

**INTEGRATING YOUR  
TELECOMS WITH  
MICROSOFT TEAMS**

# *Communicate in confidence, without breaking your budget!*

As a leading provider of Unified Communications solutions for businesses of all sizes, Unicomm has a wealth of experience; designing, deploying and supporting Unified Communications solutions to help customers seamlessly integrate telephony into their wider operations, to ultimately enhance collaboration and save our customers money.



Even before the pandemic transformed the working world, some businesses already leveraged Microsoft Teams to connect employees, customers and commercial partners. Covid-19 emphasised the need for cloud-based collaboration and Teams became one of – if not, the – most important business applications.

Many managed to cope by quickly downloading the free version of Teams, leveraging video calling and instant messaging to keep staff productive while working from home.

*But now things are getting back to normal, you may be working with Teams, but without the added benefit of integrating Teams into your broader telephony services.*

*So, it's worth honestly asking yourself if you are getting the most from your stop-gap solution? And if not, integrating Teams into your long-term communications strategy for a more flexible, productive future!*

It's also important to note that in 2025, Openreach plan to deactivate the PSTN and ISDN networks that have served our country with landline calls and low-speed broadband for decades.

This means that one-way-or-another, business will need to move their traditional calling solutions to internet-based technology – known as VoIP or Unified Communication – before then, or risk losing touch with all their important contacts.

All told, Microsoft Teams is a phenomenal business tool, but many have used the application like a plaster – a temporary solution until things went back to 'business as usual'. But the working world has changed permanently, and we would like to introduce you to robust, cost-effective integrated telephony solution, so that you can make the most out of Teams.

*As we take a look at Microsoft Teams, it's important to differentiate what you get for free Vs. what you need to pay for within Teams. And compare that with what we think is the ideal integrated solution for the majority of UK operations.*

## **IN THIS GUIDE, WE EXPLORE:**

- Making collaboration easy
- Getting value for money
- Securing your data
- Optimising your experience
- Visibility and reporting

# Microsoft Teams – the basics



Before we look at how you can optimise your business' use of Teams, we need to understand what basic functionality comes as standard, and what features you have to pay for via Microsoft 365's Basic and Standard packages.

Microsoft offers 3 tiers of Microsoft Teams - Free, Basic and Standard and no matter which you choose, the app is free to download.

Linked to your Office 365 subscription, if you already use Office 365 in your business, and have Word, Excel Outlook etc. on your devices, there's a good chance you can already take advantage of all the features that Teams offers.



Feature Category	Microsoft Teams (free)	Microsoft 365 Business Basic	Microsoft 365 Business Standard
MEETINGS AND CALLING	✗	✗	✓
CHAT AND COLLABORATION	✓	✓	✓
PRODUCTIVITY APPS AND SERVICES	✗	✗	✓
SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE	✗	✓	✓
ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT		✓	✓

But Teams on its own may not be enough to solve all the communications challenges your business is facing. With the free version of teams, there's no way to call an 01-, 07- or any other traditional phone number. All you get is the ability to communicate via video call/conference (for a maximum of 60 minutes at a time) and Instant Messenger.

To replace your existing calling solution, and make the most out of Teams, you will need to invest some resource into it, but as we'll explore, there are cost-effective ways to leverage Teams, without ever using the Teams app - ever again...

# Making collaboration easy



## FREE

You get to enjoy three of Teams' most used features - video calling, instant messenger and presence. Meaning you can enable your people to communicate.

## BASIC/STANDARD

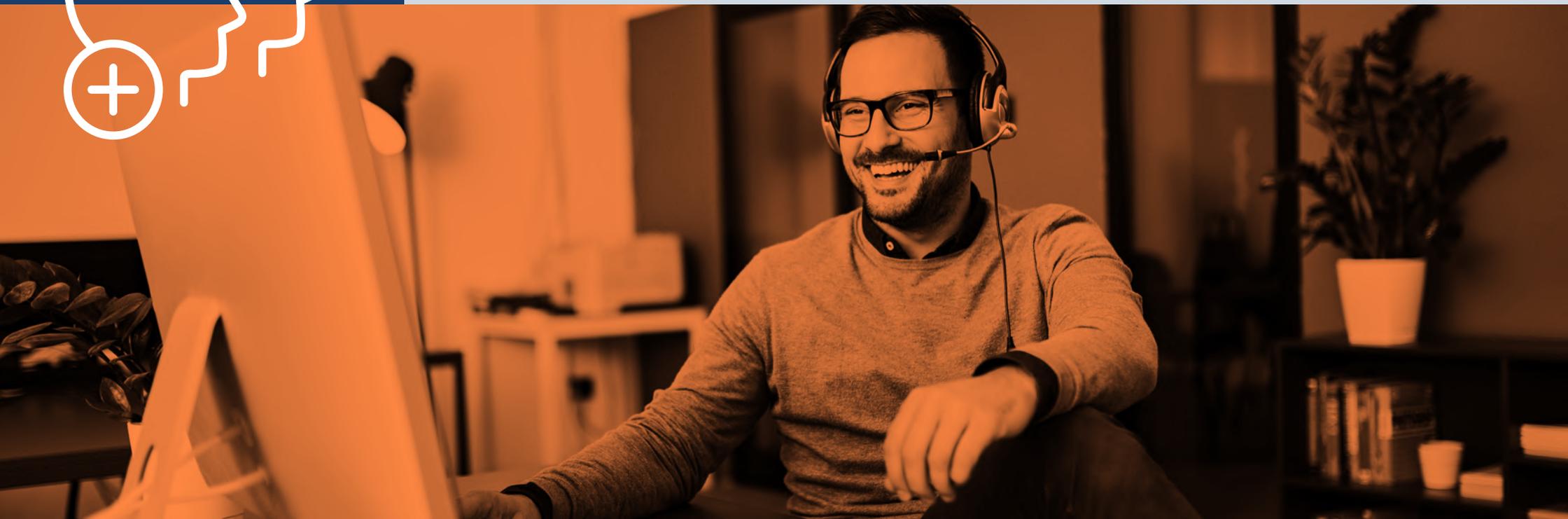
Paying for Basic gives your team the ability to use the Office 365 Web Apps (Word, Excel PowerPoint) but you also get OneDrive and SharePoint to save docs in the cloud, acting as a central repository for your documents. Maximum video call length jumps from 60 minutes to 24 hours and also offers meeting recording.

Moving up to Standard means your team can take those documents offline, using desktop versions of Microsoft's applications, to work on those same docs without an internet connection.

## IDEAL

Remember, none of these solutions so far give you the ability to call traditional phone numbers. We'll get further into this in our next section, but that's a vital function of your business and needs to be considered thoroughly!

It's also important to note that Teams isn't the only collaboration solution available. Many even integrate Teams into their own app's functionality, meaning you can harness Teams as well as additional functionality through a third-party application



# Getting value for money



## FREE

With video calls limited to 60-minute meetings and no calling to 01, 07, or any other traditional phone numbers, your team would be limited to calling on their mobile phones while working from home.

## BASIC/STANDARD

No matter which version of Teams you choose (Basic or even Standard) you would need to pay Microsoft an extra £9 pm/pu for the ability to call, along with 1,200 mins, but only for domestic calls. (Cost is usually £12 but Microsoft is running a discount at the time of publication and is subject to change).

Including Microsoft 365, and now a calling plan, your lines could already be costing £20 for each user, and only 60 minutes per day on the phone! Even more if you need to call internationally, the ability to record calls or leverage advanced call handling features.

## IDEAL

What businesses want is one standard price that includes all calls and the features they need.

Mitel's phone systems are easy-to-use, all-in-one cloud communications, collaboration and contact centre services, matching-if-not-exceeding Teams with added functionality and reliability - all in a single subscription.

*Most importantly, it could even cost you LESS than the equivalent sourced solely through Teams!*



# Securing your calls and data



## FREE

The only security feature included with Teams' free version – albeit a vital one – is encryption. Translating your data into code that is near-impossible for hackers to decode is essential, but doesn't protect your team from phishing attacks, or using an employee's credentials to gain access to your systems.

## BASIC/STANDARD

Whether you choose Basic or Standard, you can enjoy Multi-factor Authentication, Single Sign On across multiple devices, as well as limited auditing functionality.

## IDEAL

Whichever tier of Teams you choose, Microsoft doesn't provide any reliability assurances or failovers, meaning if there's a major outage, your phone lines and collaboration services would fall too. Mitel phone systems are backed by Google Cloud's industry-leading reliability, security and scalability to deliver uptime, reliability and industry compliance when required.

*Mitel's management portal enables you to restrict permissions to certain staff and add multiple layers of authentication to prevent a lost username and password from opening up your entire organisation to hackers.*

# Visibility and Reporting

## FREE

Simply put, there's none. But if your team will be working from home regularly, you'll need some way to assess the productivity of your staff...

## BASIC/STANDARD

With both basic and Standard tiers, there is reporting functionality, but it only leverages the data within Teams such as call volume and length. Meaning there's no context linking those metrics to your other systems to make informed decisions.

## IDEAL

Mitel enables you to make informed decisions about what areas need extra development, and visibility across employee performance and productivity, meaning better decisions and optimisation of your staff – all as standard.

# Optimising your experience

Integrations between your disparate systems (CRMs, Finance and invoicing, CSAT etc.) connects the data between them, allowing for better interactions and saving your team's precious time.

## FREE

Within Teams, there's a mini-app store that offers a choice of over 400 app integrations, helping you access data from your other systems into Teams.

But from experience, many don't offer the same level of usability or reliability that is to be expected.

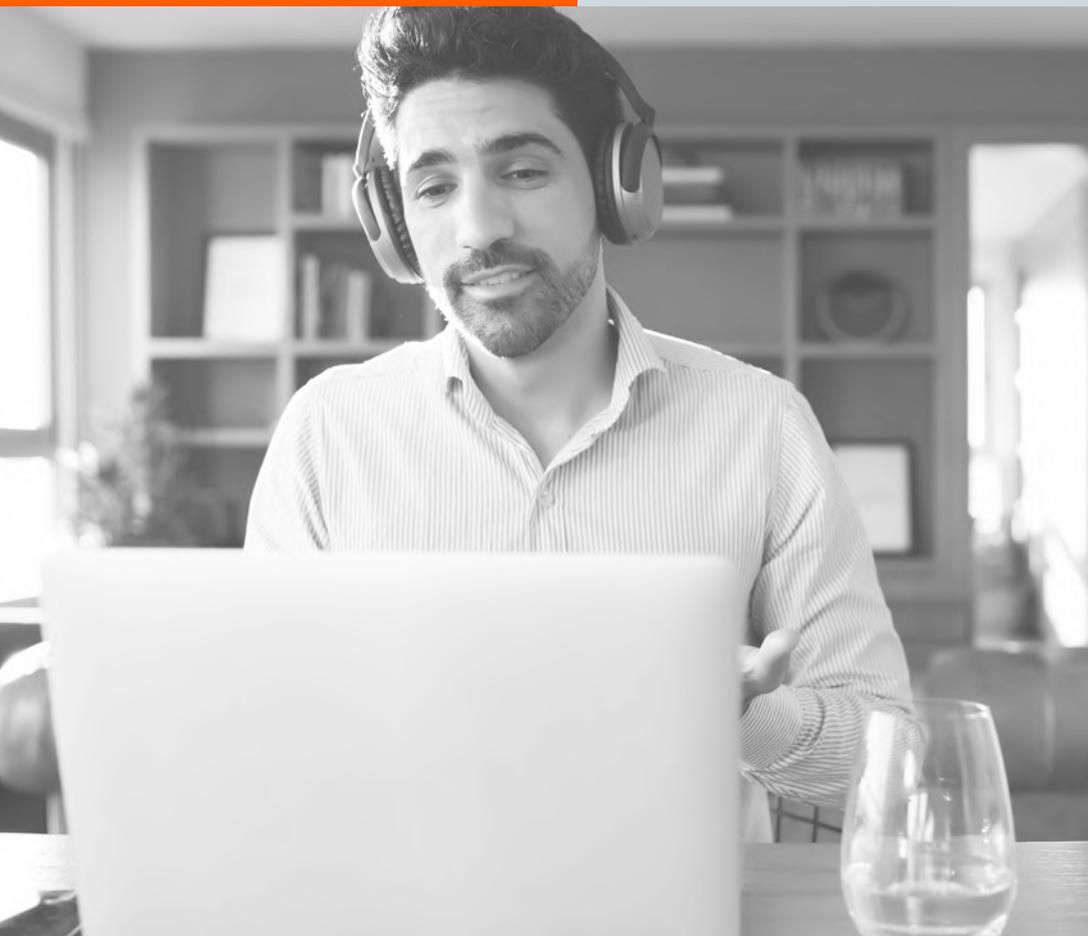
## BASIC/STANDARD

There are no further integrations available, so the only way to enhance Team' communication with other platforms would be to create custom integrations.

For which, you'd need the ability to code or to hire a third party to create the integration for you.

## IDEAL

Mitel's range of rich contact centre and CTM integration options can help bring your separate systems together, helping staff have better informed conversations with your customers.



## Conclusion

If you just want to chat + video call – no reason to spend a single penny! Just download the app and use – great for self-employed and start-ups. Established businesses need reliable communications, financial predictability, support and a fully-featured product – Standard Teams can provide this but restricts to domestic calls.

What businesses really need is an all-in-one solution that does everything. Unicomm's broad range of phone systems – whether you're already using Teams or not - will provide everything you need to stay in touch with customers and enable staff to collaborate seamlessly!

One massive factor we haven't discussed is support and multi-national corporations like Microsoft are famous for their lack of it. Working with an experienced tech partner like Unicomm means you have unlimited access to our 24/7 support team for any issues you have.

## *Why choose Unicomm?*

Unicomm is a leading provider of Unified Communications Solutions for businesses of all sizes, with a vendor agnostic approach for all deployments. We're here to help you navigate the vast range of technologies to find the right solution for you.

Within our management team, there's over 70 years of telecoms experience, and we continually research new technologies that enhance our portfolio, ensuring that the solutions we create provide genuine day-to-day benefits and help your business.

Whether you're already using Teams, or looking at options to future-proof your organisation, we can support the planning, deployment and ongoing maintenance of your new calling solution. So, what are you waiting for? Get in touch today!



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