



THE DREAM TEAMS

WHEN ENGLAND NETBALL FELL IN LOVE WITH MS TEAMS

When COVID-19 struck and the government imposed UK lockdown began in March 2020, England Netball, like many organisations, started to plan for remote working for its 140-strong workforce.

As the chief national governing body for the sport, they provide support to a lot of clubs, leagues, coaches and umpires, as well as help inspire over 170,000 women to start playing netball after last year's World Cup. With so many people depending on England Netball for advice and guidance during this period, they knew they needed to find a way to communicate and collaborate effectively internally and with their external stakeholders.

New to Microsoft Teams and with little experience of how it can work to enhance collaboration for a dispersed workforce, England Netball called in Changing Social to get them off the mark.

Operations Manager, Ian Poynton, wanted to help the team work more effectively and efficiently from home during lockdown but knew they didn't have the tools to do the job. He said, "We've had Teams for some time but we just didn't really know what it could do. We'd never really been shown or explained the capabilities."

As well as not fully understanding the potential of Teams, staff were facing challenges of different versions of Office on their work laptops, which was impacting how people could interact with the app.

"On top of this, we had a load of legacy systems that we were using. We seemed to be using lots of different systems for the same purpose, and with video conferencing we were using at least three tools, possibly more.

"It was clear, we needed to streamline this and really understand how MS Teams could help us." Ian concluded.

MATCH-MAKING: ENGLAND NETBALL, MEET MS TEAMS

With a mixed bag of abilities and willingness to use MS Teams, Changing Social recommended the best way to get everyone on the same page was with some intensive MS Teams training.

Delivered remotely via Teams meetings, we held three hour-long webinars that covered the basics of Teams..

Changing Social's Teams specialist, Fran Clark, designed the training sessions with England Netball to make sure the sessions were bespoke to their needs while also covering the very latest information and updates on Teams.

"For an organisation that exists to help people stay fit and active, it was hard for them to do their work during lockdown."

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"The idea with the Teams training was to empower these passionate people with the tools and skills to be able to work in new and interesting ways, and continue to support the clubs, players and coaches they have always worked with, just in a new way."

"This ultimately meant continuity of service and made sure that England Netball was in a good position when lockdown eased and competitive sport could resume", Said Fran.

"With Teams, we could potentially get rid of these physical classroom theory sessions and move it all online."

NO ONE PIVOTS BETTER THAN A NETBALLER!

While everyone is pivoting and adapting their business model in a post-COVID world, Netballers are adept pivoters and have been doing it well for years. It's therefore no surprise that England Netball are considering new ways of working.

"There's a consensus that everyone can now work from home post COVID-19. While there will be some IT and Health and Safety issues for us to work through, we've now proven it can be done and with our much-improved Teams skills and confidence, I'm sure we could do it", said Ian.

And it's not just where staff work from that can change now England Netball has access to tools and skills around online events and hosting webinars through MS Teams.

"We've always held our training and CPD sessions in conference rooms up. A coach would typically do a day or two in the classroom, and then head out for their practical sessions after that."

"With Teams we could potentially get rid of these physical classroom theory sessions and move it all online. Then we can just get together to do the fun part – the practical element, saving everyone time and money."





THE NEXT MOVE FOR ENGLAND NETBALL?

According to Ian there's definitely a change in the air at England Netball. He said, "We've had a lot more interest and queries in people using different elements of Teams.

"I'm hoping we're going to be more collaborative. I'd like to see us have fewer systems, use the ones we have a bit better, and get better at collaborating with each other.

"The training we've had from Changing Social has been exceptional. Changing Social has made a massive difference in helping employees who know very little about the product, to getting them to a 3 or 4 out of 5 – moderate to excellent proficiency level."

England Netball is now considering how it can further develop its MS Teams journey and reinforce the learning to date, and the team is contemplating our Digital Champions programme to assist with this.

At Changing Social, we're adoption and change management experts. Let us use our extensive knowledge of O365, combined with our Microsoft Accredited Partner status, to help you get the most of O365 in your organisation.

Use our contact information on the right, to arrange a chat today.

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