



Maximise collaboration and productivity with SharePoint

A guide to Microsoft's leading
solution for connecting people
and managing information
across your business





It has never been more important for colleagues to collaborate and feel connected.

As we become more accustomed to a world where hybrid working is the norm, traditional forms of information management and data creation are no longer fit for purpose. We need better ways of co-authoring documents and of reviewing live tasks. We need to build a central platform where all data and documentation is available at all times and from all devices. We need to squeeze the most value out of our technological investments through clever use of technology.

Sound familiar? These are challenges common around the world for businesses of all sizes.

Microsoft SharePoint offers a solution that is not only simple but scalable too. Whether you need out-of-the-box integration with the full Microsoft stack or are looking for greater flexibility and customisation, SharePoint delivers. It's extremely likely that you already have some form of access to SharePoint within your existing Microsoft licence, meaning you can hit the ground running with a solution that feels familiar.

As the tech company with people at heart, Advania's primary focus is on making your employees' lives easier. An expansive and modern approach to SharePoint can allow your business to accomplish more with less, with greater innovation, and build towards a more sustainable and efficient future.

In this eBook, we look at why organisations turn to SharePoint to secure their workforces' future with solutions they can rely on.

With a global workforce adapting to new ways of working and discovering what these changes mean for their professional lives, ensuring that your people benefit from secure, reliable communication across your organisation is the smartest way to be prepared for whatever challenge comes next.

It's why more than 200,000 organisations and 190 million people have turned to SharePoint for intranets, team sites and content management¹.

What follows will show you why you might want to join them.

Melanie Mackenzie,
Sales Director for SMB





Pain points? SharePoint!

Let's look at some common challenges that organisations face with information management and how SharePoint can help.

Many workplaces find themselves frustrated and inefficient due to reliance on outdated or legacy systems. People struggle to connect in real-time, turning minor problems with simple solutions into long-term bottlenecks.

Up to 30% of business revenue can be lost through workplace inefficiencies²

More than a quarter of employee time is wasted every day due to outdated systems³

Over 70% of respondents to an international survey wished their collaboration tools were more compatible⁴

² Are process inefficiencies causing more disruption than you think? Tiffany Leung.

³ How inefficient processes waste nearly a third of employees' time, The CFO, June 2019.

⁴ Four Ways Leaders Can Empower People for How Work Gets Done, Microsoft, 2023

In the face of these frustrations, SharePoint offers a raft of modern alternatives to established – but dated – ways of working.



Collaboration

With the ability for multiple users to review and edit a document simultaneously and offering 24/7 access wherever you are, you can manage your resources efficiently and encourage increased communication and output.



Collective knowledge

When using search in SharePoint, tailored recommendations instantly appear. These can include recent files, relevant content and news – as well as the names and information of colleagues whose skills and experiences match your search needs.



Greater employee engagement

Whether you focus on Viva Connections, which places your intranet inside Microsoft Teams, Viva Topics, which provides a topic management facility for all your organisation's content, or any of the other people-focused features built into SharePoint, your workforce will be better engaged with each other as a community and with your workplace values as an organisation.



In today's post-pandemic world, recreating those intimate human moments is essential for colleagues who may no longer meet regularly in person.

The five-minute chat by the coffee machine, a joke over the cubicle wall and - perhaps most crucial of all - the ability to pop your head round the door and ask a vital question - all of these must make the transition to our new digital workplace.

That is the call that SharePoint answers.





Everything, anytime, anywhere

One of the biggest benefits for an organisation undergoing a digital transformation is building a model which allows data to be constantly accessible from multiple devices.

By removing the need to be tied to an office desk, working patterns which suit your people - not just your technology - can develop, boosting productivity and employee engagement.

An important requirement is the need for consistency in appearance and functionality. SharePoint ensures that all your people see the same thing when viewing documents and data, wherever and whenever they need it, breaking down the silo mentality which for so long divided colleagues across an organisation.



Three SharePoint features you'll love:

Document library

A document library provides a secure location to store files and collaborate with ease. One example could be creating a document library in SharePoint to store all the files relating to a specific project.

Document libraries reduce wasted time spent searching for information and allow you to organise and streamline your document management.

Managing permissions and access

You can set individual permission levels for users across the whole of SharePoint. You may want to restrict access to certain projects, or hand full control to select groups of people.

With five unique levels of permission available, you'll be able to collaborate securely and be granular in the access given to others.

Versioning and Content Approval

When working collaboratively, you may want to discover the time and date of a particular change to a document. With Versioning, each successive iteration is numbered, giving you a complete history.

With Content Approval, you can create a simple process which gives you the peace of mind that documents pending approval will not be published until you are ready.



SharePoint Lists: more than Microsoft Excel can offer

With a seemingly similar tool on the market in Microsoft Excel, why should you choose SharePoint Lists?

SharePoint Lists offer you the ability to input, store and manipulate data within the collaborative and secure environments you create for your organisation, but they also offer some vital upgrades over their Excel counterparts:

Benefit	Functionality
A single source of truth	<p>Version control ensures everyone is up to date without the confusion of saving and creating multiple copies</p> <p>An 'always online' approach is more efficient and risk-averse, with increased levels of data security</p>
M365 integration	<p>Lists integrate with the Microsoft 365 suite in ways which add greater value than Excel, such as integrating List data into your SharePoint intranet</p> <p>SharePoint Lists offer the ability to integrate with Power BI to create custom reporting and trigger automated workflows</p>
Management and maintenance	<p>User-friendly interfaces allow for ease of use and a quick overview and understanding of data</p> <p>Lists offer granular-level permission for each item rather than the all-or-nothing approach in Excel, which provides additional levels of security and control over your content</p>
Excel compatibility	<p>You can export all of your SharePoint List data to Excel using the 'Out of the Box' option, if you want to view your data in a familiar format</p>





Go further with advanced SharePoint features

SharePoint is more than just a repository – it's the basis for innovation that can transform how your people work. Ready to go further?

SharePoint offers functionality and use cases far beyond basic intranets or lists. Two examples are Workflow Forms and SharePoint sites and subsites.

Businesses which require regular data from their people and clients, or need an intranet built with a particular hierarchical structure, will benefit from both of these tools.

Workflow Forms

Workflow forms are interactive windows with different fields for users to engage with and enter data into. Forms simplify business processes and allow you to make your workflows more dynamic and flexible.

Three types of Workflow Forms

Association and Initialisation Forms

These forms are displayed for users to fill out prior to any workflow beginning. You can use them to set parameters and gain workflow information before it starts.

Modification Forms

Modifications are options you present to users to change the workflow as it's running on an item. You can then offer a modification form to specify the extent of the changes you want.

Task Forms

Task Forms are templates that can be created to ensure a task is completed in the correct format and includes specific data.



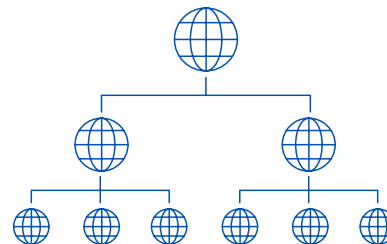
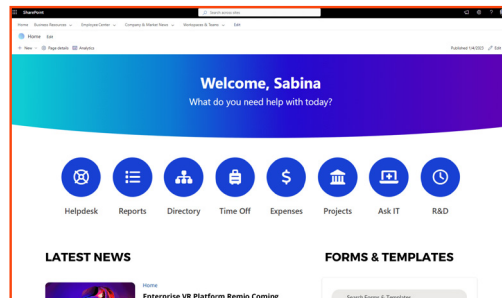
SharePoint sites and subsites

SharePoint sites have a hierarchy, just like a traditional filing system. This allows you to create sites with subsites underneath them.

Sites and subsites are sometimes used interchangeably, but they generally mean the same thing. A subsite is simply a site which lives under another site; therefore all your SharePoint sites – except for your homepage – will technically also be subsites.

If you create a Finance SharePoint site, you might want to build a self-service area for employees to place expenses claims, to handle identification, receipt data, times and dates, and other expenses information. This might also require integration with other lists and libraries, setting different access levels for staff administering this site.

For this need, a subsite accessed from the main Finance site would allow you to keep all the required information together, retain a fresh set of administration permissions and create a simple to use, clean interface.





Make document management even easier with Teams and AI



It doesn't stop at SharePoint. Collaboration and automation is made simple with integrations and AI.

SharePoint is central to Microsoft's overall collaboration strategy. It integrates seamlessly with your Microsoft apps, making things possible that couldn't have been imagined even a few years ago.

With Teams built into the foundations of the platform, there is a strong connection between the two. Every team created in the Teams app automatically creates a SharePoint Team Site in the back end, meaning all documents shared in Teams are stored by default in your SharePoint document library.

Some of the most effective SharePoint use cases come from its integration with Power Automate. Power Automate helps you automate common tasks across Microsoft 365 services with the aim of freeing up time and optimising efficiency.

Additionally, Syntex – Microsoft's AI content processing software – builds on SharePoint to provide premium capabilities to automatically recognise content, extract important information and apply metadata. This can free up your people to focus on more valuable tasks.

With organisations' focus now firmly on optimisation and modernisation, SharePoint can help key business processes improve performance and efficiency in the long term.



Collaborate and integrate with a Fresh intranet

Fresh is a market-leading intranet built in SharePoint and Microsoft 365. Fresh's out-of-the box solution has been designed to empower your employees to achieve their best and to bring your SharePoint intranet to life.

With Fresh, it's easy to design an attractive intranet and publish captivating content in SharePoint, and all without a technical degree. Bring your M365 channels and business-critical information together in a single resource that is engaging and simple to use.

Benefiting from a close relationship with Microsoft, Fresh is a solution that will give you all the best bits of an intranet - quickly, simply and at a great price.

Fresh: for a market-leading SharePoint intranet

Fresh intranet is part of Advania, and has been designing, building and delivering class-leading intranets based on Microsoft technology since 2001. In that time, the expansion of intranets in the modern workplace has been enormous, evolving from basic homepages displaying just the lunch menu and pictures from the Christmas party, up to today's interactive, collaborative, cloud-based digital workspaces.

The change has been nothing short of incredible.

At the same time, the impact that a bad intranet can have has grown exponentially as the reliance on internal communication has grown, and Fresh has had to redesign or replace systems that were simply failing employees or holding companies back.

For an intranet you can rely on for long-term success and for a name you can trust, try a Fresh approach.

Book a demo



freshintranet.com



Your SharePoint FAQs

Whether you want to start with the basics, or dig a little deeper, at Advania we're here to help.

What is SharePoint?

A team collaboration workspace, SharePoint is a platform that many organisations use to store, organise, share and access information. SharePoint is available on any device and offers solutions to document and data management challenges.

SharePoint is very often used to create company intranets and employee landing pages, with lots of functionalities now built into other Microsoft 365 apps for a seamless experience. Indeed, many end users who are collaborating in Teams may in fact be using SharePoint – even if they don't know it!

How do I access SharePoint?

SharePoint is available through a Microsoft 365 subscription, and can be accessed via browser, desktop or mobile app.

How does SharePoint integrate with Microsoft Teams?

SharePoint and Microsoft Teams are linked in many ways. Whenever you create a new Team, a SharePoint site is created in the background and connected directly to your Team. Each time a Teams site is created, a ***files*** tab is automatically created which is connected to the SharePoint site where your data is stored.

Changes made in one are reflected in the other – SharePoint and Teams are two sides of the same coin but offer different usability for greater productivity.

Can SharePoint be customised?

You can customise the overall theme and appearance of a SharePoint site, but Microsoft advises against making large structural changes. There are guidelines available which delineate what you can and can't change and following these allows you to brand your SharePoint sites and pages to your own organisation's style.

What if I need help with SharePoint?

There's lots of guidance available from Microsoft for SharePoint site owners and users, ranging from advice on getting the most from the platform to trending topics which reflect ongoing popular use cases.

However, if you're looking for a more personal approach to help with adopting SharePoint or you need some one-to-one guidance on creation, deployment and management, Advania has experienced experts who can answer your questions and offer a helping hand.

Got a question about how SharePoint can help your organisation? Read on to find out how to contact us.

How Advania can help you with SharePoint

Ready to take your next steps with Microsoft SharePoint?

At Advania we can help you with migrations from FileShare and older versions of SharePoint to the latest solution. We can also help with licensing, procurement, deployments and support.

About Advania

Advania is the tech company with people at heart, operating across Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Finland, Denmark and the UK. With a team of over 5,000 talents, we offer managed services, hardware, software, and professional services to clients in both private and public sector. Our main goal isn't just about technology; it's about empowering people to create sustainable value.

The Advania Group traces its origins to Iceland in 1939, expanding across the Nordic states over the following decades. Our UK business employs around 1,000 people, located in London, Manchester, Milton Keynes, Reading, Sheffield and Cardiff, as well as Cape Town, South Africa, and Florida and New York, US. We also deliver our services globally through 21 established partnerships.



The tech company *with people at heart*



Head Office

One Old Jewry, London EC2R 8DN

e hello@advania.co.uk **w** advania.co.uk **t** 0207 030 3999