# Remote Collaboration: Connecting Teams When Circumstances Force Work-at-Home



From winter blizzards to international travel advisories and global health concerns, sometimes powers beyond our control force remote solutions. When team members cannot gather in person, technology comes to the rescue. Now, more than ever, solutions such as Microsoft Teams prove essential in maintaining productivity through remote collaboration.

## Coronavirus Provides Preparedness Motivation

Current global fears about coronavirus (COVID-19) have set stock markets reeling and prompted widespread panic. In the office, an employee with a persistent cough prompts worry among coworkers. Parents find themselves unexpectedly working at home when schools or daycares close. And employees cancel work trips to high risk areas.

In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently published recommended strategies for businesses in light of the crisis. These recommendations include:

- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home.

- Develop an infectious disease response plan that includes policies for telecommuting.

- Plan for possible impacts including employees who must stay at home due to illness, sick loved ones or school and daycare closures.

- Minimize exposure between employees when public health officials recommend it.

And, here are some tips from the Harvard Medical School on preventing infection:

- Wash your hands well. You probably wash your hands after using the bathroom, before preparing or eating food, and after gardening or other dirty tasks. You should also wash up after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; feeding or stroking your pet; or visiting or caring for a sick person. Wet your hands thoroughly. Lather up with soap or cleanser and rub it into the palms and backs of your hands and your wrists. Be sure to clean your fingertips, under your nails and between your fingers. Rinse under running water. Dry your hands and wrists thoroughly.

- Cover a cough. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you sneeze or cough, then dispose of it. If no tissue is handy, cough or sneeze into your elbow rather than into your hands.

- Don't share dishes, glasses, or eating utensils and avoid direct contact with napkins, tissues, handkerchiefs, or similar items used by others.

While experts caution against panic, they also advise organizations to put plans in place to allow for social distancing. For example, businesses can replace in-person meetings with video conferencing and promote remote collaboration powered by the productivity features of Microsoft Teams.



## Connecting Employees across Distance

Whether employees work regularly from home, or circumstances temporarily require remote solutions, technology offers solutions. Cloud-based document management systems allow team members to share documents securely from multiple locations. And with powerful video and chat options, virtual meetings allow an unprecedented level of connectedness.

For organizations using [Office 365](#), now may prove the perfect time to tap into the many features designed for remote work and mobile access. Tools such as Yammer and Microsoft Teams empower virtual water cooler conversations and seamlessly integrate communication into the work at hand.

## Powering Remote Collaboration with Microsoft Teams

Regardless of distance, Microsoft Teams provides the tools you need to bring colleagues into the same virtual room. When canceled flights keeps team members on separate continents, or quarantine forces [work-at-home](#), Teams comes to the rescue.

With real-time collaboration, multiple employees can work together on a single Word document, PowerPoint presentation or Excel spreadsheet. They can conduct a group chat without leaving the open document. Then, with the touch of a button, they can move directly from the group chat to a video conference.

Because every document the team shares saves to the cloud, team members always have access to the most recent document version. And Microsoft Teams pulls content, tools, and conversations together into a chat-based workspace designed to promote productivity.

Behind the scenes, additional features ensure that remote collaboration does not require any sacrifice of security. Automated encryption protects documents in transit and at rest. Multi-factor authentication and advanced threat protection protect identity and detect suspicious activity. And Mobile Device Management provides tools for [mobile workforce security](#).



## Preparedness Specialists

eMazzanti opened for business in August 2001 in Hoboken, New Jersey. Less than a month later, the fledgling business brought its customers through the crisis of 9/11. That commitment to providing business continuity, networking and security solutions has continued for nearly two decades.

We know what it takes to keep employees connected and businesses productive. And, as a Microsoft Gold Partner, eMazzanti can help your organization get the most out of Office 365 and Microsoft Teams.