

# WorkWisely



NEWSLETTER

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A photograph of a middle-aged man with short, light-colored hair and glasses, wearing a striped polo shirt and brown trousers. He is sitting on a brown leather couch, smiling slightly at the camera. The background is a blurred office setting with a whiteboard and colorful sticky notes.

**A JOURNEY OF  
DIGITAL  
TRANSFORMATION**  
WITH BOETA PRETORIUS



- Storage: At the heart of digital evolution
- NWU on Third Party Apps and more
- Change: Microsoft Teams ups the game



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## Academic and Office Solutions (IT: AOS)



Andiswa Msi



Adelle Lotter



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# Digital Transformation in Higher Education



Boeta Pretorius

*2024 brings great anticipation in the Higher Education sector. The rapid expansion of online distance learning and the automation of various functions across teaching, learning, research, and support services signal a shift towards a technology-driven education. In this article, our IT Chief Director, Boeta Pretorius, shares his insights on how digital transformation affects higher education and businesses.*

**T**echnology now plays a pivotal role in our value chain, and this indicates a shift towards technology-driven core businesses also in the Higher Education sector. The dramatic growth in hyper automation and other digital opportunities, together with lower barriers to entry (e.g., greater technical expertise across the enterprise, low-code development tools and AI-assisted development) are among the factors that enable the democratisation of technology delivery beyond the typical scope of IT professionals.

## Changes in the IT space

Being an IT professional for many years, I have seen several changes and varied involvement from non-IT professionals in the IT space. Information Technology Departments have traditionally interpreted the so-called shadow IT as a threat for many years, but there is a dramatic shift taking place towards the democratisation of IT and innovation. Organisations need to be aware of this and prepare itself to take advantage of the opportunities it may hold.

Internationally, top performing

enterprises compete by harnessing the expertise of all their employees, not only those who are appointed in a specific discipline. Unfortunately, many leaders are still wedded to outdated ways of working that fail to recognise how technology decisions have become a shared leadership responsibility. (Gartner, 2022)

Executives and managers now recognise the value of having tech-savvy members on their teams to boost business performance. With the right mindsets, CIO's can ensure that the technology utilised actually lead to increased business performance.

Universities are traditionally slow-moving entities when it comes to embracing change. If they want to stay competitive, they will need to update their culture and IT related strategies.

## Becoming a Digital Organisation

One of the building blocks of transforming to a Digital organisation is Digital Dexterity.

Digital dexterity is the ability of employees to adapt and adopt existing and emerging technologies in their field to

produce better results for their company. As the digital world is constantly changing, the desire to adapt and innovate using new technologies is important for employees. An open mindset and agile behaviour deliver the **highest level of digital dexterity**.

Developing a digital organisation requires the combination of a digital-first mindset and key characteristics:

- ▶ **Digital-first Mindset.** An attitude that reflects a broad tendency to seek out digital solutions first, use technology as a tool for advantage, and approach enterprise data in a systematic fashion.
- ▶ **Characteristics that support the development of a digital organisation:**
  - **Digitised Operations:** the reliance on digitised information to document, automate, and monitor enterprise activities more precisely.
  - **Collaborative Learning:** a readiness for boundary-crossing collaboration to innovate, solve problems, and discover new insights.
  - **Data-Driven Decisions:** relying on digitised information and systematic analysis to make important decisions, a practice that becomes increasingly robust as Digitised Operations become established.
  - **Workforce:** Digital Organisations acknowledge the contributions of employees, contingent workers, partners, and customers.
  - **Digital Skills:** Organisations benefit from their Technology Experience as more people learn how and when they can apply these tools.
  - **Resources:** Digital tools and data are critical inputs to the functioning of a Digital Organisation.
  - **Collaborative Tools:** support for communication, collaboration, and rapid feedback within an organisation.

## FUN FACTS

### ABOUT BOETA PRETORIUS

- ▶ **First job:** Lecturer in Computer Science
- ▶ **First pay:** R800
- ▶ **Interesting things about you:**  
I like cooking, it is a way of winding down.
- ▶ **Worst investment mistake you've made?**  
I am a bit conservative when it comes to investments. Play a bit with shares, but never make a bad decision.
- ▶ **Best book you've read this year and why did you like it?**  
*The Coming Wave* by Mustafa Suleyman. It gives you a glimpse into the near future where AI and other technologies like quantum computing, DNA printers and robot assistants will be part of life.

In conclusion, as we navigate the transformative landscape of Higher Education in 2024 and beyond, it is evident that digital transformation is not merely a trend but a necessity. The shift towards a technology-driven education sector, marked by the rapid expansion of online learning and the automation of various functions, presents both challenges and opportunities. Embracing digital dexterity and fostering a digital-first mindset are essential for universities to stay competitive and relevant in the fast-paced digital era. As technology continues to evolve, so too must our approaches to teaching, learning, and sharing information. By harnessing the power of technology and embracing a culture of innovation, higher education institutions can pave the way for exciting developments that enhance the educational experience for all stakeholders. ▣



# NWU Microsoft Storage

The NWU has adopted the Microsoft environment as part of its digital workplace infrastructure.

This environment integrates various MS 365 applications and forms part of the NWU's Digital transformation strategy. Key applications within this environment include Outlook, Office, Teams, OneDrive, and more.

In 2023 Microsoft implemented a pooled storage policy that limits the MS Cloud storage to the NWU in the MS 365 environment. The pooled storage available is intended for use by both staff and students alike.

Microsoft motivates this change with the following reasons:

- ▶ Minimise security risk created by legacy storage and data sprawl.
  - Globally, Education and Research are the most attacked industries.
  - K-12 schools receive over 80% of workplace malware attacks.

- ▶ Reduce our collective carbon footprint.
  - Over half of stored data does not serve a purpose. This “dark data” takes up space on servers and results in increased electricity consumption, generating 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 alone.

Following this adjustment, the maintenance and management of MS storage within NWU assume a high priority and as a result, stringent user quotas have been instituted to effectively facilitate the management of the emerging storage demands.

In summary, all MS Apps that store data or files in the cloud, contribute to the NWU pooled storage. Please keep your data in the cloud to a minimum and within the set limits. ☒

## The general apps that contribute to the NWU storage:



### Outlook

Outlook has an Online Archive/ In-Place Archive that does not contribute to the NWU pooled storage. Moving active mail to the Online Archive / In-place Archive will assist in keeping your mailbox active.

#### 👍 Best practices to manage your Outlook mailbox:

- Keep your active mailbox within the size limit.
- Use your Online Archive/ In-Place Archive.
- Please remember to clean up your mailbox regularly.

Mail can be exported to a local file for backup purposes or to take it along when you are no longer associated with the NWU.



### OneDrive

OneDrive provides personal cloud storage for files and documents, allowing users to store, access, and share their own files from anywhere, anytime and from many devices.

#### 👍 Best practices to manage your OneDrive cloud storage:

- Only keep day-to-day live data in your OneDrive.
- Do not keep duplicates of your data.
- Make sure to regularly clean up your OneDrive.
- Move data that are NWU records to the NWU Archive.



### Teams (SharePoint)

Teams are used for collaboration and content management and enables groups of people (e.g. project teams) to share documents, collaborate, and manage projects collectively. Documents in the Files part of Teams is stored in an underlying SharePoint environment.

#### 👍 Best practices to manage your Teams (SharePoint) cloud storage:

- Only keep working data in your team.
- Do regular data clean ups within the team.
- Move data that needs to be records to the NWU Archive.

# New Microsoft Teams is Here



Microsoft Teams is getting better and better. In this edition of Work Wisely, we're excited to share an important update from Microsoft about the new Microsoft Teams app.

Set to arrive at the end of March 2024, this upgraded Teams platform promises to be smarter, faster, and more efficient, offering an enhanced way to connect and communicate.


Here's what to expect:

- **Enhanced Performance:** Improved speed and responsiveness, with the new Teams app using up to 50% less memory while being twice as fast as its predecessor.
- **Streamlined Interface:** Enjoy a simplified and intuitive design, making navigation and task management a breeze.
- **New Features:** The new Teams app will be the sole recipient of exciting new features and functionalities released in the future, keeping you ahead of the curve.

To ensure a smooth transition, please note the following important dates:

- **Automatic upgrade:** After March 31, 2024, haven't updated to the new Teams yet will be automatically updated to the new app. However, this automatic update won't affect Microsoft Teams Room (MTR/Yealink) and Surface Hub devices.
- **Be Proactive:** You can update to the new Teams before 31 March 2024 to experience its benefits early and familiarise yourself with the new interface. We highly recommend taking advantage of this opportunity.

Change can be daunting, but we're confident that the new Microsoft Teams app will significantly enhance your work life.

Visit the IT Webpage for more information or watch a YouTube video for a quick overview. 

IT Webpage 



YouTube 



## Exploring the World of Third-Party Apps in the MS 365 Environment

In the dynamic landscape of the new digital world, third-party apps have become indispensable tools for streamlining processes and enhancing productivity.


These apps offer potential benefits, from automating tasks to integrating seamlessly with existing systems. However, before integrating any third-party app into your MS 365 environment, it's essential to tread cautiously and conduct a thorough investigation.

The advantage of third-party apps lies in their ability to save time and resources by simplifying complex workflows. Yet, there are also potential risks, particularly concerning the security of sensitive data.

When considering a third-party app, it is important to safeguard all sensitive information. Any breach or compromise could have far-reaching consequences for the university, including financial losses and damage to reputation. Therefore, it is imperative to assess the security measures implemented by the app's vendor. It should be measured against all relevant regulations, such as South African laws and NWU regulations.

In addition to the security assessment, Vendor Risk Management (VRM) practices should be implemented to mitigate potential risks comprehensively. VRM is a range of measures, including evaluating data protection protocols, assessing business continuity strategies, and addressing security vulnerabilities.

It's worth noting that even Office 365 add-ins, such as those for Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, and Word, fall under the category of third-party apps. Despite being developed by Microsoft, these add-ins must also be scrutinised to ensure they meet the organisation's security standards. Requests to use such add-ins should be channelled through the support system, following an evaluation process to mitigate any potential risks.

In conclusion, while third-party apps offer undeniable benefits, they also pose inherent risks that cannot be overlooked. By conducting security assessments, implementing Vendor Risk Management practices, and adhering to evaluation criteria, the power of third-party apps can be harnessed while safeguarding sensitive data. 

# How NWU Staff Mastered Digital Dexterity

*Adapting to new technology can pose significant challenges for employees, potentially obstructing digital transformation initiatives.*

Prof. Leenta Grobler

At North West University (NWU), concerted efforts have been made to navigate these hurdles effectively. This article explores the strategies employed by NWU's leadership, specifically highlighting the roles of the Deputy Dean in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, Prof. Herman Van Der Merwe, and the Deputy Director in the NWU Business School, Prof. Leenta Grobler, in fostering a culture of digital adaptability among staff.

McKinsey & Company, a leading consultancy, underscores the pivotal role of digital transformation in organisational success through its paper, *Unlocking Success in Digital Transformations*. The firm posits that the main obstacle to digital adoption is not the selection of technology but ensuring that individuals enthusiastically embrace and utilise these tools.

Prof. Herman Van Der Merwe, the Deputy Dean in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, has been instrumental in overcoming these adoption barriers at NWU. His engagement with internet technology stretches back to the early '90s, with a significant moment occurring at a conference where Tim Berners-Lee, credited as the inventor of the World Wide Web, demonstrated the web's capabilities. Reflecting on his journey, Prof. Van Der Merwe remarked, "My awakening to the significance of the web happened in 1994 at the University of Pretoria. I envisaged its impact as monumental as Coca-Cola's, a vision that has been validated with the advent

of technologies like ChatGPT and the broader concept of AI in November 2022."

In response to the national lockdown and the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, NWU pivoted to online student assessments, adopting the Cirrus e-assessment platform from 1 October 2020. This move was part of a broader strategy initiated earlier to embrace digital assessment tools. Prof. Van Der Merwe advocates for a transformative educational approach, favouring incentives over mandates to encourage voluntary uptake, thereby setting a positive example for others to follow.

He employs what he calls the "footpath approach" to technology adoption, offering choices and observing natural usage patterns to guide recommendations. This user-centred strategy draws inspiration from how architects observe the natural paths created by foot traffic to inform the design of walkways.

Prof. Leenta Grobler, a computer and electronic engineer and the Deputy Director for Teaching and Learning in the NWU Business School, concurs with this philosophy. She recognises the common resistance and fear among employees towards digital transformation, often stemming from concerns over job security and self-efficacy. To address these challenges, Prof. Grobler engages staff in discussions about digital fluency, using everyday technology use as a parallel to demystify new digital tools.

With "Generative AI" becoming a focal point of discussion in 2023, NWU has been proactive in exploring its

academic applications. Despite initial apprehensions among staff regarding job displacement and academic integrity, Prof. Grobler advocates for the integration of AI as an enhancement to traditional roles. She highlights the importance of firsthand experiences with AI to challenge misconceptions and illuminate its potential to augment academic processes.



Prof. Herman Van Der Merwe

In conclusion, the leadership in Teaching and Learning at the NWU, particularly Prof. Herman Van Der Merwe and Prof. Leenta Grobler, has been pivotal in guiding staff through the digital transformation journey. By emphasising practical engagement, choice, and the benefits of digital tools, NWU is setting a precedent for how educational institutions can navigate the challenges of adopting new technologies. ▣

# Efficiently Manage Recording Expiration in Microsoft Teams



Are you having trouble in handling the recording expiration process in Microsoft Teams? Don't fret. Here is your guide to help you understand and manage this process easily.

Microsoft Teams offers a versatile recording feature, allowing you to capture audio, video, and screen sharing content during meetings, webinars, and lectures. However, it's important to note that these recordings come with an expiration date. Let's delve into the steps and settings of the expiration process to empower you to effectively manage it.

## Automatic Expiration of Recordings

This feature manages your storage space by automatically expiring older recordings. **OneDrive** and **SharePoint** oversee the expiration settings for all meeting recordings, moving them to the recycle bin when reaching the expiration date.

The implementation of this policy aims to optimise storage usage within the Teams platform. With the exponential growth of digital data, effective management of storage resources becomes imperative to prevent overload.

## Default Expiration Time

This setting determines whether meeting recordings automatically expire once "Meetings automatically expire" is enabled. By default, meeting recordings expire after 31 days. While the implementation of a 31-day retention period may seem restrictive, users are encouraged to download and archive important recordings within this timeframe. Any changes to this setting will only apply to new meeting recordings and won't affect existing ones.

## Deletion Process of Recordings

Upon reaching its expiration date, a recording is moved to the recycle bin, and the expiration date field is reset. If a user retrieves a recording from the recycle bin, the meeting expiration setting will not delete it again.

The recording remains in the recycle bin for an additional 30 days after the expiration date. The file owner receives an email notification when the recording expires, guiding them to the recycle bin for potential recovery of the recording. The 30-day grace period facilitates recording retrieval, offering users ample time to access and save critical data.

## Restoring an Expired Recording

If you need to keep the expired recording for an extended period, you can do so through the Recycle Bin within the 30-day grace period. Simply select the file and click 'Restore'. The file will be restored to its original location, i.e., your Recordings folder. ☑

## IT Word Search

K	N	I	G	N	I	N	R	A	E	L	A	P	A
C	I	T	N	E	M	E	G	A	N	A	M	R	E
P	I	E	M	A	I	L	B	O	X	K	R	E	L
C	E	C	E	N	C	S	A	H	L	A	C	C	E
C	D	A	T	A	R	G	E	E	I	P	D	O	C
E	V	I	H	C	R	A	D	I	T	P	A	R	R
E	O	A	W	W	W	T	K	N	E	S	W	D	O
A	C	A	S	E	C	I	T	C	A	R	P	I	F
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E	D	R	E	A	N	R	T	R	G	E	W	F	T
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- MAILBOX
- WORKFORCE
- WORKPLACE
- PRACTICES
- TEACHING
- ARCHIVE
- APPS
- INTERFACE
- MANAGEMENT
- RECORDING
- LEARNING
- RESEARCH
- INTEGRATION
- RISK
- DATA

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