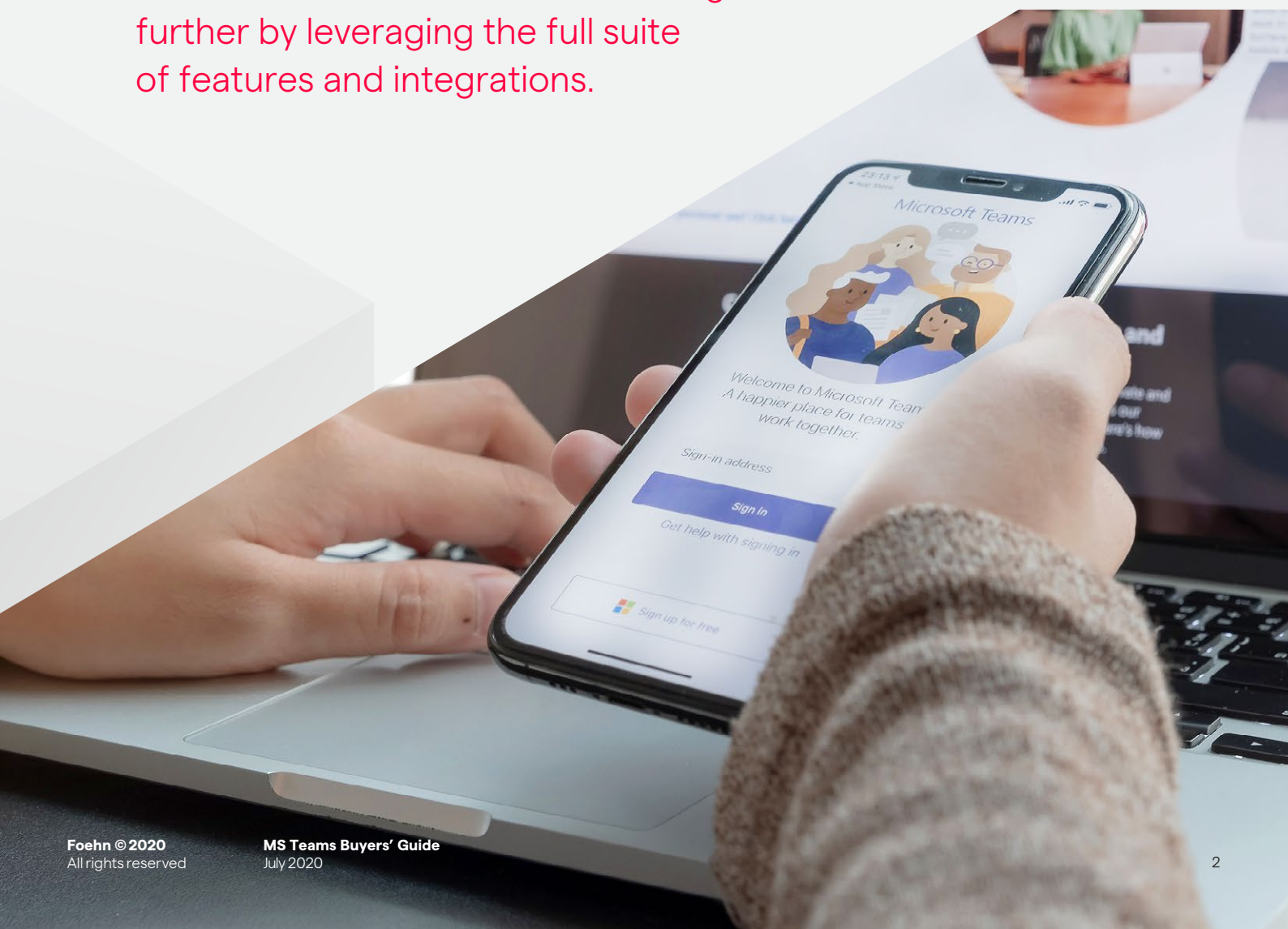


# Microsoft Teams: extracting most value for least effort

Explaining how organisations can make their Microsoft Teams investments go further by leveraging the full suite of features and integrations.



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## Microsoft Teams is good, but it could be better

You'll probably already be using or thinking about adopting Microsoft Teams. And why not? Described by Microsoft as the fastest growing application in its history, Teams is one of the most elegant collaboration platforms around.

Yet, you could be missing tricks. While the average user can easily run a point-and-click Teams session, setting up the telephony side of things takes more technical knowhow. Microsoft can act as a service provider, although call plans are only available in 12 countries and can be expensive. Outside those areas PSTN break-out will be required. Call charges can be expensive too.

There are other hidden shortcomings. Essential telephony features such as call queuing and auto attendant are basic and inflexible. Without native CRM and contact centre integration it's hard to capture and share customer information. Meanwhile, major feature gaps, like artificial intelligence, limit the opportunity to leverage reporting and analytics.



## Start with Direct Routing





The functionality's already there, just not enabled. Alongside conferencing, screen sharing, chat, federation and other native features, Direct Routing lets you make and receive calls across the PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network) through Microsoft Teams. Effectively making old, expensive on-prem and VoIP phone systems and PBXs redundant right across the company. Reducing IT costs locally and globally, while improving business continuity and making remote working more effective and productive.

Direct Routing is an easy quick win and a great place to start the conversation with your IT provider. Make sure they have strong understanding of Microsoft licences required, certified session border controllers (SBCs) and SIP trunks. The crucial piece of kit is the SBC: setup on-prem or in the cloud with dual redundancy for resilience. Foehn provides SBCs and takes care of this for our customers.

## Consider adding new technology and functionality

Making Microsoft Teams your single go-to app doesn't mean you have to surrender essential phone system controls. Or run unified communications and contact centre solutions separately, creating information silos, IT complexity and expense.

Below are examples of current Microsoft Teams gaps – like drag-and-drop dial plan editing, compliance tools, real-time reporting and contact centre functionality. These can be simply plugged by integration with a fully-fledged, cloud communications platform like Foehn [Voxivo](#).

 <b>Call Features</b>	 <b>Routing Features</b>
Call Recording	Hunt Groups
 <b>ACD</b>	Visual Dial Plan Editor
Dynamic Agent Login	Multiple DDIs Per User
Agent Pause	Custom Hold Music
Skills-based Routing	Group Voicemail
Call Outcome Disposition	Account Codes
Advanced Reporting	Day/Night Mode
Call Wrap-Up	User Defined Routing Modes
Cell Centre Suite	Caller PIN Verification
 <b>Compliance</b>	Destination-based Presentation Number
MiFID II Compliant Call Recording	Custom Integrations
PCI Compliant Payments	



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## Don't get caught in the middle

As well as checking for voice skills and expertise, you should be confident your Microsoft partner will own and resolve any service issues. Sadly, that's not always the case. Some are quick to shunt customers back to Microsoft online support, leaving them stuck in the middle of a long, painful process.



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## Selecting a managed service provider

A safer approach is to wrap Microsoft Teams into a fully managed service. Look for a provider who will proactively monitor your Teams environment for performance and user experience levels. When it comes to SLAs, make sure they guarantee 99.95% availability, as a minimum.

Secondly, they should be able to support moves, adds and changes management with new user provisioning and a 24/7 helpdesk and central escalation point.

Finally, make sure your IT provider has proven success in voice and unified communications. Even better if they have their own platforms and solutions. They should also be able to provide strong customer references and have a solid roadmap for continuous development.



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## Securing the best commercial terms

There are lots of companies purporting to be Microsoft Teams managed service providers. Beware those looking to lock you into 12-month (or longer) fixed contracts. Look instead for try-before-you-buy arrangements. Some providers, including Foehn, offer a free 30-day trial and flexible monthly rolling contracts. So it's worth comparing offers. It could save you loads of hassle and a small fortune in the long run.

## Use case



Digital marketing specialist **Chillabyte** helps clients optimise results from SEO, paid search campaigns, web design, user experience and social. Like many companies it's become a fervent fan of Microsoft Teams during lockdown. Regular video calls and group discussions have kept remote workers engaged, while desktop sharing has come into its own when pitching ideas and reviewing project plans and campaign results.

Previously tied to the office by a legacy PBX phone system, Chillabyte is taking full advantage of Direct Routing and Voxivo as part of a blended home/office approach. Benefits include:



### Digital marketing

- ▶ Work more efficiently with a cloud phone system that follows them wherever they go
- ▶ Never miss a call – from their desktop or mobile app
- ▶ Streamline communications with IVR and hunt group features



### IT

- ▶ Reduce complexity and management points, while reducing licencing and call costs
- ▶ Save time and money on moves, adds and changes
- ▶ Improve business continuity through simpler disaster recovery plans



### Customers

- ▶ Get a faster response
- ▶ Reach the right digital expert, first time, every time
- ▶ Enjoy a smoother ride and user experience

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## What does good look like?

Moving to a Microsoft Teams managed service arrangement and taking advantage of Direct Routing should provide:

- ▶ A smooth transition to cloud telephony, with less risk and hassle
- ▶ Smarter voice capabilities, enhancing collaboration and the user experience
- ▶ A stronger digital transformation roadmap
- ▶ More integration possibilities, reducing IT effort and boosting employee productivity
- ▶ Greater insight into inbound and outbound customer communications
- ▶ Potential savings on calls and retiring expensive-to-support legacy phone systems

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## Frequently asked questions

**Q: Why should I consider taking out a managed Microsoft Teams service?**

**A:** In addition to the benefits outlined in this guide, transitioning to Teams should be a gradual process. There are a lot of moving parts to consider, such as how new features will work with your organisation and IT team as well as end-user training. Understanding how external users will fit in along with audio and video needs, conference room system upgrades, and how to transition away from Skype for Business or other collaboration tools is key to an effective migration.

**Q: What phone features does Microsoft Teams offer? Can you create hunt groups, IVR menus and schedules?**

**A:** See the feature comparison on Page 2.

**Q: Are you able to use the Microsoft app to make call with our SIP channels?**

**A:** Yes, once Direct Routing is activated on the user account within Microsoft Teams.

**Q: When Voxivo is ready to be integrated with Microsoft Teams, will customers have to pay above-normal SIP connection costs?**

**A:** No. Our pricing is extremely competitive and flexible. Foehn can also offer other advantages such as international number porting and provisioning capability, all simply managed by one supplier.

**Q: What services does Foehn offer for Microsoft Teams?**

**A:** Foehn provides a fully managed service. In addition to setting up and optimising Direct Routing we can integrate Teams with Voxivo, our fully-fledged unified communications and contact centre platform. That will provide customers with a more complete roadmap for omnichannel and digital transformation.

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## How Foehn can help

Integrating Microsoft Teams with our Voxivo cloud communications platform unleashes voice potential by adding security and compliance to traditional PBX functionality. You can make or receive calls within Teams and connect to customers on the move. Our drag-and-drop dial plan editor gives instant control over telephony changes. And intelligent routing helps identify and manage calls proficiently.

To learn more about unlocking more value from Microsoft Teams, get in touch today:

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