail to implement proper Teams governance – before highlighting the benefits that effective Teams management can bring.

Why does Teams governance matter?

As businesses come to rely on collaboration tools, and more activity takes place within them, the strain on IT governance grows. There is a need for greater insight and scrutiny into the processes that govern them.

Processes that require governance may include the following:

✓ Team creation: should everyone be able to create a new Teams channel?

✓ External access: will you allow people within a team to invite guests?

✓ Naming conventions: should everyone follow the same format?

✓ Internal access: are the right people granted access to the right groups?

✓ Is sensitive business information shared in Teams properly protected?

Without governance, your business could suffer from the dreaded Teams sprawl. And, if you simply let anyone create anything, the risk of error and confusion only increases. The more mistakes that are made, the more administrators need to monitor and intervene.

Teams sprawl

When individuals can create teams on-demand—without planning or oversight. This can lead to scattered data, empty channels, and numerous unused teams.

When too many teams are created, it becomes hard to find information. Duplicate teams may inadvertently be created, the wrong members may be granted access to a team or channel – or a new team may be created when it should have been a channel.

If a team is created incorrectly, it can cause a series of time-consuming issues. Individuals may have to totally recreate their team or channel, move files, or lose entire conversation threads. Not only is this frustrating for those involved, but it can also lead to issues with data security and information silos.

Governance around how or when a team is created can help to keep these issues in check before they even arise. As in most cases, prevention is most certainly better than cure.

The business benefits of effective Teams governance

Effective Teams governance can be the difference between a well-run hub of collaboration and a chaotic digital wasteland. Not only does it help businesses to control Teams sprawl, but it also ensures that companies can truly get the most value from its Teams investment.

In case you need a little more convincing, let's explore further business benefits:

Complete visibility over your Teams environment

Without full visibility over the inner workings of an organization, it's impossible for business leaders to make effective and informed decisions. By understanding exactly how Teams is used in your business, you will be in a better position to manage the processes around it.

Enhanced data protection and security

A lot of information is shared over Teams, whether in private chats or shared channels. Without sufficient governance, there is a risk of this

information becoming lost or falling into the wrong hands—which is far from ideal from a data protection standpoint. Teams governance prevents this, since it allows you to take control of where, when and how data is shared and stored.

Increased efficiency and cost savings

When things go wrong, it takes time to fix them. This time translates directly into expense; which could be avoided with an effective governance plan. Streamlining your administration systems results in increased efficiency and considerable cost savings.

Carve out time for work that matters most

With Teams governance taken care of, your IT personnel are free to focus on other value-adding work. The right approach to governance kills two birds with one stone, as it ensures policy enforcement while also removing manual work from your operations team. Win-win!

Three steps to get started with Teams governance

Step 1: Define your rights

Businesses can take a range of different approaches when
it comes to implementing Teams governance. For many, the
process begins with defining the administrative rights of
certain individuals in the company:

Administrator
Someone who can define roles for other users and modify
teams

Owner
Someone who can create, delete, or edit a team—adding
members and changing their permissions

Team member
Someone who can create channels, join teams and request
to add new members

Step 2: Naming conventions

Once these privileges have been defined, the next step
is typically to decide upon naming conventions for your
teams and channels. This should be a company-wide

policy that makes it easier to find teams and information —
alongside outlining a set of abbreviations that everyone can
implement.

Step 3: Setting authority

From here, it's important to outline who has the authority to
grant external access to channels and content. Following
this, businesses must establish processes for archiving
teams or channels that are no longer in use — based
on a set of pre-determined criteria. You may decide, for
instance, that teams that have been inactive for a certain
stretch of time can be removed completely from your
system.

Is everyone in your business on board?

Company-wide adoption is one issue that crops up repeatedly when manually implementing Teams governance in a business. Frequently, IT professionals find themselves at odds with team owners. There's often a tension between the needs of those using Teams and the people responsible for administrating it, who are both pulling in different directions. Let's look at what their differences are:

Team owners want	IT Professionals need
Self service	Structure
Freedom	Control
Quick turnaround	Visibility
Flexibility	Automation
Simplicity	Security / Compliance

As you can see, successfully implementing Teams governance can be a balancing act between keeping all parties satisfied. It's no mean feat, often requiring considerable work from IT staff, many of whom already face heavy workloads.

Many businesses turn to third-party solutions to solve the problem of effective Teams governance, while also keeping users happy. But they must be careful to choose a solution that offers all the control and ease-of-use needed to be truly valuable for governance. That's why we developed MessageOps Team Captain.

Set sail on your governance journey with Team Captain

[MessageOps Team Captain](#) is a streamlined, straightforward, and powerful Microsoft Teams governance platform. It's designed to automate and simplify governance and security for your organization's Teams environment.

Here's how Team Captain makes life easier for IT professionals:

Access detailed Teams insights

With Team Captain, you have a single window into your Teams environment. Not only does the user-friendly dashboard let you easily filter and view by key statistics, but you can also gain detailed insights into your organization's Teams usage.

For instance, Team Captain lets you identify Teams without owners, view last activity by date range, and understand which applications are being used in a team. It's also easy to gain an overall organization-wide view or access insights on Teams usage by department or by an individual – alongside the devices upon which Teams is being used.

User-friendly settings

Team Captain was designed with the user firmly in mind. Navigating the settings is fast and simple, and the platform lends a helping hand, by providing Team inactivity reminders and enabling you to automatically take control of inactive or unused teams and users.

Team Captain also provides global policy control, communication reports, and reminders for external user sharing. Combined, these functions allow you to automatically empower owners of newly created teams, who are then automatically contacted and asked to act, based on policies that you have put in place.

Fully customizable team creation approval workflow

If your users aren't permitted to create a team without approval, you can add a pre-built workflow to streamline team creation and ensure governance. With Team Captain, users simply need to submit their team request via Microsoft Forms and then Team Captain gets to work by summarizing and sending requests for approval.

Once approved, the workflow automatically creates the team, applies the policies, and then assigns the team owner, enabling your users to quickly start working in their new team. And, as the base workflow is entirely customizable for your business environment you can pick exactly which types of users are able to submit, review, and approve teams.

Power BI productivity dashboard and full Teams statistics

As the saying goes: knowledge is power. The productivity dashboard on Team Captain provides detailed and trended analysis that can be viewed over time, detailing the number of calls, chats, and meetings taking place within your Teams environment. Understanding these and other statistics like numbers of archived teams, inactive or private teams, gives you a better insight into how the platform is used in your business, and therefore how best to manage it.
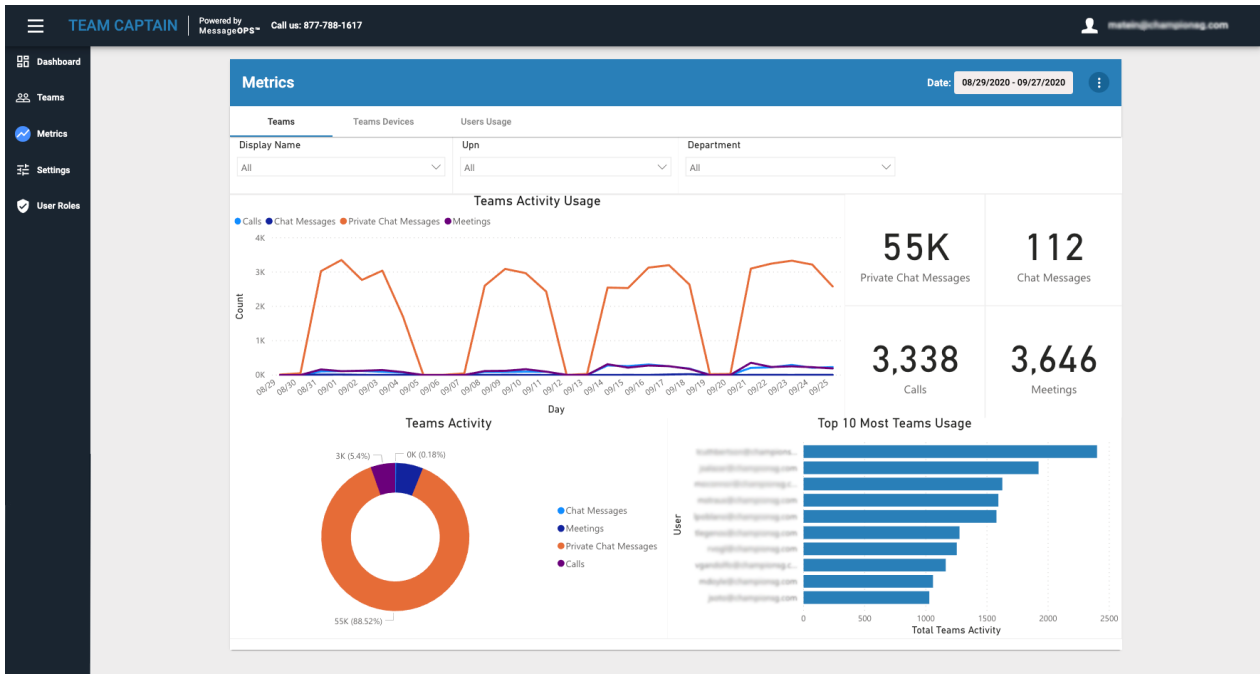
Team Captain's POWER BI Productivity Dashboard provides trended analysis that can be viewed over time on an overall company, department, or user basis.

Begin your 14-day free Team Captain trial today

To see for yourself, why not test drive Team Captain with a 14-day free trial? Log in using a single sign-on to get started and see how easy it is to control Teams sprawl by managing, governing, and securing your Teams environment.

Start a 14-day Free Trial of this easy-to-use Microsoft Teams governance platform today!

Get started

About MessageOps

MessageOps, a Division of Sirius Computer Solutions,
specializes in Microsoft Cloud services that increase
productivity, improve collaboration, mitigate risks,
and optimize costs. MessageOps has been working
in the Microsoft cloud since the beginning and are
therefore, not just a chapter ahead of you in the manual.
MessageOps has real-life experiences that will ensure
you have a successful project. Our focus is in helping
you gain value at every stage of your cloud journey.

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