

Collaborate as one team across boundaries

The future of collaboration

How organizations communicate and collaborate is changing rapidly. A large part of this evolution involves collaboration that goes beyond traditional boundaries, accommodating an increasingly external and dispersed workforce.

Today, IT executives say that **55%** of all collaboration is with external business partners.

At the same time, organizations are aggressively pursuing new deals.

60% of organizations have a greater appetite for M&A activity since March 2020.*

In fact, **61%** of US dealmakers expect M&A activity to return to pre-COVID levels within the next 12 months.*

However, in the aftermath of these deals, organizations discover fragmented IT boundaries that introduce friction to user collaboration, including duplicative security policies, disjointed application and device access, and lengthy onboarding periods.

The nature of work changes how teams collaborate and adds complexity to organizational structure, making it critical that the seams of IT are not felt and collaboration remains a frictionless, flexible, and cohesive experience for all users.

* Deloitte, 2020

We encounter **three** main scenarios for cross-boundary collaboration:

Ad hoc collaboration



Enable quick and lightweight chat with internal and external users.

What this can look like:

- Seasonal volunteers for a major retailer need access to **short-term chats** with full-time employees, while IT needs streamlined control over lifecycle management.

Partnerships & Joint Venture collaboration

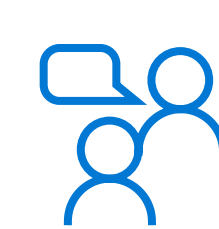


Collaborate with experts outside the organization, such as suppliers, distributors, contractors, and strategic business partners.

What this can look like:

- A car company needs to work and collaborate with external suppliers and other **B2B partners**.
- Two car companies establish a **joint venture** and want to collaborate on a new product line.

Intra-organization collaboration



Work seamlessly with all members of the team, regardless of where they fall in or outside your org chart.

What this can look like:

- A pharmaceutical company is **acquired** by another company and both companies now need to operate and collaborate as one.

42% of organizations are interested in exploring **nontraditional M&A** during times of uncertainty and change.*

- A **multi-conglomerate** broadcasting company seeks to enable better user experiences for employees across its subsidiaries.
- A **multinational** professional services networks company has operations around the world, requiring multiple tenants to meet data residency or other compliance regulations specific to each of these locations.

* Deloitte, 2020





Pillars of cross-boundary collaboration

Microsoft's vision for cross-boundary collaboration starts with three guiding principles. Working as one team, with users across IT and organizational boundaries, requires fine-grained security controls, seamless user experiences, and ease of onboarding.



Seamless experiences

Organizations know that successful user collaboration and the resulting productivity drives business forward.

Identity decision makers identified investing in user experiences as their top priority for the next 12 months.*

Seamless experiences backed by secure access requires deliberate and thoughtful Conditional Access policies like multi-factor authentication, or MFA. Security should always be present but not felt when users access devices and applications, especially when collaborating with external partners. If an organization has not properly reconciled how residual IT boundaries from a merger impact one another, users may face multiple MFA policies when accessing necessary applications or devices for collaboration.

Regardless of how users are organized within your IT directory, they should be able to collaborate without having to log out of one instance and sign into another. The proper identity solution can ensure IT hierarchies remain invisible to the user regardless of where or how they're collaborating.

* Microsoft internal research, 2020



Security & governance

Security is critical to collaboration, particularly when it happens outside the core organization.

51% of US executives said cybersecurity threats are top of mind when managing deals virtually.*

Whether within internal chats or across acquired multinational companies operating as one, organizations need communication and collaboration that is completely secure.

With all collaboration, users and devices are backed by trusted Microsoft security.

On average, Azure analyzes 8 trillion threat signals each day, detecting 5 billion threats on devices every month.

* Deloitte, 2020



Ease of onboarding

Migration of users to a single directory or other consolidation processes are not only lengthy, they can be quite costly. Traditional onboarding may require third-party vendors, contractors, and custom tooling, all of which complicates the process and reduces the time to start working and collaborating. Onboarding users should be quick and efficient, allowing all users to collaborate and work securely right away.

Key takeaways

Collaboration is no longer limited by the traditional understanding of collaboration or standard modes of operation. Today's organizations are growing and require collaboration capabilities that are both flexible and secure.

As organizations take on new shapes and structures to adapt to increasingly competitive markets, they need tools and resources that seamlessly and securely bridge the gap between all forms of collaboration.

Learn how **Microsoft Azure Active Directory** can power cross-boundary collaboration for your organization:

aka.ms/collaboratewithanyone