



Microsoft Viva for Internal Comms: Exploring The Employee Communications and Communities Plan

A practical guide exploring Microsoft Viva's 'Employee Communications and Communities' plan, considering how Viva can elevate your organisation's internal communication.



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Introduction

Since its launch, Microsoft Viva has helped organisations engage and connect their employees by unifying key tools. But despite its continued success, Viva remains a bit of a mystery to many internal communication (IC) professionals.

This guide dives into Viva's 'Employee Communications and Communities' plan to explore the different ways it can elevate your internal comms and improve the overall employee experience.

The 'Employee Communications and Communities' plan has been created for organisations to access the Viva apps that focus specifically on internal communication and employee engagement.

It focuses on connection, integration and engagement, and it's here to make your life easier.

Throughout this guide, we'll explain how Microsoft Viva works and how the 'Communications and Communities' plan can help you take your approach to internal communications to the next level.

Section One:

What is Microsoft Viva?

In simple terms, Microsoft Viva is a suite of applications that come together to form an all-in employee experience platform. We like to think of it as the next layer of the digital workplace, building on the solid foundation laid by SharePoint and integrating applications that are purpose-built for IC and engagement.

Before Viva was introduced, Microsoft's employee experience solution involved internal communicators working across numerous different M365 applications for different tasks, such as SharePoint for news and broadcast comms, Yammer (now Engage) for company-wide discussions, Teams for building communities, and entirely different third-party platforms for things like campaign management and scheduling.

While each of these tools might function perfectly well, the approach was all quite... fragmented.

Juggling too many digital tools and channels can lead to tech overload and cause inefficiencies¹, which ultimately damages the quality of our communications.

Gallagher's 2025 Employee Communications Report² highlighted that less than half of internal communicators believed their tools and channels provided a good user experience for employees (45%), and only 46% said they have the ability to create interaction and engagement via their existing channels. Many IC teams are over-capacity, under-resourced, and lacking in the right tools to do the job.

¹ <https://www.fastcompany.com/90598890/how-communication-tools-can-fuel-burnout-and-what-to-do-about-it>

² <https://www.aig.com/employeeexperience/-/media/files/gallaghercomms/gcommssite/employee-communications-report-2025.pdf>





And this is exactly why Microsoft Viva is so valuable for busy in-house IC teams.

It pulls everything together and makes the most of what you already have in order to amplify your impact.

Practically, Microsoft Viva is not a new or separate platform, but instead a set of building blocks that come together to form an unrivalled employee experience solution.

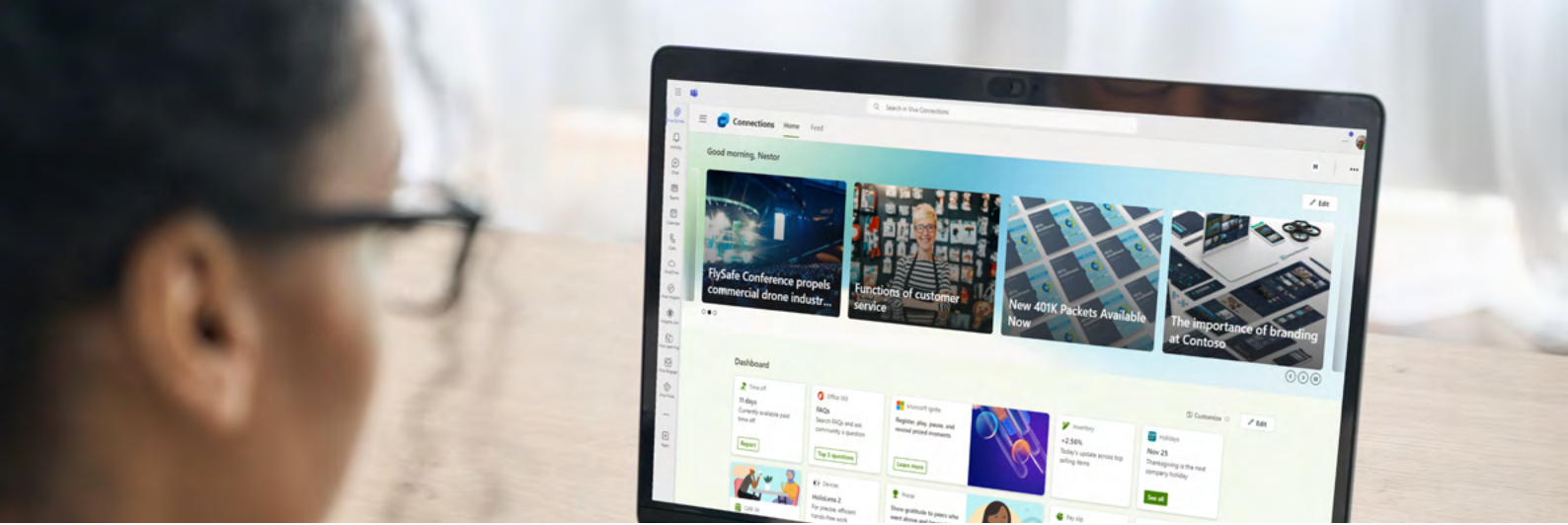
From an IC perspective, Viva is a no-brainer, particularly for organisations already using Microsoft 365.

So, let's get down to business: while some basic features are included with your M365 license, you need a separate license to access the full 'Employee Communications and Communities' plan. It's helpfully called the 'Viva Employee Communications and Communities license' – it says what it does on the tin. We like that.

As part of the plan, you receive full access to Viva Connections, Viva Engage and Viva Amplify, in addition to all the standard employee experience features included in Microsoft 365³.

In the following sections, we'll explore some of the best features and functionality of each of these key applications.

³ <https://www.microsoft.com/en-ie/microsoft-viva/pricing>



Section Two: Viva Connections



Microsoft Viva Connections is a customisable employee experience app – accessed via Teams, the SharePoint app bar, or your desktop – that provides a gateway to your organisation’s digital workplace.

It aggregates content and updates from right across Microsoft 365, such as news and updates from SharePoint, and community updates from Viva Engage. Viva Connections is not a replacement for an intranet; it’s the intranet’s trusted ally.

It provides the kind of seamless integration that employees are asking for, bringing the most important tools, resources, news and announcements to the forefront.

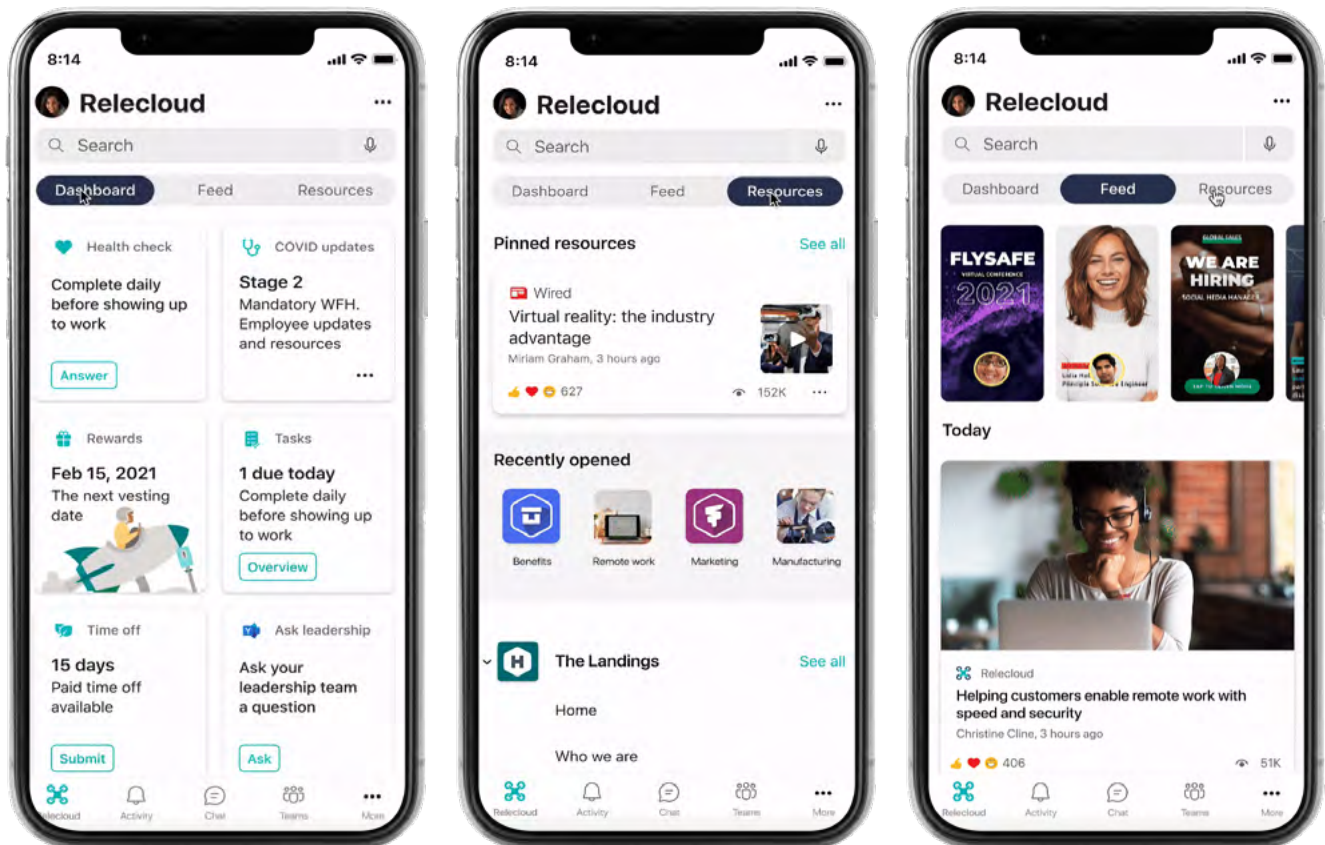
The ‘enterprise news reader’ feature goes one step further by leveraging Copilot to help summarise top news and updates, delivering an immersive experience that helps employees stay on the ball.

Viva Connections is your company-branded front door, composed of three primary components – Dashboard, News, and Resources. The app is easily accessed via Teams, the SharePoint app bar, or directly on the desktop and mobile – perfect for both desk-based and frontline workers.

Personalisation remains a key area of focus in the world of IC, but only 30%⁴ of internal communicators say they have the capacity within their existing channels to effectively personalise or segment content.

Viva Connections provides an actionable solution. It enables the creation of a fully personalised landing page for different employee groups within the organisation, allowing IC teams to create up to 50 unique ‘instances’ within a tenant.

⁴ <https://www.ajg.com/employeeexperience/-/media/files/gallaghercomms/gcommssite/employee-communications-report-2025.pdf>

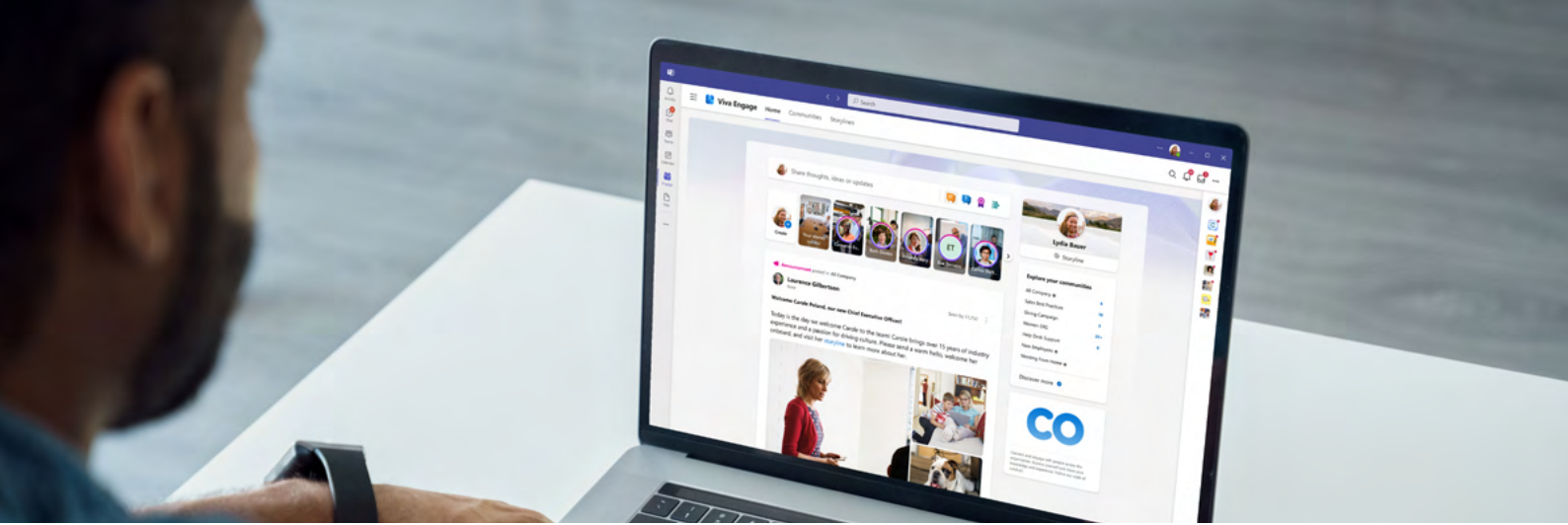


Relevant tools, news and conversations can be targeted to different employee audiences, segmented by things such as by department, location or business unit. In practice, this could mean having a different landing page for each different department or brand within the organisation, with specific links and apps for each employee group.

On top of the personalised news experience and homepages, employees can curate a dashboard of 'cards' to access their most important tools and content easily. A new addition to the selection of Viva Connections cards is 'My sites' – a handy feature that provides quick access to all the employee's frequently-visited and followed SharePoint sites, within the dashboard.

Key Benefits:

- ✓ **Seamless personalisation**
- ✓ **Optimised mobile experience**
- ✓ **Convenient dashboards to access important tools**



Section Three: Viva Engage



Viva Engage connects employees right across an organisation through communities and conversations. As the evolution of Yammer, it's often the most familiar Viva app for IC teams. It helps to increase engagement by building community and connecting employees around everything from department or job type to social interests and hobbies.

Viva Engage brings connection and collaboration to the next level by surfacing community experiences from right across the digital workplace. It has community and conversation at its heart, providing a space for employees to share knowledge, build their networks, and ask questions.

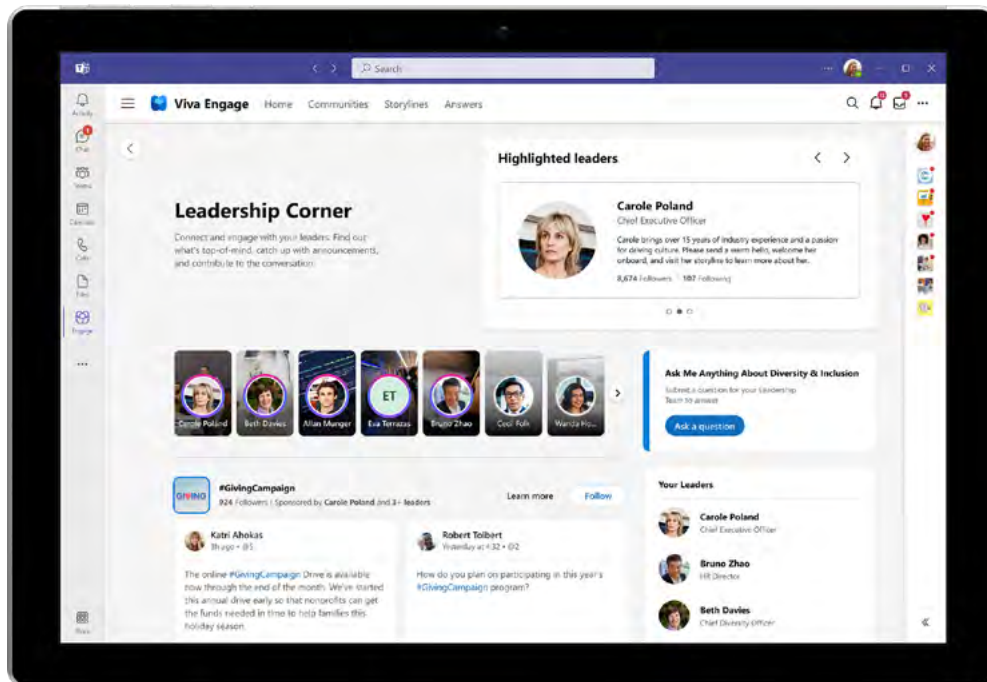
Within Viva Engage communities, admins can assign certain people as 'community experts'. These individuals can encourage greater engagement throughout the community by doing things like pinning posts and marking the best answers.

A feature that's proving to be incredibly useful for both knowledge-sharing and community-building is 'Answers in Viva'. By clicking the 'Answers' tab in Viva Engage, employees can ask and answer questions.

It's a quick and effective way to help people connect with subject matter experts and learn from each other. Microsoft has also introduced 'Verified Answers', which builds on 'Answers in Viva' by allowing platform administrators to flag certain responses as 'verified'.

This helps to build trust and credibility, making it quicker and easier for employees to find the information they need.





In addition to the community-focused elements are Viva Engage's leadership connection features, designed to elevate leader communications and enable announcements at scale.

'Leadership Corner' automatically aggregates content from all different leaders across the organisations, pulling together their discussions, events, campaigns and posts. Employees can filter the feed within 'Leadership Corner' to show 'all conversations', 'new conversations' or 'announcements', helping them stay connected to the organisation's leaders.

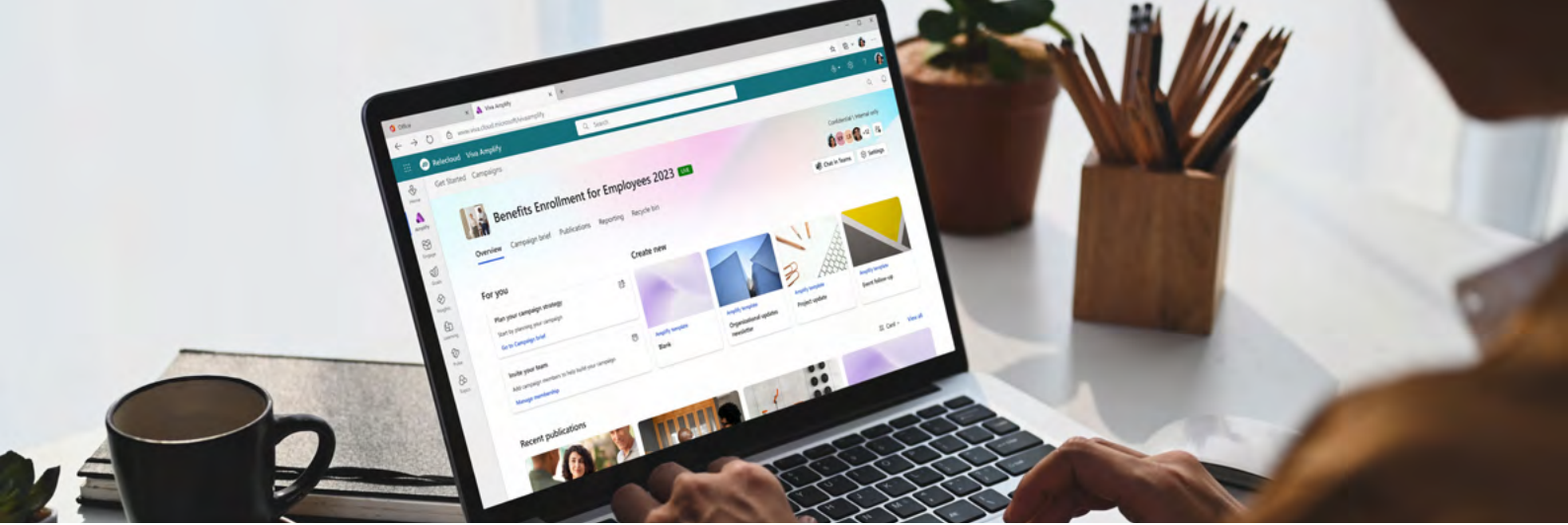
'Leadership Corner' also provides the perfect place for internal communicators to host virtual events like leader-led Townhalls and live Q&A-style 'Ask Me Anything' sessions.

The more our clients use Viva Engage, the more they love it.

And with an advanced analytics experience that enables real-time data updates, expanded date range options and different engagement breakdowns, internal communicators can better understand engagement within different communities and turn insights into action.

Key Benefits:

- 
Drives two-way engagement and communication
- 
Provides analytics and insights on community and conversation engagement
- 
Easily search existing conversations and route questions to relevant leaders



Section Four: Viva Amplify



The third application included in the 'Employee Communications and Communities' plan is Viva Amplify – the jewel in Microsoft 365's internal communications crown. It makes internal campaign management easier than ever before, simplifying communications by centralising campaign publication, management and reporting.

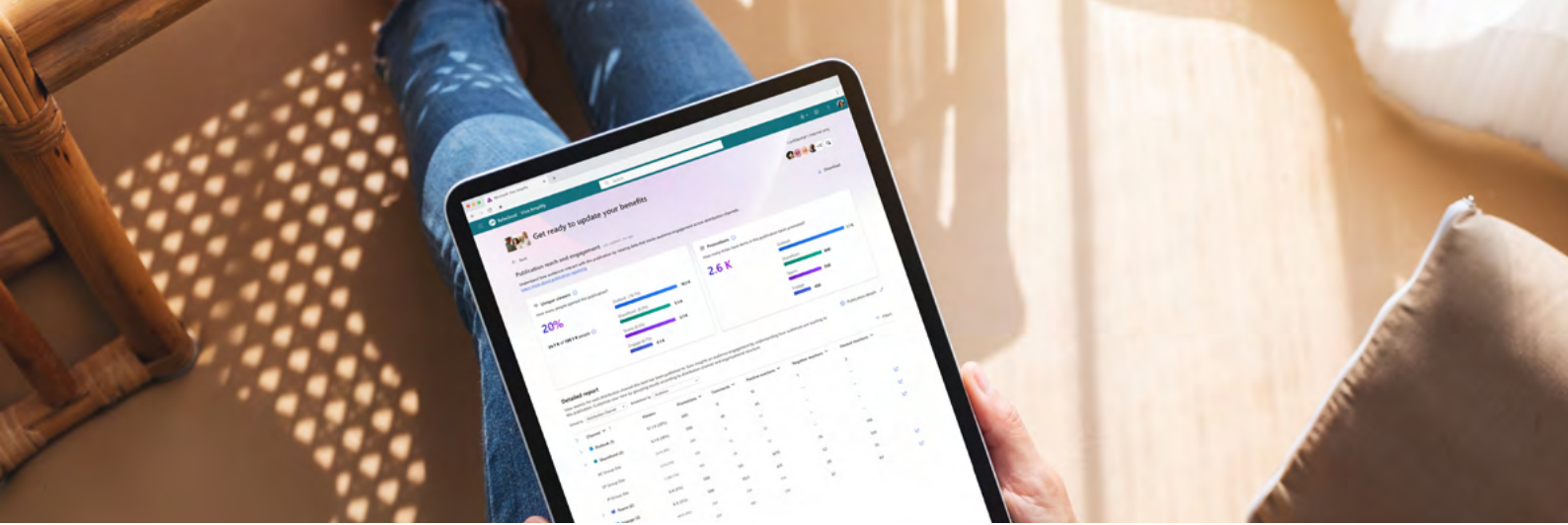
Practically, the Amplify application enables IC teams to schedule posts, manage approvals, publish content across multiple channels, and access top-notch data and analytics.

Its aim is literally to amplify the impact of internal comms. It's a one-stop shop for internal communicators to plan, deliver and measure campaigns. It saves time and ensures consistency by publishing content to multiple distribution channels – such as SharePoint, Teams, Viva Engage, and Outlook – from one central hub.

Viva Amplify's features are built around three core areas – campaign management, authoring and publishing, and reporting and analytics.

Under 'campaign management', IC teams can manage the lifecycle of different campaigns within a single view, schedule communications, and manage reviews and approvals. On the 'authoring and publishing' side of things, you can co-author and collaborate on campaigns with other members of the team, publish custom content to different channels, and make use of prebuilt campaign templates.

And finally, the 'reporting and analytics' features include the ability to compare engagement data for different employee groups, filter campaign engagement by channel, and analyse employee sentiment.



“

The huge superpower of Viva Amplify is that it allows you to create a communication once and publish it in many places without having to rewrite it. You can send it to email, 10 different SharePoint site collections, and up to five different Teams channels.”

Sam Crewdson, Microsoft Digital⁵

Key Benefits:



Streamlined communication campaign management



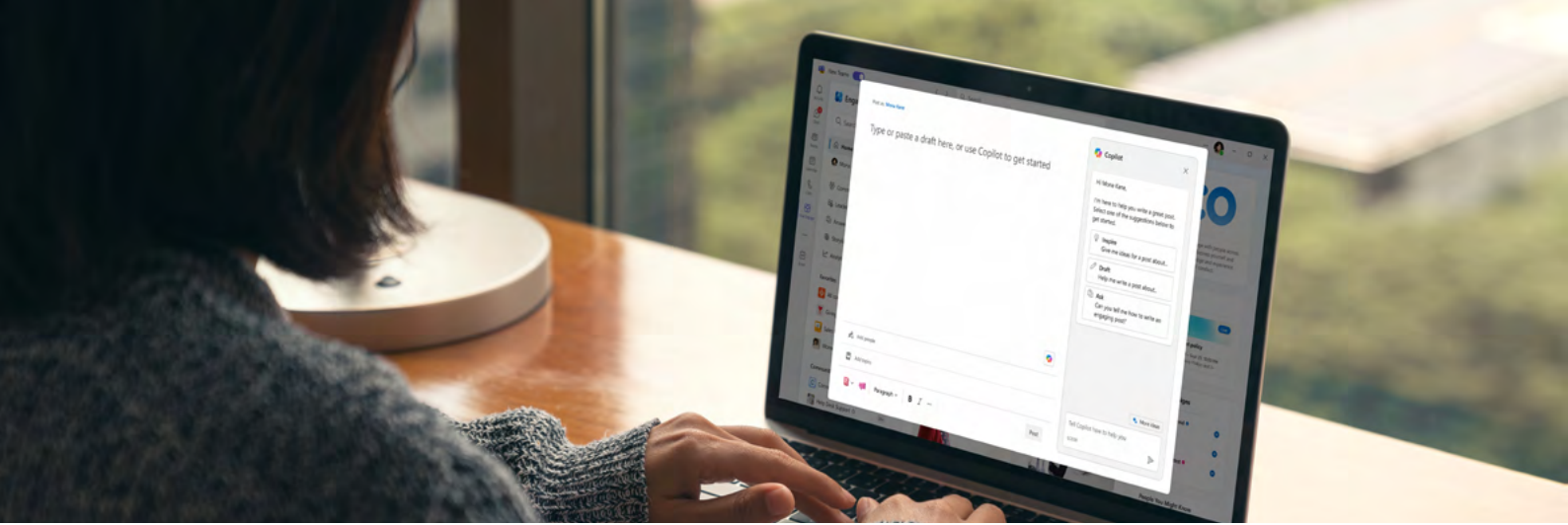
Campaign templates with custom branding



Access to analytics with audience and channel breakdown

⁵ <https://www.microsoft.com/insidetrack/blog/delivering-communications-internally-at-microsoft-with-microsoft-viva-amplify>

Viva Amplify is a game changer for IC teams, making it easy to deliver industry-leading campaigns without needing to jump between different applications. The ‘campaign goals’ feature takes things to a whole new level, enabling the integration of tangible goals into the Viva Amplify reporting screen and tracking campaign performance in real time.



Section Five: Copilot in Viva



Underpinning all of the applications in Viva's 'Employee Communications and Communities' plan is the enhanced capabilities of Copilot – Microsoft's cutting-edge AI assistant.

Microsoft 365 Copilot integrates with each different Viva app to deliver AI-powered features and capabilities that help streamline work, boost productivity, and amplify creativity⁶.

In **Viva Connections**, the 'enterprise news reader' that we introduced earlier uses Copilot's capabilities to create a summary of each of the top news stories, helping employees stay on top of everything.

In **Viva Engage**, employees can access Copilot wherever they write a post – on community and campaign pages, the home feed, or a storyline. Copilot suggests helpful prompts and AI-generated 'conversation starters' that are personalised to the individual employee and the organisation's trending topics.

In **Viva Amplify**, Copilot supports internal communicators with content drafting via the 'rich text editor', ensuring messaging is targeted and succinct. It can be used across all text web parts, including as part of campaign briefs.

⁶ <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/viva/copilot/viva-copilot-overview>



Section Six: Real-life use cases

We've looked at what Microsoft Viva is, and explored the three key applications, underpinned by Copilot, created specifically to support internal communication and employee engagement. It's now time to start thinking about how Viva could work for you and your organisation. The following examples explore four different use cases to help demonstrate the art of the possible with Microsoft Viva...

Frontline worker communications



Challenge: Ensure frontline and 'offline' employees can access and engage with all internal communication and feel connected to the wider organisation.

Viva solution: Make content from right across Microsoft 365 fully accessible to frontline workers via the Viva Connections mobile app, which has been designed with mobile-first users in mind. Give frontline workers a voice and help bridge the gap between 'offline' and 'online' teams by rolling out the Viva Engage app and encouraging two-way communication.

Leader communications



Challenge: Empower and equip senior leaders to communicate more effectively to help build trust in the organisation.

Viva solution: Use Viva Engage to publish more frequent updates on behalf of members of the senior leadership team, including strategy updates and check-ins. Raise awareness of 'Leadership Corner' to increase leadership visibility, and schedule leaders to host regular Townhalls and "Ask Me Anything" sessions to encourage more direct engagement. Increase the reach and impact of this activity through employees' Viva Connections feeds.

Metrics and analytics



Challenge: Improve the measurement of your communications to enable more effective campaigns that target the right audiences.

Viva solution: Begin managing campaigns through Viva Amplify to access full analytics, including audience and channel breakdown, sentiment analysis and campaign reports.

Start using the advanced analytics features within Viva Engage to monitor interaction and engagement with different communities, and enlist the support of Copilot to pull all of the data together in digestible reports.

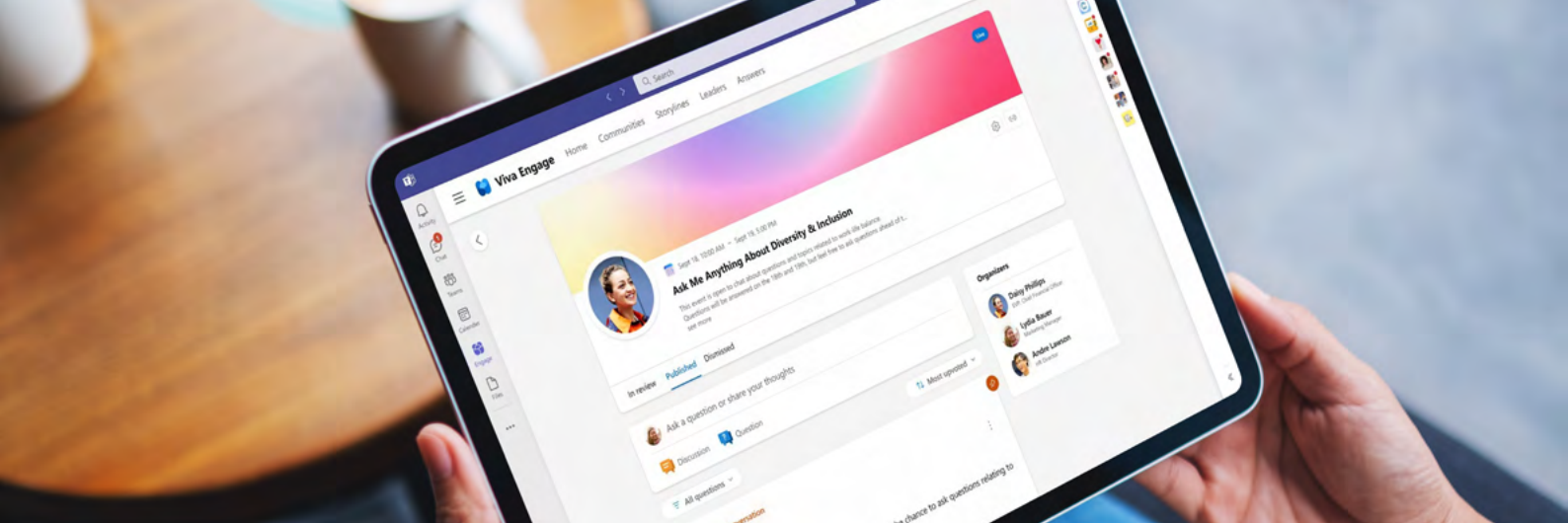
Sense of community



Challenge: Enable better connections across the organisation to build a greater sense of community, inclusive of frontline and desk-based teams.

Viva solution: Encourage community engagement and conversations on shared interests in Viva Engage. Help people get to know each other better by bringing subject matter experts to the forefront using 'Answers in Viva', also within Viva Engage.





Bringing Viva Engage to life at the University of Leeds

The University of Leeds is one of the largest universities in the UK, with over 9,000 staff and 39,000 students. Ranked in the top 75 universities in the world, the University of Leeds prides itself on its desire to make a difference in the world.

As part of its strategy for 2020 to 2030, the University embarked on a comprehensive digital transformation programme to use technology to improve ways of working. One of the pillars of the programme was focused on improving the digital employee experience, so the IC team partnered with us to build a new SharePoint intranet that would become a central hub for employees.

One of the core goals of the project was to create a solid foundation upon which the University could layer additional collaboration and communication tools. As part of the new intranet development, the IC team began trialing Viva Engage by introducing a new community for 'intranet content owners'.

It quickly became a thriving collaborative space where more than 100 employees shared best practices and asked each other for help.

The trial of Viva Engage was a huge success for the University of Leeds, with many of the content owners sharing how valuable the community had become and requesting that it continued past the launch of the new intranet.

[Read the full University of Leeds case study here.](#)

Silicon Reef helps companies elevate their internal communications with Microsoft Viva

We specialise in Microsoft 365 and work with a team of experts who have seen Viva make a difference to many different organisations.

We'd love to connect – book your free **Art of the Possible** Session to see how Microsoft 365 can transform your business, helping your IC team to work smarter, not harder. You're in safe hands with us.

GET IN TOUCH TODAY

