



Beyond Teams: The Future of Work and the Modern Global Enterprise

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Executive summary

We are often asked about the difference between Jive and Microsoft Teams. Does an enterprise really need both tools? Aren't they both just "collaboration" platforms? Don't they do the same things?

The short answer is "no, they don't do the same things" — and "yes, you likely do need both." To understand why, we must look closely at three types of work being done every day across major organizations: individual work, teamwork, and enterprise work. Under this lens, you will quickly realize that each type of work requires a different set of tools — and that coordinating effective outcomes at the enterprise work level (think of your largest objectives that ultimately drive the trajectory and success of the company) requires highly specialized capabilities that Microsoft Teams cannot provide alone.

That's the purpose of this document. We'll introduce and explain the difference between the types of work across every major organization, and the best tools for each type of work. Most importantly, we'll directly address the core and fundamental differences between Microsoft Teams and Jive — and how the latter is critical for organizational effectiveness.

The three types of work — and the technologies that support them

As a simplification, there are three types of work that happen within a company for which technology companies like Aurea provide tools:



Individual work is what people can accomplish on their own. Spreadsheets and word processors have formed the bedrock of employee productivity tools for the last several decades.

The core work hub for the individual is the calendar. It dictates work priorities and allocation of time and is generally the first thing an individual references each day.



Teamwork as its name suggests, is about enabling small groups of people to work together effectively. Tools that support effective teamwork have existed for decades, but have seen an explosion over the last decade with cloud-based chat tools (Teams, Slack), video conferencing tools (Zoom), and document collaboration tools (O365, GSuite). All of these tools principally emphasize real-time communication as their main benefit functional core.

The core work hub for the team has historically been email, but it's shifting to chat-based applications like Slack and Teams (which provide better and more focused organization of team relevant dialogue). A lot of innovation is happening in this space, and the tools employees use will see a significant amount of change in the years to come.



Enterprise work is when individuals leverage the full assets of the company — its people and its intellectual property — to get work done. There are numerous tools focused on enterprise work today (like CRM systems, for example) that give individual employees access to assets (in this case, customers and their history) of the company.

The core work hub for the enterprise has historically been the corporate intranet, and this is where Jive comes in. Jive replaces the corporate intranet with an enterprise work management solution focused on connecting the entire global enterprise — not just people on the same team, but employees, content, and expertise from every corner of a global organization.

Teamwork and enterprise work: the similarities and differences

As you know, there are hundreds of collaboration tools. Most of them (like Microsoft Teams) are focused on helping small teams work together effectively within their silos, whereas Jive is focused on helping large, global organizations work better together across the entire enterprise. Let's examine the differences between these two types of work.



Teamwork: Conversing with people you already know to get the job done

Conversations are the key focus of virtually all team-based tools. Microsoft Teams is largely just a simple way for team members — who primarily all know each other and work together on a day-to-day basis — to connect and have conversations that help them get shared teamwork done.

It's an important function, because without conversation, you don't have alignment. Conversations help team members share knowledge, facts, and research about the work they are trying to accomplish together. Through conversation, team members can meet and discuss goals, priorities, progress, and problems.

Yet it's important to point out: inner-team conversations do not broker connection outside of the immediate team. Tools like Microsoft Teams are not designed to help employees find and access the best resources available to them across the company, to get the best work done, and to coordinate the efforts of very large groups of people who do not know each other.

Which leads us to enterprise work, and Jive.



Enterprise work: Finding people and content you don't know to do your work even better

If teamwork is about conversation, enterprise work is about connection: connecting individuals and teams that don't know each other, connecting people and ideas that would otherwise not be made, and connecting individuals with the values of the enterprise (cascading culture, and then measuring and understanding the health of that connected whole). An enterprise work platform like Jive brokers those connections easily and instantaneously — giving employees the ability to quickly find and leverage the full resources of the company (from people to content) — to do even better work. The end result is a company “whole” that is far greater than the sum of its parts.

Coordinating the efforts of very large groups of people who don't know each other is the source of the greatest achievements of mankind, from building the pyramids of Egypt to landing on the moon. As Yuval Noah Harari describes in his book *Sapiens*, “Sapiens are able to organize in mass cooperation networks” like towns, nations, and corporations — to achieve amazing things that an individual or a team could not dream of accomplishing.

So enterprise work and teamwork are different.

Why different tools for each?

There are six core design differences between an enterprise work platform like Jive and a teamwork platform like Slack or Teams that reflect the nature of conversations versus connections. These differences are summarized in the table below.



Teamwork

Enterprise Work

Conversation	Collaboration Attribute	Connection
Narrow search	Finding content	Broad discovery
Synchronous/uncurated	Creating content	Asynchronous/curated
Organizational directory	Finding people	Relationship graph
Transient thoughts	Managing content	Persistent knowledge
Bottom-up communication	Orientation	Top-down culture
Activity metrics	Measurements	Health insights



Let's take a deeper dive into each attribute...

- **Narrow team search vs broader enterprise discovery**

A frequent use case for both team and enterprise work tools is the need to find information. However, the context of the use case is very different.

In team-oriented tools, you are usually looking for a conversation, a piece of content, or a person with whom you have previous familiarity— like searching your email inbox for that email you recall seeing or searching a Slack channel for a decision you recall being made. In both instances, the value comes in narrowing the scope of the search. When the common use case is to find something you remember seeing, narrow-focused search is better.

In enterprise work, you are typically looking for information you don't know even exists. You are seeking what the broader enterprise “knows” about a topic, and who knows it. You need the tool to surface relevant information even when you aren't looking for it, suggesting relevant content or people based on your current work context. In both of these scenarios, you want the search pool to be as broad as possible — encompassing not only content and people outside of your team, but content outside the direct walls of the enterprise platform (including content that may be stored in a wide variety of team-based tools).

This is why enterprise work platforms like Jive are not based on the presumption that they are the source of all content creation. In fact, they presume the opposite. It's their job, instead, to understand the relationships between people, their experiences and skills, and the content they produce. And they need to do that independent of where the work gets done.

- **Synchronous and uncured vs. asynchronous and curated**

By now, we've established that team-based tools are built to support conversations. Conversations are inherently synchronous: you initiate a discussion and trade responses.

Teams and Slack are built for this exact type of communication. They present a series of “channels” that are real-time conversation streams. Throughout the day, you frequently participate in one or more conversations at a time — and the structure can work well as long as you are focused on a small set of conversations relevant to your team.

The second you blur teamwork with enterprise work, you will be overwhelmed. Employees commonly subscribe to dozens of conversations (or more), and the conversation tool that once drove team-level productivity becomes a disaster, making enterprise work impossible. This is exactly what has driven the much-publicized “Slacklash” against group messaging applications.



Jive, on the other hand, is built to support connections at enterprise-scale. While a small team can work on a handful of things together in a chat room, a global enterprise with hundreds of thousands of people will inherently be working asynchronously: not everyone will be working on the same thing at the same time.

That's when it's critical that you have an enterprise work platform that can decide what content and people to surface based on what an individual is working on. Jive helps shield the user from “never-ending chatter” and directs them to the most important people and content via a personalized homepage and news feed.

This is similar to social networks. Facebook and LinkedIn do not bombard you with each and every musing from the people, organizations, or topics you follow. Rather, you are presented with a curated news feed that highlights the most important topics, and you're given the option to drill down into specific areas that warrant greater focus and attention.

To recap, tools like Microsoft Teams are great for small-group conversations, and even for finding them a few days or weeks later. But this is debilitatingly deficient at the enterprise level. You need an effective enterprise work platform that can abstract, summarize, curate, and organize all the content across the entire organization. Enterprises have thousands of people creating hundreds of thousands (or millions) of pieces of content. It's the job of an enterprise work platform to foster the right connections between all of those people and their content.

- **Organizational directory vs. relationship graph**

In the confines of your small team, you get to know your teammates very well. You have an intimate sense of their strengths, weaknesses, skills, experience, and capabilities. But as you think beyond teamwork and strive for the outcomes of enterprise work, you quickly need a deeper level of people insight. An org chart or directory simply won't do.

Enterprise work platforms like Jive enable the right connections to be made by having an understanding of the organization that extends well beyond the notion of a contact database. They construct a vivid and dynamic profile of every person in the organization that reflects their skills, experience, knowledge, relationships, and other attributes of value. An enterprise work platform can then use this insight to start connecting people – either reactively (through people search or browse) or proactively (by suggesting people connections based on the work context of what people are doing).

This is a big part of the future of Jive's new PeopleGraph technology. PeopleGraph is able to represent these dynamic attributes of employees at a vast scale to enable rapid discovery so that the right connections can be made in real time.



- **Transient thoughts vs. persistent knowledge**

Team-based platforms are generally not built to concern themselves with history. The core of their value is the exchange of ideas among team members in real-time conversation. As such, the content in team-based tools is not generally retained for more than a few months and is rarely archived. These “chats” do not become shared, searchable, context-rich institutional knowledge. What teammates learn from reviewing these recent chats stays in their heads, and doesn’t benefit the enterprise at large.

Conversely, enterprise work is inherently cumulative. New ideas build on IP from the past, and new projects leverage knowledge, people and experiences from other projects. The enterprise grows over time as it accumulates this IP borne of experiences, and new employees benefit from the experiences and accomplishments of their predecessors.

Enterprise work management platforms like Jive emphasize content durability and the construction of enterprise IP – enabling work to be translated into knowledge such that it is discoverable, and leverageable, for years to come. It is about building and establishing what the organization knows over time, not just aggregating the thoughts of teams as they communicate today. In other words, team-based tools are what people think, while Jive is what an organization knows.

- **Bottom-up communication vs. top-down culture**

Team-based tools focus on conversations and the sharing of ideas or information at the team level. This is super useful from the standpoint of a team, but the enterprise message is not just the sum of employee conversations. It requires top-down distillation from leadership. And this is not what team-based tools are about.

One of the most profound differences between team-based work and enterprise-based work is the role that enterprise work platforms play in developing and cascading corporate culture. When we speak with Jive customers, this is among the most-cited business benefit that our enterprise work platform provides.

Enterprise work platforms are able to present long-form, cascaded content from executive management coupled with curated content from around the company that helps exemplify its desired values, ideas, and behaviors. The enterprise work platform mixes content that is uniquely relevant to the needs of the individual employee with cascaded messaging that helps build and reinforce the corporate culture. It joins together minds and spirits by creating connections. It enables HR and business leadership to provide and reinforce the messaging that everyone in the organization needs to understand in order to be part of something bigger than themselves and their team(s).



- **Activity metrics vs. health insights**

Most collaboration tools provide some data to administrators or executives about the activity on their platform. Team-based platforms primarily focus on tool administration (total users, active users, etc.), while the analytics modules of enterprise work platforms (like Jive's PeopleGraph) focus on distilling important organizational health insights from the work happening across the enterprise.

Because an enterprise work platform like Jive takes a pan-company view, it can help HR leaders and CEOs understand how specific messages are resonating, or where morale and sentiment are softening, suggesting risk of attrition. This enables leaders to understand not just what is happening on the platform, but also what those activities mean in terms of organizational health. An enterprise work platform should become the diagnostic tool by which HR and business leaders understand the state of their organization and take steps to improve it.

The case for both: enabling team and enterprise work

The underpinning of teamwork, and the functional core of tools that support it, is conversation. Teamwork relies on tight alignment enabled by shared understanding, and frequent, unscheduled, short-form interaction has proven the best way of fostering that shared understanding. Teamwork tools are adept at enabling this kind of quick, simple communication for small groups of people.

The core of enterprise work, and the functional core of Jive, is connection. It is about enabling enterprises to bring together people with people, and people with content, that might not otherwise happen. It is about helping enterprises realize their scale advantage through intelligent coordination of hundreds of thousands of people. It is about sustaining culture. Jive is built to help organizations and individuals create these kinds of connections.

From a practical standpoint, there is no such thing as a job that entails exclusively what we've referred to as "teamwork" and "enterprise work" – almost all jobs are a mix of individual work, teamwork, and enterprise work. In order to make the mix of the different types of work in a typical job clearer, let's consider an illustration.

Amy is a marketing manager for a fast-growing consumer electronics firm who is part of a team that is responsible for market entry into new geographic markets. She and her team have been tasked with creating a new market entry strategy for China.

1. *The first thing that Amy does upon receipt of the assignment is to watch the new strategy video on Jive from the division head to understand the broader context behind the expansion into China and how it contributes to the division and company's overall growth strategy. She then goes into a sister division's Jive China strategy room to get some additional context on that division's experiences.*

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2. *Next, she has a Zoom kick-off meeting with her team to clarify goals and priorities, with follow-on discussion using Microsoft Teams to deal with questions and ambiguities that emerge as individuals start their work.*

TEAMWORK

3. *With the project kicked off, Amy decides to do some research in Jive to find experts on China within the company, and also get some intelligence from the company's last Asian new market entry which took place in Korea last year. She creates a connection with a Hong Kong-based colleague whom she hadn't met before who had launched a business in China with a prior employer. She also reads through the briefing documents and linked content from Teams and O365 connected to the Korea project room in Jive, and reaches out to some of the people associated with the project to get their perspectives on what worked and what didn't in Korea that could apply to China.*

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4. *Amy then spends time doing some independent research on the internet and writing up the team's project plan, team roles, responsibilities, and charter using Office 365. She establishes and baselines the metrics she will use to gauge the team's progress and to report on it to upper management.*

INDIVIDUAL WORK

5. *Finally, Amy creates a channel in Teams that she will use to enable focused conversation on the project with team members.*

TEAMWORK

And she sets up a work room in Jive to which she attaches external content from numerous external sources.

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6. *At the end of the year, the CEO asks the head of HR for a point of view on how all the new market expansion teams are doing. She is able to use Jive to derive a sentiment analysis of all the teams working on new market expansion as well as overall company resonance with the market expansion message.*

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The future of work and the modern global enterprise

The evolving nature of work – global, distributed, asynchronous, flexible – coupled with the increasing imperative of a diverse and inclusive workforce, presents both opportunity and massive challenges for the modern global enterprise. Technology can help solve these problems, providing the tools that enable individuals to be productive, teams to communicate, and enterprises to marshal the collective power of their people. This can bring people together, create culture, and eliminate silos even as the enterprise becomes increasingly virtual, global, and distributed.

But the wrong tools applied to the wrong problems – such as attempting to use teamwork tools for enterprise work – will exacerbate the issues that the future of work is introducing. It will cement silos and create more of them. It will disconnect people. It will cause cultural dissipation. It will turn the enterprise into a loose federation of disconnected teams.

We believe that Jive can be that enterprise work platform for the modern global enterprise – and that is our vision for the product: providing the capabilities that connect people, harvest corporate IP, and build enterprise-scale community. We believe the future of the global enterprise is bright – it will operate more effectively, more cohesively, and more inclusively than ever before. We're excited to be a part of creating that future.

**Interested in learning how a Jive Enterprise Work Platform
can help you advance and enhance your business?**

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