



Blending AI with Human Collaboration in Microsoft Teams

Frameable's solutions transform remote and hybrid work with smarter collaboration, productivity, and decision-making in Microsoft Teams.

We are standing on the precipice of a new era of modern work and a technological revolution. The overarching trend towards integrating artificial intelligence (AI) with human collaboration tools has quickly become the most salient way to stay competitive and drive innovation. Now that we have comfortably settled into a shared understanding of remote and hybrid work models, business leaders are ready to implement new technologies that enhance productivity, synthesize complex materials, and improve collaborative efforts throughout their organizations. With greater clarity as to how and where to implement tools like GPT (generative pre-trained transformer) and LLM (large language model) AI, leaders now have the support of research and the power of their authority to drive effective adoption and improve their team's overall potential.

The State of Remote/Hybrid/Distributed Work

The widespread adoption of remote, hybrid, and distributed work models since the COVID-19 pandemic has been the most significant change in the global workforce in decades (Choudhury 2020). According to a Gartner survey, 82% of company leaders plan to allow employees to work remotely at least part of the time, indicating a permanent shift in the work paradigm (“Gartner Survey Reveals 82%” 2020).

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This transition, coupled with growing employee sentiment surrounding feeling disconnected from coworkers, underscores the need for tools that facilitate meaningful and productive communication and collaboration across distributed teams (Harter 2023).

Recognizing this emergent need for better collaboration and productivity tools, Frameable stepped forward to create a new tool specifically tailored for these evolving, distributed environments. By integrating with Microsoft Teams, Frameable's solutions redefine how teams collaborate remotely through the expansion and improvement of existing and widely adopted software with 320 million users. The decision to integrate with Microsoft Teams was further supported by our proprietary research that revealed Microsoft Teams as the top choice collaboration tool by highly engaged workers ("Frameable Remote/Hybrid/Distributed Work Index" 2024).

By simplifying communication and providing streamlined access to meetings, files, and broader team interactions, Frameable's solutions improve productivity by revealing more opportunities for natural collaboration within Microsoft Teams. In doing so, Frameable responds to the current demand for more effective virtual collaboration tools and sets a new standard for how distributed teams operate. Ensuring that despite any physical distance between colleagues, their efficiency, cohesion, and innovation potential continue to flourish.

Frameable AI in Microsoft Teams

The integration of AI within collaboration tools represents another shift in traditional work, particularly in remote and hybrid environments. Initially, there were concerns that AI tools in the workplace would result in job loss or replacement. However, the trend has shifted towards using AI to enhance human potential and creativity. Frameable's integration with Microsoft Teams is the next step towards enhancing human collaboration by leveraging AI. By providing advanced capabilities like streamlined access to resources, accurate summarization of text communications like messages and channels, and actionable tasks, Frameable enriches the Microsoft Teams environment, making it more efficient for today's workforce regardless of their physical location.

Enhancing Decision-Making with AI

LLMs (Large Language Models), the core of how we think of many AI tools today, are deep learning algorithms that can recognize, summarize, translate, predict, and generate content by using very large datasets ("What are large language models?"). Generative AI, a type of LLM, is often used to create images, videos, and text, but it can also facilitate the comprehension of large amounts of data. With data analysis in record time, AI can quickly provide insights and recommendations, streamlining the decision-making process. In the context of Frameable's Overview,

AI can analyze the content of connected Microsoft Outlook calendars as well as Teams chats, channels, and files, reduce time spent on administrative tasks, and suggest actionable insights. By improving the speed of everyday tasks, AI rapidly facilitates a more productive workday and enables workers to make better decisions, faster.

It's important to keep in mind that AI in the workplace is an aid, not a substitute, for human potential and oversight. All currently available AI tools have their limitations, and there remains a clear demarcation between tasks AI can correctly complete and those it cannot. It must be consistently reiterated that employees will still need to validate and employ their own "cognitive effort" to ensure their AI-generated outcomes are valuable and accurate (Dell'Acqua et al. 2023). But, knowing where that line lies, and where that line lies in regards to organizational goals and specific tasks, will be crucial for successfully using AI to enhance or speed up decision-making processes. Instead of concentrating on tasks and processes that AI cannot automate, it's often more beneficial for

Training on AI best practices is required to prevent mistakes and improve outcomes.

companies and their staff to concentrate on processes that can be accelerated with AI assistance, such as generating a first draft or summarizing long documents. Only your team will understand all of the intricacies surrounding your goals. Letting AI speed up summarization and surfacing the right content frees up more time for in-depth conversations and tasks that cannot be outsourced to an AI assistant. However, this type of implementation will only improve outcomes if it is paired with clear training and an understanding of where employees need to break from using AI and conduct analysis themselves (Dell'Acqua et al. 2023). Because many AI-generated answers and suggestions can appear, on a surface level, to be correct, this step in training is necessary to prevent employees from simply “turning off their brains” (Dell'Acqua et al. 2023).

Productivity and Efficiency

A McKinsey study found that knowledge workers spend up to 19% of their week, or nearly 8 hours in a standard 40-hour work week, searching for and gathering information (Chui et al. 2012). A study published by PWC highlights that AI-driven tools like Overview can reduce information retrieval time by up to 40%, directly translating into heightened productivity levels, especially for seasoned knowledge workers (Bernard and Rao 2021).

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By employing AI, employees reduce the time spent searching through information. For instance, Overview identifies which files or meetings are most relevant to employees based on their current projects or the content of their communications, and thus streamlines workflows within Microsoft Teams. A natural language prompt, “Where is Adam’s deck?” is now a faster, streamlined way to locate a document amidst cumbersome communications.

The integration of AI in everyday tasks addresses a critical challenge in modern work environments: information overload (Hemp 2009). By intelligently filtering and prioritizing information, AI tools help mitigate the cognitive load placed on employees. A simple question like “What should I prioritize today?” prompts Overview to quickly summarize goals for the day based on the surrounding context. This functionality offers employees the opportunity to see their work from a new perspective before focusing on higher-order tasks that require creative and strategic thinking. Luckily, this tends to be the work that most excites and engages employees at all levels. Revealing another net-new benefit not previously possible at the same scale.

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Solutions for Personalized Workflows

The true power of Frameable's productivity and collaboration solutions lies in its customizability. Overview by Frameable tailors the work experience to individual employee needs by organizing Microsoft Teams in a digestible way. Overview analyzes an employee's project involvement, communication content, and frequent collaborators to organize relevant files, meetings, and tasks into a single view. Overview can also assist in retrieving the communications and content most relevant to the employee.

For example, suppose an employee is currently working on a project with specific colleagues. In this case, Overview can help find communications, files, links, and meetings related to this project in a simple chat thread within Microsoft Teams. The AI's rapid information processing, prioritization of tasks, and even personalization of information reduce the cognitive load on employees, minimizing the time spent navigating through irrelevant information and allowing them to access what they need, when they need it, with unprecedented efficiency (Karr-Wisniewski and Lu 2010).

Bridging the Gap Between Virtual Teams

While the primary focus of Frameable's solutions is to improve productivity and efficiency inside the tools you already employ, they also play a crucial role in fostering collaboration. An employee who missed a working session

can catch up by reviewing a summary of what was missed, including any next steps. By ensuring that employees have access to the most relevant information and resources at the right time, AI aids in breaking down silos with faster, independent retrieval of information. It facilitates a more integrated approach to project management and team collaboration, where everyone is aligned and informed, without the need for constant regrouping or reiteration of covered material.

With recent surveys and sentiment reports revealing up to 69% of remote workers feel burnt-out from communication tools, eliminating needless back and forth around simple tasks and planning will provide further support to employees in simple, meaningful ways (Freed 2020).

Synchronizing collaboration sessions across different time zones remains a logistical challenge in remote and hybrid teams. AI can alleviate this challenge by analyzing employees' schedules, time zones, and work patterns to suggest optimal times for meetings or working sessions. This not only ensures maximum participation but also respects individual work-life balance by avoiding scheduling meetings during unsociable hours for any employee. AI's capabilities extend to identifying when employees may

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require additional support, be it in terms of current projects, or upcoming time off. By analyzing public communication threads and calendars, Overview can pinpoint instances where an employee may need support. Suppose an employee plans to take time off and is a collaborator on a team project. In this case, AI can remind collaborating colleagues to check in before and after their absence. Similarly, AI can also answer questions about current or upcoming projects, including who's collaborating, what they're working on, and share any relevant documents.

The Human-AI Partnership

AI's role in this partnership is to handle tasks that are repetitive, data-intensive, or when employees need to jumpstart a new project, freeing them up to focus on areas where they excel, such as strategic thinking, creativity, and collaboration. The synergy between human intelligence and AI has the potential to improve productivity to unprecedented levels. We've already begun to see the results, with recent studies concluding utilizing AI can result in a 20% increase in employee productivity (Azagury et al. 2024). By effectively summarizing the goals for the day and identifying which tasks to prioritize, AI allows employees to dedicate more time to that which requires human touch: collaboration. This partnership not only increases efficiency but also paves the way for more innovative and collaborative workplaces, highlighting the transformative power of human and AI collaboration.

The Future of Creativity and Innovation

One of the most exciting prospects of the Human-AI Partnership is its potential to venture beyond simple productivity and collaboration improvements to create an environment ripe for creativity and innovation at new heights. AI can process and analyze vast amounts of data at speeds unattainable by humans, revealing insights and patterns to spark new ideas and solutions when engaged properly (Dell'Acqua et al. 2023). AI could, for example, suggest new approaches to project challenges based on data from similar projects, even identifying potential pitfalls before they arise. Furthermore, AI tools can facilitate working sessions in video calls by suggesting ideas, drawing connections between seemingly unrelated pieces of information, and even generating visual aids. This not only accelerates the creative process but also ensures that decision-making is informed by a comprehensive analysis of all available data, leading to more innovative and effective solutions regardless of industry.

Conclusion

As these groundbreaking technological advancements continue to expand the realm of what is possible, the importance of fusing technology with human collaboration will continue to increase as an essential facet of the modern workplace. This necessity is underscored in environments that increasingly adopt remote and hybrid models, with a recent Accenture

study revealing that organizations utilizing AI in their operations can see a productivity increase of up to 20% (Azagury et al. 2024).

The integration of Frameable's solutions in Microsoft Teams represents a significant leap forward in enhancing remote, hybrid, and distributed work environments. By facilitating better decision-making, boosting productivity, and fostering better engagement among dispersed teams, new collaboration technology using AI has already begun to revolutionize the way we work. As we move forward, the partnership between the right technology and human intelligence will undoubtedly be a key driver of innovation in the workplace.

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About Frameable

Frameable is at the forefront of transforming how organizations collaborate, communicate, and increase productivity within Microsoft Teams. Frameable offers a suite of thoughtfully-designed software tools aimed at enhancing daily digital experiences, connecting people, tasks, and ideas seamlessly. With a relentless focus on innovation and user experience, Frameable empowers organizations to unlock the full potential of virtual teamwork. Learn more at frameable.com.