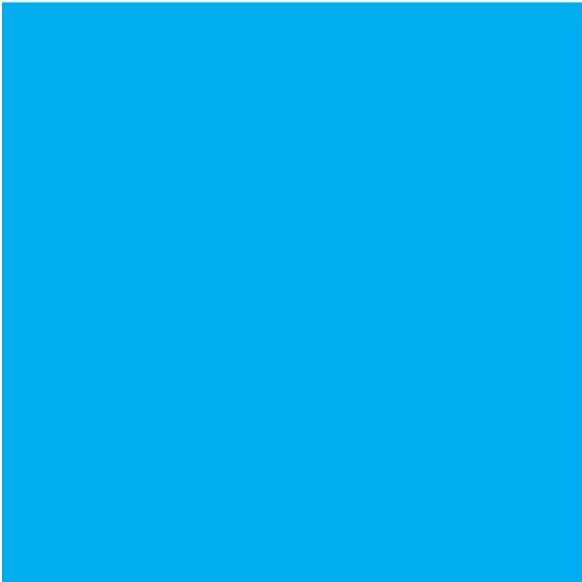


Microsoft sees huge boost to Teams with 44 million, with COVID-19 sending workers home

March 20 2020, by Jefferson Graham, Usa Today



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Microsoft Teams has come up with a solution to the problem many of us working at home types are facing. Noise in the background.

The company announced a "noise suppression" feature, "which will minimize distracting background noise (e.g., keyboard typing, [vacuum cleaner](#)), allowing you to hear what's being said," the company says.

However, before you get too excited and rush to use it, Microsoft says the feature won't be live until later in the year.

But it's worth looking forward to. In a sample video shared with U.S. TODAY, a Microsoft engineer shows a before and after shot, of him eating [potato chips](#). In the after shot, the sound of the crackling chips are inaudible.

For the "[noise suppression](#)," Microsoft is using [artificial intelligence](#), similar to how it can blur the background during a video meeting.

Thursday marked the third anniversary of Teams, which is targeted at the same audience that uses Slack, as a way for inter-office communication, with text chats, video meetings and [phone calls](#).

Microsoft has seen a huge boost for Teams since so many workers have been sent home, due to the coronavirus. Teams now has 44 million daily users, a figure that has grown by 12 million "in just the last seven days," Microsoft says. This week alone, users have generated over 900 million meeting and calling minutes on Teams.

Some other new features announced:

Raise your hand

This will give anyone in the meeting a visual signal if they'd like to be heard.

Offline support

Users can read chat messages and write responses offline, even without an Internet connection.

Teams is geared to enterprises but is made available free to anyone with a Microsoft account. The key missing feature from the [free version](#): extra storage space for shared photos and videos, and the ability to make voice calls. The pro accounts starts at \$12.50 monthly.

With so many people working at home now, "We're going to look back and realize this is where it all changed," Microsoft 365 chief Jared Spataro told TheVerge. "We're never going to go back to working the way that we did."

Microsoft itself has 50,000 people now working remotely in the Seattle area.

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