



CASE STUDY

Avanade inspires employees and clients using design-led, hybrid work experiences and Microsoft 365

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As a technology solutions provider, we create business value for our clients by fostering a connected, modern employee experience within our own organization. Because we're an early adopter of Microsoft technology and use expertise garnered from providing solutions like **Microsoft 365** and **Microsoft Teams** to our globally distributed workforce, we're well positioned to speak to our customers about solution benefits and obstacles to avoid.

"As we think about the future of hybrid work at Avanade, we continuously ask how we can make it as seamless as possible for our users and our clients to collaborate and achieve mutual goals with Microsoft solutions," says Joseph Paradi, Enterprise Services Executive for Information Technology at Avanade.

We've traditionally embedded our business consultants and technology professionals within clients' workplaces in a collaborative solutions and services model. When COVID-19 eliminated in-person collaboration, however, we found ourselves having to demonstrate first-hand to employees and clients how to pivot and preserve

operations by using highly secure digital solutions that enhance remote employees' experiences.

Strengthening employee experiences with data-led innovation

A challenge that many organizations face with making data-driven decisions is measuring the impact that digital transformation initiatives have on the employee experience. To overcome this, we use Microsoft 365, Teams and **Microsoft Power Platform** applications as the catalysts to build and maintain a comprehensive cloud-first employee experience.

"We run our business on Power BI reports now," says Paradi. "The standard for most meetings or presentations at Avanade is to provide a link to a Power BI report that's connected to official data sources."



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We use **Power BI** and **Power Automate** to inform how to design and deliver work environments that unlock people's full potential. "Using the Power BI data visualization platform, you can better understand human behavior and act based on that knowledge," says Dalinda Peña, Change Enablement Manager at Avanade.

We're using Power Automate to manage the return to offices and navigate workplace safety guidelines related to COVID-19 for our global workforce. Employees who request permission to return to an Avanade or client office use an automated approval app in Teams that routes the request to the appropriate team for approval. Automating work safety guidelines removes manual workflows for thousands of approvals and helps our employees safely return to offices with a reliable, highly secure approval process. "Power Automate for Microsoft Teams is a lifesaver," says Peña. "We can automate and redirect flows to specific program managers by location."

Protecting client data with Zero Trust, cloud-first solutions

Securing distributed devices and virtual workspaces for a global workforce with the reach and scale of ours is vital for empowering collaboration with clients anywhere. We rely on Microsoft 365 compliance tools and implement seamless data loss prevention (DLP) policies across the Microsoft 365 ecosystem to help secure our hybrid workplaces and endpoints without hindering collaboration or forcing new workflows.

"We worry about data going where it's not supposed to go, whether it's our data or client data," says Paradi. "Embracing Microsoft 365 security tools and the Zero Trust framework allows us to reduce friction and keep our people focused on

serving our clients and achieving client outcomes."

By defining and applying DLP policies in Microsoft 365, we can identify, monitor and automatically protect sensitive items across Microsoft 365 services such as Teams, Exchange, SharePoint, OneDrive and non-Microsoft cloud apps. With this approach to secure collaboration, we exemplify how to find business efficiencies in a highly secure, cloud-first environment built around Microsoft 365 and Teams.

Merging physical spaces and digital experiences for more fluid collaboration

Despite the changing landscape of hybrid workplaces, many of our clients still require some of their employees and partners to be present in physical offices. Our digital transformation expertise focuses on an innovative blend of workplace design and technology to increase employee engagement in both physical settings and across digital domains.

By creating design-led workplace experiences with Microsoft Teams Rooms, we can demonstrate how hybrid workplaces increase employee engagement, making collaboration more efficient and seamless. "We all had access to the same resources when working from home," says Peña. "You have to find new ways to make that work for everyone and recreate alternative workplace experiences."

Using Teams Rooms bridges the gap between those in the room and remote attendees, ensuring that every attendee can fully participate in meetings and experience a more immersive meeting experience from anywhere. With Teams Rooms, our meetings span the distances among people, places and devices.

"We believe that Microsoft Teams Rooms are critical to the future of hybrid work. Teams Rooms are a game-changer for how our employees experience meetings, and it democratized how our executives communicate with their teams."

Joseph Paradi

Enterprise Services Executive for Information Technology, Avanade

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The Teams Rooms experience is a key enabler for cross-functional communication, which has unlocked new capacities for us and improved employee collaboration. Our executives also now have a centralized location to connect with our global workforce across all devices and the ability to send messages, share files and show meeting histories and agendas on slides. We're currently retrofitting and building offices with Teams Rooms in even more global locations.

"I recently participated in an extensive Teams meeting with 180 people, and I did it from a Teams Room equipped with one-touch join capabilities, ceiling-mounted microphones, ceiling-mounted speakers, multiple cameras and multiple screens," says Paradi. "To have meeting content on a 65-inch screen with a live feed of the presenter, a video of the other participants on another screen and excellent sound quality makes me feel more immersed in the meeting."

Reduced complexity for streamlined employee experiences

The average organization has more than 200 work apps. Employees can spend hours each day searching for information and switching between tools, which drains productivity and impacts the overall employee experience. A critical goal is to find ways to bring these capabilities together naturally in the flow of everyday work. By helping employees quickly and efficiently find the information they need using Microsoft 365, Teams and **Microsoft Viva**, we reduce the impact of context switching to the flow of work.

"Teams is a collaboration hub that reduces context switching during the workday," says Jill Hannemann of the Workplace Experience Advisory Group at Avanade. "Employees can set up different digital workspaces and move within a platform that brings together applications in a single pane of glass."

Our adoption of the Viva employee experience platform illustrates how tearing down and replacing existing systems isn't necessary to enhance the hybrid workplace. With Viva, we have a seamless, integrated environment that enables



more effective collaboration across distributed global teams, business units and clients. "Using Microsoft Viva Topics and Microsoft Search for IT support and the great connectors that Microsoft has built for systems like ServiceNow, we get a complete set of responses to any query that our users generate," says Paradi. "They only need to go to one place to find content."

Beyond IT, Viva empowers us to do our best work by merging communication, knowledge, learning and insights capabilities in a single workspace experience so we can find the information we need and share knowledge and resources crucial to our clients' success. Viva seamlessly connects thousands of globally distributed employees and promotes effective collaboration, resulting in an enhanced employee experience. And we can discover actionable data by using a single source of truth coupled with real-time analysis and Microsoft Viva Insights. Additionally, by using Microsoft Viva Learning and Microsoft Viva Connections, we now have a more accessible learning experience by making it easier to find and engage with relevant information and connect to subject matter experts for help when necessary.

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Modern hybrid workplace solutions from experience

As technology continues to disrupt traditional workplace models, creating new opportunities for us, we will continue helping clients innovate and reimagine approaches to hybrid work. The challenge is to effectively show how to implement and manage digital-led hybrid workplaces while accelerating the delivery of services to our clients.

With Microsoft 365 and Teams, we continue to demonstrate the value of hybrid workplace technology to our clients, including reducing costs related to modern information management. "Our clients are trying to understand how to navigate this new hybrid workplace," says Paradi. "Because we've lived in this hybrid world for a while, we can offer them efficient, secure experiences with Microsoft 365."

About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital, cloud and advisory services, industry solutions and design-led experiences across the Microsoft ecosystem. Every day, our 56,000 professionals in 26 countries make a genuine human impact for our clients, their employees and their customers. Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. Learn more at www.avanade.com

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