

CHECKLIST



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Microsoft Teams Experience Management Challenges

Productivity and Customer Experience Hurdles

In today's fast-paced and hybrid business environment, you can't collaborate effectively without Microsoft Teams. As businesses integrate this powerful platform into their workflow, they often encounter challenges that can disrupt the smooth flow of collaboration. According to a recent report from IT research firm EMA, **81% of customer-facing and revenue-generating Teams users say that Teams performance issues such as poor video or audio quality have a high or significant impact on their productivity.** What's more, these users also say that this impact extends to the customer experience. The same research also revealed that these critical Teams users were the least likely to report their problems to the IT team. In this e-book, we look at how IT managers can solve this problem, providing a checklist to optimize Microsoft Teams performance.

Microsoft Native Tools for Teams Performance Monitoring

Microsoft understands the need for tools that arm IT teams with the necessary administrative capabilities to manage and maintain Microsoft Teams. However, Microsoft Teams has unique requirements when it comes to management, because of the real-time experiential nature of the platform. Because the user experience is so subjective, Microsoft created three primary tools. While these tools are helpful in validating that a problem exists, they don't provide insight into the root cause, or proactively alert you of the problem.

Teams Admin Center

While this tool has a number of administrative functions, with regard to analyzing Teams calls, the Teams Admin Center provides detail on a per-user basis including call history, call analytics, real-time telemetry as well as user and connectivity information. It's a great place to start because it's easy to find a specific meeting or call based on the user(s) involved and view details about the individual data streams and performance metrics that may help identify the source of the problem.

Call Quality Dashboard (CQD)

The primary focus of the CQD is to provide visibility into the overall experience for an organization or Microsoft 365 tenant. There is also some ability to navigate down into Teams Meeting Rooms. This tool is useful for providing an understanding of whether the reported problem is being experienced at a much greater scope than just a single user.

Power BI Reports

Microsoft has created some built-in reports on the Power BI platform around Teams quality of experience, with a number of sub-reports that can be used as templates to build out your own reports and dashboards based on the specific aspects of Teams that are important to your organization. With access to just about any piece of call and user data related to Teams, you can think of the Teams reports in Power BI as a customizable way of presenting both Teams Admin Center and CQD data in one place. The only downside is that it does take some time to refresh the data viewed within Power BI, so you'll need some patience when using this tool. Since the data only refreshes at set intervals (usually 24 hours), it is far from real-time.

By using these tools, you should expect that you are able to – at a minimum – establish that a problem does indeed exist and who is impacted. There's also enough visibility here to know whether the Wi-Fi signal strength is too low, but there is relatively minimal insight offered into the root cause.

The Tooling Gap

To optimize Microsoft Teams performance for productive user experiences and a top-notch customer experience, you need to shift from reactive to proactive and get deep visibility into the root cause of any problem impacting the Teams user experience.

If you rely on native Microsoft tools to monitor Microsoft Teams performance and user experience, you will find the following gaps:

Proactive Detection

with Microsoft tools you can only identify and resolve a problem after it has impacted users. While Microsoft Teams provides valuable insights through tools like Call Analytics, real-time monitoring can be challenging. Delays in data reporting may occur, limiting the immediacy of issue identification.

Limited Usage Analytics

Usage Analytics offers high-level insights into user activity, but it may need more advanced expertise for detailed analysis. Organizations with complex reporting requirements may find the built-in analytics somewhat limited.

Alerting is Limited to Microsoft 365 Status

The Service Health Dashboard relies on Microsoft's reporting of service status. If there are delays or inaccuracies in Microsoft's reporting, administrators may not have the most current information about service health. What's more, there is a complex range of factors contributing to any Teams service degradation, so without alerting and notifications, you won't know these things are happening quickly enough to respond.

Limited Troubleshooting Features

While monitoring tools offer insights, some administrators may find the troubleshooting capabilities within Microsoft native tools to be somewhat limited. In-depth analysis and issue resolution may require additional tools or collaboration with Microsoft support.

Checklist

Optimizing Microsoft Teams with Vantage DX

Martello's Vantage DX is a game changer for Microsoft 365 and Teams. It provides features that help you proactively optimize all aspects of Teams. Now, let's look at some ways Vantage DX can make your life easier:



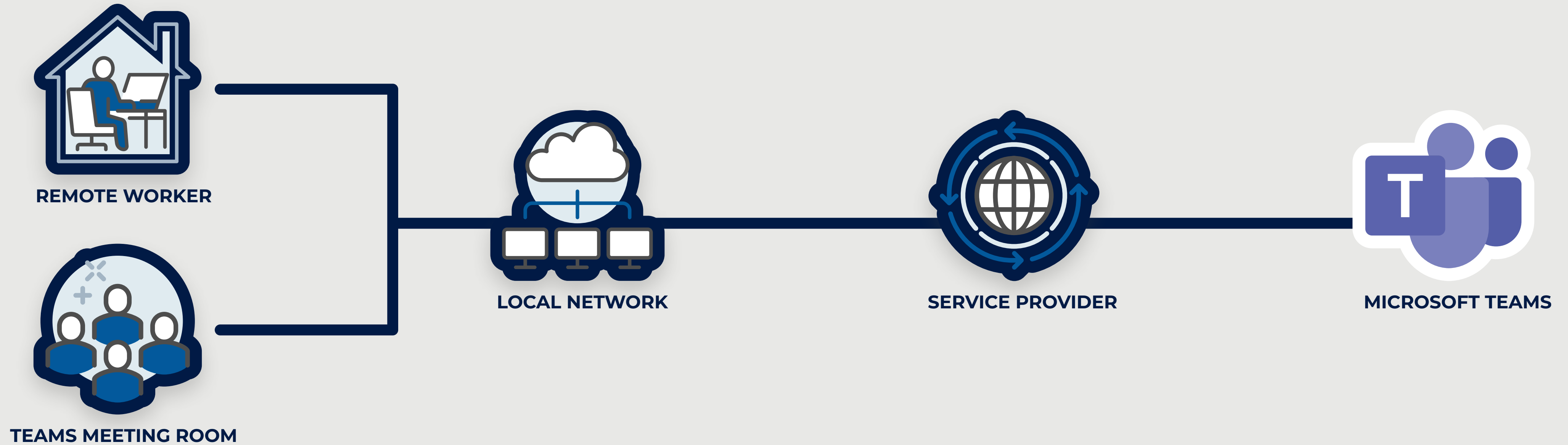
Monitoring Blind Spots

Teams issues are notoriously difficult to find and resolve, largely due to the real-time nature of the platform and multiple complex dependencies on network performance, ISPs and often telephony components such as session border controllers (SBCs). Without end-to-end visibility into the IT infrastructure that is supporting Teams, IT managers will have monitoring blind spots. As we've discussed before, there are limitations to the monitoring tools that Microsoft provides natively. Therefore, IT teams need, something that can give them end-to-end visibility. That is where Vantage DX comes into play.

Microsoft provides data on Teams audio and video calls. Vantage DX takes that data, correlates it with other data sources and analyzes it to determine where the issue is coming from. Vantage DX's user-friendly UI then organizes that and presents to IT managers in a way that allows them to detect and resolve problems. Root causes have 5 categories.



- ▶ Wi-Fi
- ▶ Memory/RAM shortage
- ▶ Headset compatibility
- ▶ Endpoint security





- ▶ Speaker health
- ▶ Display health
- ▶ Wi-Fi



- ▶ Bandwidth
- ▶ Wi-Fi
- ▶ Network switch
- ▶ Dropped stream



Failure to meet SLA



Teams service outage Teams performance

It may be surprising to some, but the vast majority of Teams performance problems have nothing to do with Microsoft. As you can see from the list above, the source could be the ISP or PSTN or an end user issue like unqualified headsets or devices that contribute to poor audio, video and screen-sharing.

Vantage DX gives you a breakdown of all of these potential sources of problems. It monitors different users, their ISPs and all of their devices. Their local network and office networks all are tracked to understand where the issues are stemming from. It can identify the exact device that might be the cause. And then, it gives you a visual and detailed overview of all of these in a single dashboard, so that IT can easily address the root cause.

Vantage DX also categorizes the user data in terms of geographical location. The easy-to-use user interface organizes geographically dispersed employees by category to decrease the hassle of finding them one by one. This way you can look for different patterns and identify if people from the same location are having similar issues, or if a problem is impacting remote versus in-office employees. That helps IT track down the root of the cause precisely.



Proactive Issue Resolution

With 81% of customer-facing and revenue-generating users saying that Teams performance issues such as poor video or audio quality have a significant impact on their productivity, resolving these issues fast is highly important. Because, as long as someone is facing problems regarding Teams, it will be costing the company productivity and ultimately, revenue. Any time that Microsoft Teams saves your salesforce is time directly returned to revenue-generating activities.

The top issues that Teams users face are authentication, poor video and audio quality, and screen sharing problems. As we know, Teams calls operate within a very complex framework with a lot of moving parts. Resolving problems quickly can be quite overwhelming for IT managers.

To accelerate issue resolution, IT managers need to be alerted when a problem is detected from continuous monitoring, ideally **before** the user is impacted. Martello Vantage DX uses synthetic transaction monitoring to perform user actions as a synthetic user (ie: send a chat message, schedule a meeting, etc), so that problems can be detected before they impact a real user. Vantage DX takes this a step further by correlating this data with real user monitoring to detect issues experienced by users quickly. Regardless of the technology behind the detection, Vantage DX provides an immediate alert with actionable context.

3 Troubleshooting

Knowing where the problem is can be challenging for a real-time application like Microsoft Teams. Vantage DX shortens the troubleshooting cycle with a visual depiction of the network path. These paths will show you how the network performed from hop-to-hop while the Teams services were being used. This will also give you a detailed view of the round-trip time which identifies any jitter or packet loss. Vantage DX also lets you set third party end points to observe and get detailed information on their performance. This way, user experience can be monitored from end-to-end in real time. And consequently, the process of pinpointing an occurring issue becomes quicker.



4 Ensuring Efficient Hybrid Collaboration

The EMA research shows that IT teams are blind to the productivity losses and customer experience problems occurring throughout the organization from Microsoft Teams issues, with only 7% of IT teams saying they have an accurate picture of how Teams performs for users. Ensuring that Teams is always working properly is necessary for efficient and continuous collaboration. If communication is hindered, the day-to-day workflow slows down.

This is especially important in the 74% of organizations that have implemented or plan to implement hybrid work models. 82% of IT teams surveyed by EMA said that the shift to hybrid work doubled the importance of Microsoft Teams to their organization. Hybrid work environments are meeting-heavy, with a greater reliance on Microsoft Teams, and particularly capabilities like Microsoft Teams Rooms (MTRs). MTRs represent a significant investment in enabling an equitable meeting experience for both remote and in-person participants. Given this investment and the heavy usage of MTRs by VIPs, there is tremendous pressure on IT managers to ensure they work flawlessly. Vantage DX monitors MTRs and alerts IT teams when problems are detected in any room, eliminating the need to go to every room to ensure device health eg. devices connected properly, and on the current software release. In addition, Vantage DX monitors usage and can identify under-used, over-used and unused MTRs, to maximize the return on investment.

5 A Single Source of Truth

When it comes to managing the Microsoft Teams user experience, the organizational approach is often quite siloed, with unified communications, network, IT and application teams each operating separately using different tools. Add third-parties like ISPs to this list and there are many hands involved in delivering an effective Teams service. With Vantage DX, all of these roles are tied together with a single source of truth on Teams performance to eliminate finger pointing amongst teams about who is responsible for fixing the issue.. Many of Martello's customers rely on Vantage DX to easily demonstrate to other teams where the problem is, or to prove to an ISP that the problem is caused on their end. This extends to regular SLA reports that tangibly illustrate performance against established SLAs.

6 Building a Proactive Culture

Less than 20% of Teams users who experience performance issues with the platform will report them to IT. They try workarounds and troubleshooting by themselves. But this just delays the process of resolution. Because even if the reports eventually reach IT, they have already lost a lot of valuable troubleshooting time. Which leads to reactive firefighting.

So, organizations need to build a culture where Teams issues are detected proactively by Vantage DX. As a result, IT managers don't need to wait for reports or tickets coming to their desk. They can detect them and have them addressed - before the user even notices the problem. Not only IT, but the whole organization needs to understand and follow this culture of proactive measures.



Vantage DX Leading the Way

Vantage DX is not just a generic monitoring tool. It is a sophisticated experience management platform that is purpose-built for Microsoft Teams, making complex Teams issues very simple for IT to fix. Recommended by Microsoft as a Preferred Solution, Vantage DX goes beyond what native Microsoft tools can provide to help IT teams proactively detect problems, resolve them faster and optimize the Microsoft Teams user experience.

By using Vantage DX, IT teams can shift to a more proactive Microsoft Teams experience management model and ensure that revenue-generating users stay productive and delivering the best possible customer experience.

Martello Technologies Group Inc. (TSXV: MTLO) provides Microsoft 365 and Teams monitoring solutions including the Vantage DX SaaS platform, which optimize the modern workplace. The company's products deliver end-to-end visibility of the entire IT infrastructure supporting Microsoft 365 and Teams, empowering IT teams and service providers to deliver stellar user experiences. Martello Technologies Group is a public company headquartered in Ottawa, Canada with employees in Europe, North America and the Asia Pacific region.

Learn more at www.martellotech.com

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