



Microsoft Uses Insights from AvePoint tyGraph to Understand Adoption across its Viva Engage Communities

Customer Profile

Microsoft creates platforms and tools powered by AI to deliver innovative solutions that meet the evolving needs of our customers. The technology company is committed to making AI available broadly and doing so responsibly, with a mission to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. Microsoft operates in 190 countries and is made up of more than 220,000 passionate employees worldwide.

Location

Redmond, United States

Industry

Information Technology

Platform

Microsoft Viva Engage

Critical Needs

- Measure usage and adoption metrics
- Identify and track meaningful engagement
- Drive adoption across the organization
- Demonstrate business value

Solution

AvePoint tyGraph

Success Highlights

- 95% of full-time employees now view messages across 5,000 Viva Engage communities each month.
- Increased percentage of active communities from 17% to 40%, as a result of investing in popular communities and removing excess.
- Enabled targeted engagement strategies by correlating activity metrics with employee demographics.

The Challenge

After acquiring Yammer (now Viva Engage), Microsoft made a concerted effort to move collaboration from closed email threads to the social network platform. However, to make the business case for shifting to these new, untested models, they knew they would need to identify and track metrics related to user engagement, adoption, and collaboration effectiveness.

Back then, there were limited options for understanding the dynamics and engagement within the network. Without insights into which strategies were driving participation and which audiences were actively engaging in communities, it was challenging for the tactical teams to make improvements to their practices, as well as for management to decide how, when, and where to invest in collaboration tools.

Microsoft needed a way to better measure usage and adoption metrics to drive adoption across the business and demonstrate business value.

The AvePoint Solution

At the time, there were no established analytics offerings for Viva Engage, but tyGraph (now part of AvePoint) was developing a comprehensive tool. Microsoft leveraged its strong relationship with tyGraph to collaborate closely as tyGraph for Viva Engage was developed, ensuring the new solution met its analytics needs.

“The relationship with the tyGraph team was a symbiotic one,” explains Frank Delia, Principal Product Manager at Microsoft. “The tyGraph team was eager to understand what insights would be most valuable so they could include these metrics in their tool. They heard our pain points and delivered.”

One of the critical capabilities of the tyGraph tool was its ability to correlate product signals with HRIS demographic information from employees. This enabled Microsoft to analyze where employees from different departments, regions, seniority, etc. were most active, allowing for targeted adoption strategies to address the needs of specific audiences and geographies. Organization hierarchy data also empowered leaders to discover how their employees embrace Viva Engage.

As Frank says, “We understood that a single company-wide adoption program would not be successful. Being able to understand and measure change within individual communities or organization audiences has been essential. The tight integration with employee data and activity metrics is a big reason we still rely on tyGraph.”

tyGraph not only facilitated the adoption of Viva Engage but also played a pivotal role in optimizing the platform for better efficiency and user engagement. By 2019, Microsoft’s culture of self-collaboration and technological experimentation had resulted in over 30,000 Viva Engage communities. However, many of these communities were no longer in use, and there was no efficient way to distinguish active communities from inactive ones.

With tyGraph’s analytics, Microsoft discovered that only about 1 in 3 communities were legitimately active. This insight allowed the team to take an aggressive stance in managing their community landscape, identifying and eliminating unnecessary

communities, and significantly improving users’ ability to discover relevant and useful communities.



Today, the Microsoft network includes approximately 5,000 communities, with around 2,000 being meaningfully active. Inactive communities are systematically removed, allowing Microsoft to maintain a balance point for its communities and focus on fostering genuinely active and productive collaboration spaces.

Community managers across Microsoft see immediate value from insights that would otherwise be challenging to discover. For example, they can identify which community members are the key influencers so they can encourage them to post regularly. Determining which threads are having the most impact helps them to improve their content plans. Finally, building custom reports showing progress toward the specific goals of their community helps to maintain investment in the active management of the community.

Connected Communities, for example, is Microsoft’s largest internal Communities of Practice program with 60,000 members participating in over 65 communities aligned to industries, solution areas and cross functional priorities. tyGraph data helps the program team better understand community engagement, program-level insights and trends such as active users and active conversations. Custom reports help the business refine and adjust program strategies such as what topics to focus on and what drives member satisfaction and value.

Additionally, customized tyGraph reports provided to the CEO's communication team enabled detection of themes in comments and questions prior to a live broadcast event. A rich word cloud suggested what was interesting for employees and informed the event agenda and most relevant questions for the senior leadership team to answer.

tyGraph's analytics also provide significant value for Microsoft's global communications efforts. Engagement insights allow the communications team to tailor and optimize their internal dissemination strategies. By combining tyGraph data with other data sets, they can compare engagement across Viva Engage posts, emails, blogs, and messages, to determine which platform is best for different types of messaging. As a result, communicators are constantly aware of where and when to publish content for maximum impact.

The Bottom Line

The long-standing partnership has spanned over a decade, with Microsoft being a tyGraph customer since 2014. Over the years, Viva Engage has been instrumental in creating a more open and transparent Microsoft culture, and the tyGraph analytics platform empowered teams to maximize engagement by tailoring strategies to specific audiences and communities.

Frank reflects, "Without the ability to identify participation bright spots through tyGraph and foster a culture of openness, information sharing, and collaboration, critical shifts within Microsoft's evolving culture might not have been possible."

Frank sums it up, "tyGraph has been instrumental in our journey to drive adoption on Viva Engage. By providing actionable insights that allow us to continuously improve communication and



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**- FRANK DELIA,
PRINCIPAL PRODUCT MANAGER,
SEAMLESS TEAMWORK**

collaboration, tyGraph has helped Viva Engage routinely reach 95% of full-time employees, demonstrating the tangible impact of our communication efforts and solidifying Viva Engage as an effective network for supporting Microsoft's success."



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