



## Collaboration: From Office-based to Remote Working Overnight

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Seven years after adopting collaboration, it has become an indispensable way of working, which has redefined Hornbill's DNA. Since introducing collaboration, our people have generated in excess of 340k workspace posts, with more than 1 million comments, not to mention the benefits of being able to seamlessly bring subject matter experts and documents into live discussions.

From the beginning, Hornbill has evangelized the transformational benefits that collaboration delivers. Our founder and CEO, Gerry Sweeney, was asked to author the collaboration content for VeriSM's landmark book [Unwrapped](#) and [Applied](#) and he has presented several keynotes on the topic.

Collaboration is interwoven with every part of our business and is the core capability of the Hornbill platform. We have dedicated workspaces, which our teams use to ask questions, bring subject matter experts into discussions and share knowledge and ideas. Other workspaces allow us to share industry news, discuss the latest web development technologies, and increase visibility of what teams are doing by working out loud.

Collaboration is embedded in the purpose, vision, and mission of the organization, which ensures that people are aware of how each team is contributing to organizational goals. It gets everyone on the same page, sharing information, knowledge, and ideas to improve our processes and deliver better outcomes for our customers.

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*"Since we started using Collaboration, I've felt much more like a part of the business as a whole, rather than a small cog in a big wheel, hidden away up North. For me, Collaboration had made Team Hornbill feel like more of a team than ever before - even when we're hundreds (or thousands) of miles apart!"*

Steve Goldthorpe, Senior Software and Integration Engineer

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Like many organizations, we responded to COVID-19 by switching our entire workforce to remote working. We were fortunate to have a fully digital supply chain, our own collaborative platform, and management practices that support collaboration.

The Hornbill platform has automated most of our business processes, and our staff work out loud, with notifications proactively keeping the right people informed. One of the lesser stated but profoundly time-saving aspects of collaboration is that you don't need to search for information, because it finds you.

Though we share many similarities with other organizations, it's the bonds and relationships that collaboration has enabled us to strengthen and embrace that make us unique and productive. Moving from office-based to remote working has truly sharpened our focus on the importance of relationships.

Within minutes of announcing that staff should work from home, we implemented collaborative workspaces to keep our staff connected and able to support each other. By utilising other tools such as Zoom and WhatsApp, the shift to remote working has had almost zero impact on our operational efficiency and the flow of information between teams.

In times of crisis, sharing humor is also lifting our spirits, and key learning resources have been posted to help parents keep their children engaged. As our usual staff hangouts are now closed, we have provided staff with access to a 'virtual kitchen' where people can access a permanent Zoom meeting and hang out with their Hornbill colleagues at any time. Our 'social distancing' workspace quickly became a popular area for people to post images of their home-working setup, with people voting for the best solutions. Given the nature of our work, it came as no surprise that many of our staff have rather impressive technology stacks at home, and yes, there was even one person who showcased their 'server room' with equally impressive colour-coded patch panel cabling.

These simple solutions allow us to maintain and nurture our close working relationships. Our collaboration journey and the technology that supports it had already delivered huge benefits before the COVID-19 crisis. However, we could never have envisaged the enormous impact that collaboration would have in a time of emergency, and how easily it has allowed us to seamlessly transition the entire organization to remote working.

If you'd like to learn more about how collaboration can help your organisation improve business efficiencies and facilitate a seamless transition to remote working, we have just published a smart guide, [Creating Effective Collaboration in remote working organizations](#) [20 min read].



[Learn more](#)

## **CREATING EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION IN THE REMOTE WORKING ORGANIZATION**

Collaboration Triple 5: 5 key steps to deliver, 5 tactics to avoid the pitfalls and the top 5 recommended deep dives

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