

Businesses that moved from Skype to Slack reduced productivity costs during the pandemic. Here's how.



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Skype was founded in 2003 as a revolutionary communication tool. At the time, it reduced the cost of voice calls by using a P2P protocol, and it set a groundwork for messaging, voice and video calling. For years, it served its purpose.

However, Skype and Skype for Business Online **remained solely as communication tools**. That's simply not enough for modern businesses, which need a **collaboration platform** that increases productivity and optimizes people's working day. Especially during a pandemic.

Over the past year, some companies have achieved incredible transformation by letting go of legacy software, like Skype, and making the move to Slack.

In doing so, they left behind siloed communication, disconnected tools and fractured knowledge management.

The stories of these companies show that transitioning to Slack is not an all-or-nothing game; businesses will reap the results of improved collaboration, regardless of their transitioning model and industry.

Now let's take a closer look at:

- A Fortune 500 retail company that turned around its communication culture.
- A Fortune 500 telecommunications giant that improved its frontline operations.
- A global financial services business that optimized the work processes of departments that needed it the most.

**Coexistence: Slack
elevates collaboration
of agile and innovative
departments**

Slack is uniquely suited to respond to the challenges of fast-moving, regulated industries, whether it's ensuring that mobile devices and data are kept secure or helping to resolve fraud incidents quickly.

Still, the corporate culture of financial services can be rigid, so quick company-wide adoption of collaboration tools is sometimes unrealistic.

Even then, Slack can be used to optimize the collaboration of departments that need it the most, coexisting with other tools and elevating them.

A Fortune 500 financial services business recently started moving from Skype to Teams. However, its more innovative and agile departments—Tech, DevOps and Engineering—tested Teams and decided that the tool didn't fit their collaboration strategy.

They wanted to replace Skype with Slack, which they were already using and loved. Seeing that Slack was the perfect fit for these departments, executives didn't push them to move from Skype to Teams.

Even though integrations, which Slack is known for, need to undergo a pre-implementation approval process in financial services businesses, **the out-of-the-box solution** still offers many benefits.

Channels make collaboration engaging and organized

Slack makes it easy for departments to **quickly connect the right people** in Slack channels, where they can do everything from discuss tech challenges to resolve critical issues.

Threads keep discussions organized so that channels remain uncluttered and relevant parties can fully engage in the conversation.

In comparison, the underlying architecture of Teams made it **impossible to replicate Slack's channel-based collaboration**. All too often, the only "solution" was to create another team, which led to siloed communication and a very cluttered communication tool.

Less context switching accelerates work

Tech teams started using Slack instead of Skype, Rocket.Chat and email. It allowed them to keep most of their communication in one place and **cut down on context switching**, which decreases productivity costs.

When you add Slack's integrations into the equation, you see just how much work you can do without leaving the collaboration platform.

Intelligent search finds everything you need— fast

One of the most important features for the aforementioned departments was Slack's intelligent and intuitive search. It allows them to **filter and modify search results** so that they can quickly find whatever they're looking for—be it information, files, channels or people.

Skype and Teams have a fairly rudimentary search, which made it difficult to find information when team members needed it. Teams' search didn't show publicly available files unless users were part of that specific team. When searching for conversations, the search returned just one message without the context that was needed.

Not only was this frustrating, it also meant that they had to interrupt other people's work to get information that had already been shared. It was a big time waster, as disrupted employees then had to refocus on their task.

Slack unlocks effective async communication across time zones

The company has a geographically dispersed team, so using Skype for async work was a massive challenge. Skype offered no solution for its remote teams as conversations can't get structured into persistent chats, and there's no possibility to send simple video messages. Switching to Slack improved async work and made it much **easier to bridge the time-zone gap**.

By using channels and intelligent search, team members on different continents could easily find the required information on their own, no longer having to rely on their colleagues during off-hours.

While the whole global financial services company wasn't quite ready to transition to Slack, it still did wonders for the collaboration of its more innovative departments.

Now let's see what happens when a whole business quickly transitions to Slack.



**Quick transition: Slack
improves frontline
communication and
customer service
while overcoming
Covid challenges**

When Covid-19 hit, a Fortune 500 telecommunications giant was forced to instantly adopt a digital-first approach. The company was facing the tall task of creating a digital HQ—practically overnight.

Slack was there to power the company's move from physical to remote offices.

While 85,000 of its employees were already using Slack before the pandemic, in mere weeks, that number jumped to **220,000**.

By using Slack as its digital HQ, the company managed to:

- Virtually onboard employees **in one day** without disrupting the service for millions of customers.
- Shift 12,000 call-center employees to work from home in less than two weeks.

While this feat in itself is impressive, read on for how Slack benefited the company's frontline employees during the pandemic and after stores reopened.

Support channels provide quick answers to customer questions

When faced with a question to which they didn't have an answer, frontline employees would normally file a ticket or call HQ support, sitting on the phone while customers were waiting. By transitioning to Slack Support Channels, staff can get an answer from subject-matter experts almost instantly.

Profiles and provided context encourage more meaningful conversations

When employees need to contact someone, they can find the right person themselves via intelligent search, as well as discussions that they were involved in and their Slack profile.

Frontline employees in such a huge organization find this especially helpful, as it encourages relevant conversations from the get-go. It also allows employees to refer to the conversation later, eliminating the need for repeated answers.

Automated ticket escalation accelerates problem-solving

Sometimes a question needs to be answered by a manager or an executive. Instead of manually searching for and contacting the right person on Skype, the company created a **simple custom workflow** in Slack Workflow Builder. Now problem escalation is automated and much quicker. The problem continues to **get visibility** until it's solved, which speeds up the process and ultimately creates a better customer service experience.

Workflows and Slack integrations generally result in:

A purple circular graphic with a white number '3x' inside, representing a threefold increase in speed.

3x

faster ticket resolution

A purple circular graphic with a white number '30%' inside, representing a 30% reduction in workload.

30%

reduction in workload for an enterprise support team

A purple circular graphic with a white number '64%' inside, representing a 64% decrease in backlog.

64%

decrease in backlog of support tickets

Knowledge repository makes support more efficient

Zendesk integration, simple screen-share recording and knowledge repository all enable the communication giant to keep relevant customer information in one place.

This allows employees to **find all of the necessary data fast**, as well as **transition support** over to teammates as they rotate shifts or are out of the office. Thanks to Slack, the company can also share customer information securely across all of its teams.

The result? More meaningful and efficient conversations with customers, coworkers and managers.

In comparison, 70% of the Microsoft Teams' roadmap is focused on voice and video features. However, there's little that would improve the efficiency of collaboration and information gathering, which is what teams really need to complete their projects faster.

Slack eliminated bottlenecks during Covid

Making Slack its digital HQ helped the telecommunications giant to overcome Covid-19 challenges and improve its collaboration in the process.

Now let's see how and why Slack organically spread through a company and transformed its collaboration.

**Organic adoption: Slack
gradually spreads a
proactive collaboration
culture**

A Fortune 500 retail company faced a culture of isolated communication that stifled productivity. It tried using Skype and Zoom for conversations, but neither tool helped with knowledge silos.

Its engineering department didn't have the same problem. Its secret? It had switched to Slack a couple of years ago and **streamlined everything, from communication to problem-solving.**

At that point, 3,000 employees in tech departments were using Slack. Seeing how it optimized their collaboration, the company decided to **test the platform** via a pilot project. This involved 10,000 users and spread from technical departments to HR, marketing and finance.

The pilot project was a success, and the company decided to transform its communication and collaboration culture with Slack's help. Its use expanded to **40,000 employees**, who use it for tasks like:

- Recruiting in HR.
- Digital fulfillment at stores.
- Supply-chain support with Slack Connect and its partners.

Slack's bot enables proactive onboarding

New hires are onboarded with a friendly custom Slack bot, which sends them a welcome message, explains the channel's purpose and tells them who to ask for help.

This is a huge step forward from the isolated communication that the company faced before. It showcases **the transition to more proactive communication** and sets the tone for new employees. It also makes it much easier for them to participate in channels from the very beginning.

Slack helps engineers minimize noise without minimizing information

The company's engineers keep their conversations organized and easy to follow with threads and integrations with their applications, such as GitHub Enterprise and Jira. They no longer have to sift through long email chains that only a few people read (and even fewer respond to).

They started using **emoji reactions** to respond to requests, approve actions and acknowledge gratitude without firing off notifications. This was an unexpected benefit that minimized communication without minimizing information.

Tech departments use custom bots to enable proactive communication as well. By providing channel users with more context, one particular bot prevented the support team from having to field the same question more than 7,000 times.

Slack Connect simplified collaboration with supply-chain partners

The retail giant managed to bring the entire supply-chain management to Slack via Slack Connect. This makes joint planning, forecasting and quarterly reviews with its partners much easier.

They all benefit from Slack's features and collaboration workflow, which were set up by the company. Onboarding is simple, and communication is much more transparent. Such collaboration just wasn't possible with Skype, and it's much less structured in Teams.

Slack gradually transformed this company's collaboration culture. Nothing was forced and everything happened as a consequence of how well it worked for the departments that used it. Now the whole company is enjoying more efficient and structured collaboration.

See how Slack can benefit your business

One-to-one communication tools are no longer sufficient for modern work. Anything less than purpose-built collaboration platforms puts businesses at a disadvantage and will be fundamentally inefficient for company-wide collaboration. Slack is the best and most proven option according to our customers.

In the three stories above, you've seen a wide range of benefits that Slack brings to the table. The departments that use it are more productive, waste less time and get their work done faster.

If you want to see how your team or company could streamline work processes and reduce meetings, then join us at our upcoming webinar:

Why choose Slack over Skype and Microsoft Teams?

You'll learn how Slack improves workforce productivity, how it increases the value of other tools, the different layers of communication that it offers and much more.

[Sign up for the webinar](#)