Manage Your Office 365 Rollout Using Yammer
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As customers roll out Office 365, they often ask how they can best use Yammer to manage their deployment. Changing from one IT system to another can be a daunting task, and the potential to create a large degree of disruption and uncertainty throughout the organization underscores the need for change management. Using a community-based approach on your Yammer network, with peer to peer learning, will help your organization adopt new technologies alongside the change.

The following ideas have been curated from customers who have successfully used Yammer as a communication and planning tool for Office 365 deployment. Many customers have highlighted the need to plan and think about what role Yammer should play before, during, and after completing the project.
Here are some best practices for using Yammer as you transition to Office 365:

1. **Create communities to support the change.**

   Create a group for specific audiences related to the deployment. For example, create a group for the pilot users, the project members, the testing users.

   Use these groups for communication about deadlines, requirements, and updates to the information for the change. This makes it easy for every member of the group to exchange messages and see others’ ideas and feedback. Yammer Groups also streamlines troubleshooting because people can search for answers to their questions.

   Collect feedback through a group called Feedback on Office 365, or use a topic hashtag like #Office365 in related conversations. Something not working like the users intended thought? Have an idea? Collect it all in a central place so everyone can benefit from the feedback and build on these ideas.

   Finally, it’s easy for people to jump right into Yammer and see the conversations that have previously happened, which is helpful as you continue to add new members to the group.
Sample groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office 365 Pilot User group</td>
<td>We will share updates on deployment, rollout, testing, and end user training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New to Office 365 group</td>
<td>Learn tip and tricks, find additional training resources and how-to’s to get started using Office 365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback on Office 365</td>
<td>Have a feature request? Think something should work a certain way? Post in here and the group will help find the best solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O365 deployment*</td>
<td>Create an External Group to be used with FastTrack and partners to actively collaborate during the Office 365 deployment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use Yammer for Q&A by creating a New to Office 365 group. This will encourage users to help each other as they transition to Office 365. Recruit your super users to help monitor this group. Share #how-to-tips every Tuesday to encourage users to learn more as they adopt more of Office 365.
2. Communicate the change

Share the plan. Share the plan. Share the plan. Plans change. Something goes well, something broke. Communicate this openly on Yammer and allow for the community to engage and be involved. Lessen the surprise by increasing the transparency.

Host a YamJam about the change, migration, and transition. Invite the senior leaders and stakeholders to be involved in the YamJam to support deployment. Prepare some questions just in case, but give priority to questions from users. Examples of good questions to start: Why are we upgrading? What are the benefits? Who else has done this before? What is the impact to our business? How have pilot users been taking advantage of Office 365?

Host in-person open house or webinar trainings and use Yammer to collect questions ahead of time. Lean on your pilot team to understand the pulse of the end users.
3. **Equip local teams**

With your user communities, involve the local teams and equip them with tools to help with the change on the actual migration days. This could include how-to print outs for specific product's needs, and changes to process that people need to be aware of due to the switch.

Provide short training options that are specific to people's needs around the change. Help provide and source the content for these trainings from Yammer, along with success stories from across the organization.

Host a Lunch and Learn, pre- and post-migration to discuss best practices to improve productivity and highlight local wins and success stories.
Post-project engagement

Migration projects conclude, but the conversations should continue. Continue to use your groups for new project progress, success stories, and updates or changes to the product, and make sure to allocate resources for managing the community.

Even though you have had an active group during the project, many will now perceive the project as “completed” be sure to keep the up momentum in the specific groups for continued support. As more functionality becomes available, use the groups to continue to communicate the changes and upcoming features.

Share what works

Have you used Yammer for change communication or for IT transition projects? If you have, we would love to learn from your experiences too, so please share your experiences in the TechCommunity.