Asana deepens its integration with Microsoft Teams

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Introduction

The problem that teams of knowledge workers have in keeping track of multiple action items and other important context around their work where they are spread across different productivity and collaboration tools shouldn't be underestimated. Work management vendor Asana is attempting to address this problem by deepening its integration with Microsoft Teams.

Asana first integrated with Microsoft Teams in 2017 and is now adding additional functionality to its offering. The company is helping organizations track tasks by allowing users, with or without an Asana license, to create tasks within the platform directly from Teams chat. It is also allowing users to drop a task link from Asana into Teams, as well as create custom notifications.

The 451 Take

Asana’s latest integration with Microsoft Teams gives benefits to both sides – Teams users get easier access to their important information in Asana and even if they aren’t Asana license holders, they can have their requests reflected directly into Asana. Asana users, especially those managing key projects, now have a more seamless way of ensuring that important context and engagement around their projects can be automated into actionable items in their project workflows. Of course, there will be many joint users who can reap both sets of benefits. Integrations like these are important for applications like Asana, the value of which essentially lies in their accuracy as systems of record for work. The less relevant information in other applications is reflected in Asana, the less accurate and useful it will be perceived to be and hence the lower likelihood of valuable workflows being created in it. The opposite is of course true – by providing a centralized place to aggregate value around work, work management tools can be the basis for powerful new processes and digital experiences that can alleviate the friction of constantly switching tools, losing important information, repeating work and general disorganization; all of which can result in lost time and productivity.
Details

One of the main goals of the integration is to ensure that where requests are being made or where useful context around a project is shared as unstructured text in Teams it can be reflected directly as structured tasks in Asana. The company saw Teams gain significant adoption during the coronavirus pandemic, and a large percentage of its own customers are Microsoft users. This addition is part of the company’s larger strategy to create clarity within organizations by addressing friction around connecting team members, cross-functional partners and their workflows.

The integration has multiple new features that give users the ability to turn Teams conversations into actionable items in Asana. When a request from a Teams user appears within a Teams chat, it can be converted it into an actionable item reflected directly within Asana. For those without an Asana license, a registered user can send a link to a fillable form to the external participant. This is then automatically added into the platform. In both cases, details can be added to the task to define context and deadlines. This entire process can be reversed, and tasks can be linked from Asana into Teams through a dynamic, easily readable card that can be viewed by non-Asana users. Customers can also create project tabs and receive notifications for projects in Teams. These notification types include communications, updates and task tracking and can be customized by the user.

By virtue of the fact that users can create a tab in Teams linking to other applications, Teams users can also find and share information from Asana directly from within Teams. The Microsoft Teams integration builds upon other features from Asana for Microsoft 365 including turning emails into tasks, attaching files, syncing tasks and projects to Outlook calendars, connecting to Azure Active Directory and pushing data to Power BI.