

WHITEPAPER

Crowdsolving: unleash the power of people to solve any problem





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The following is intended to explain crowdsolving and outline Groopit general product capabilities. The development, release, and timing of any features or functionality described for Groopit products remain at the sole discretion of Groopit. The examples are intended to illustrate crowdsolving possibilities.



LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR **Tammy Savage**CEO & Co-founder, Groopit

Solving complex problems by leading an extended team inspired me to start Groopit. Before you dive into this whitepaper, I thought I'd take a moment to share part of my story.

At Microsoft, I inherited the design of over 100 internet services and my job was to transform the siloed products to operate as three unified suites known today as Windows Internet Services, Bing, and MSN. Every service was designed, built, marketed, sold, and supported as separate products which resulted in constrained resources, adoption, usage, net promoter scores, and ultimately revenue. It was a complex problem only solved by working through thousands of people in engineering, sales, marketing, branding, operations, and executives – an extended team.

Extended teams are people who work outside of the traditional core team. They work across departments, disciplines, geographies, organizations, industries, or areas of expertise.

This experience led me to start researching extended teams. I wanted to gain a deep understanding of who they are, how they work, and where they break down.

I learned how extended teams function and dysfunction by studying them in extreme situations including the prevention of crime and terrorism, recovery after disasters, to outbreaks of infectious disease. My mission was to discover what holds leaders and their extended teams back. And specifically, if there was something missing in our technology stacks keeping us from doing our best work.

Through my research, I found the answers. Extended teams broke down in the same areas. The findings were consistent across different types of work, leaders, and extended teams.

In this whitepaper, I share **three of the main areas of breakdown** contrasted against the **fundamentals to accelerating progress across extended teams through crowdsolving.** Crowdsolving is a leadership strategy and a new category of software empowering both leaders and their extended teams.

As you read, please feel free to reach out to me at tammy@groopit.co. I'd love to hear your questions, thoughts, or the problems you imagine crowdsolving might help your company solve.

Sincerely,



INTRODUCTION

Leaders often fail to solve the complex problems because of the traditional technologies and strategies they use.

The most challenging problems we face today cross traditional team boundaries. They span departments, disciplines, locations, hierarchies, organizations, industries, and expertise areas. There are a multitude of dependent and independent decision makers. People tackle multiple issues simultaneously, at all levels, over an extended period of time. Progress is dependent upon loosely connected people stepping up at unpredictable moments and taking

unpredictable actions. This is the work of an extended team. It is not linear. It is fluid and complex. It is often hard and slow, but it does not need to be.

David Bejamin and David Komlos wrote in Fast Company, "The most significant challenges leaders face today are complex in nature. They are issues like doubling the growth of a business, transforming a culture, offering a world-beating consumer experience, complying with new legislation, or stemming an epidemic. The problem is that leaders try to solve these highly complex challenges as if they were merely complicated, and that's a problem."

Leaders can overcome these challenges within their organizations by implementing new crowdsolving strategies and software.

Businesses, governments, and organizations can transform how extended teams operate and accelerate results with crowdsolving.

This whitepaper explains why extended teams break down and defines crowdsolving. The paper also provides an overview of Groopit and five use cases to demonstrate how leaders implement crowdsolving strategies to solve complex problems. It concludes with the technical architecture of Groopit and steps to get started.

Three Main Areas Extended Teams Break Down

Extended teams function and dysfunction differently than traditional core teams. For example, they are not held accountable by any one person, nor are resources controlled by any one hierarchy, so traditional project management and communication methods do not work for this group.



1: Lack of real-time data from the extended team. The world is moving fast but gathering information from an extended

team is generally a slow and highly manual process. The information leaders need from an extended team is often not readily available, so leaders gather it using a variety of methods. Each method has its downside:

Email, text, conversations, meetings, and channels yield unstructured, inconsistent information that takes time to transform into meaningful data that can be acted upon.

Surveys and pulsing mechanisms collect information retroactively, causing people to recollect what happened after-the-fact yielding latent, less accurate data.

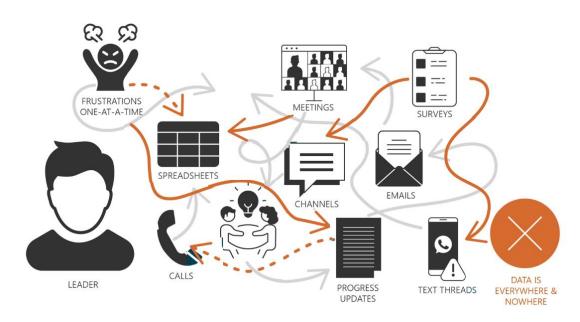
Shared spreadsheets are used to capture data on demand, but they are largely neglected and unsecured.

Systems of record, like CRMs, capture data consistently over a long period of time, but are typically not flexible, fast, or inclusive enough to gather data leaders need in-the-moment.

Leaders end up using multiple methods, simultaneously, to get the information they need. Data is everywhere, nowhere, and it's ad-hoc data chaos. By the time data is gathered and aggregated, the situation, and nuances of the situation have already changed. As a result, leaders often struggle to accurately understand progress and problems.

When leaders lack the capability to quickly get precisely the right information from people, extended teams and progress break down.

Ad-hoc Data Chaos





2: Lack of shared real-time visibility. Making progress today involves a multitude of decision-makers, working at every altitude

in an organization, across disciplines, locations, industries, and areas of expertise. There's an intricate web of decision-makers. Every person must be empowered in their respective roles with data to inform their decisions, but instead extended teams are very often kept in the dark.

As information is gathered, a person or small group of people consumes the data. They take unstructured information from emails, channels, texts, chats, meetings, and discussions. They take data from spreadsheets, surveys, and reports. They aggregate the data, prioritize, analyze, filter it, draw conclusions, and share updates. At key points, decisions are made, and people must be aligned. Every leader has experienced the related pain. The root cause: lack of shared, real-time visibility.

When extended team members lack visibility, they lose the opportunity to take informed, constructive action on their own accord. Team members miss chances to tackle a specific issue, invent a new process, create a new strategy, evolve their understanding, or revisit a decision. In order for extended teams to function effectively, members need to act in unpredictable ways and at unpredictable times. The lack of real-time visibility across an extended team grinds progress to a halt.

If employees say the information they share goes nowhere, or they don't know what happens with it, or nothing changes – you are suffering from this problem. There is no real-time shared visibility. People cannot see the data coming in or what's being done about it.



3: Lack of clear direction. Making progress is not an event, it's a process. The type of real-time data needed from an extended team

changes over time. The type of visibility needed by an extended team changes over time. Extended team members must adjust accordingly, and breakdowns occur when there's a lack of clear direction.

In traditional organizations, direction is announced at a meeting, sent through email, posted to a channel. Direction is provided, then it changes, and it's difficult for extended team members to keep track of those changes, to know what is important right now.

Leaders often lack the systems to provide ongoing direction at scale and redirect people instantly, so progress breaks down. Traditional tools and methods leave a gap that make it difficult for leaders to lead at scale.

Three Break Downs

- 1. Lack of real-time data
- 2. Lack of shared visibility
- 3. Lack of clear direction

The world is changing fast and so are the nuances of the problems we are solving.

Extended teams need the capacity to understand, act, and adapt in a fast-changing environment. New technology solutions are needed to make rapid problem-solving possible.

Crowdsolving: What It Is and Why It Matters

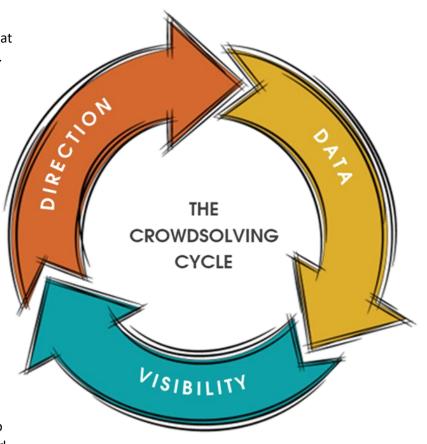
Crowdsolving is a new category of software that empowers extended teams to solve problems.

Crowdsolving is a cycle where an extended team has **direction**, shares **data** in real-time, and has **visibility** to the data shared by other extended team members. It is a cycle that allows people to adapt and work together over an extended period of time.

Waze, the traffic and navigation app, is an example of crowdsolving. Drivers have a shared purpose, to outsmart traffic, but all drive independently. They're driving their own routes, simultaneously making independent and unpredictable decisions. And, traffic is constantly changing. Waze directs drivers to share data: traffic jams, police sightings, accidents, and hazards. Waze also makes data visible to other drivers, allowing each driver to immediately see what's happening on the road and use the data to inform their own decisions. As a result, drivers drive independently and outsmart traffic together. Every person is empowered with data that is highly accurate, valuable information because it is collected and shared in real-time.

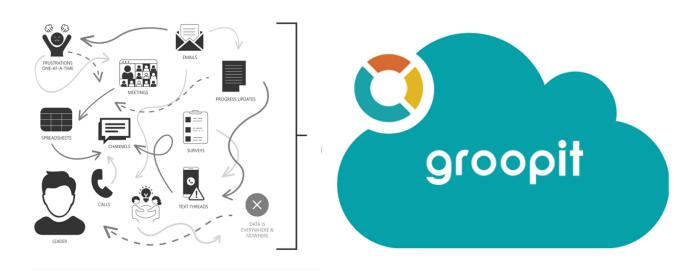
Imagine Waze users trying to outsmart traffic by using email, shared spreadsheets, surveys, and project management tools. It would be impossible, yet that's exactly how extended teams in business try to work together today.

Groopit is software that delivers crowdsolving capabilities to businesses, governments, and leaders of all types. It is software that requires no custom code or development. It allows leaders and their extended teams to start crowdsolving immediately.



The Groopit Crowdsolving Solution and How It Works

Groopit Crowdsolving replaces the chaos of ad-hoc data collection with one lightweight workflow.



Ultimately, Groopit empowers leaders and their extended teams to make better, faster decisions by providing three core capabilities: real-time data direction, sharing, and visibility.

Real-time Direction

Leaders provide direction by defining the data people should share. For example, to reduce non-selling time, ask people to share *Lost Selling Time* so you can quantitatively identify bottlenecks in the sales process. Choose from 30+ pre-built data sharing workflows. Or build one from scratch. No code required.



Real-time Data Sharing

Every data sharing workflow includes data fields that make it easy for employees to share high-quality, quantitative data in three taps and less than a minute.

For example, this data sharing workflow allows employees to share Lost Selling Time.
Whenever selling time is lost, reps share the reason, pain level caused, and minutes lost. This structure yields high-quality, quantitative data with just a few taps.

Data sharing workflows are defined by combining data fields. There are eight types of real-time data fields to choose from including

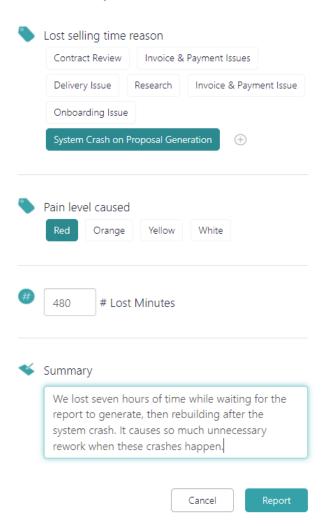
- Tags
- Location
- Photos
- Numbers
- Dates and times
- Responses
- Text
- Hidden fields for confidential data

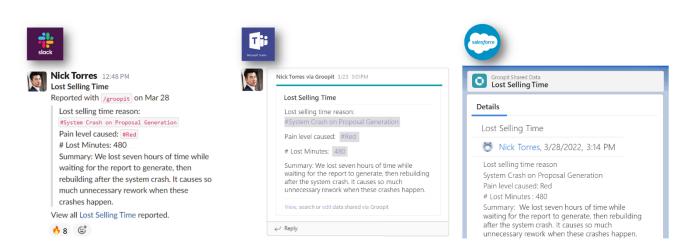
Groopit makes it easy to share this data from within Slack, Teams, Salesforce, Groopit, or any web-based business application. This approach allows Groopit to make sharing easy – easy to share, adopt, and use from wherever employees work today.



Lost Selling Time

Share whenever internal processes cause lost selling time so we can identify and remove bottlenecks.



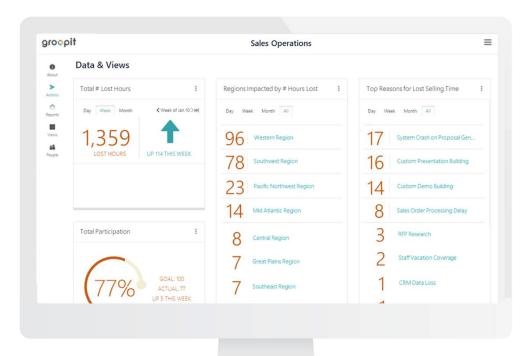


Real-time Data Visibility

Groopit aggregates data shared through Salesforce, Slack, Teams, and Groopit apps to create a big picture view.

Groopit displays a lightweight feed of data as it's shared so the extended team sees the play-by-play. In this example, see a feed of lost selling time. Question. Comment. @Mention. Send. Search. Use the data to inform your own decisions.

Groopit displays aggregate data views as well, giving the extended team a big picture view. See patterns, anomalies and use the information to inform your own decisions. There are five customizable views including leaderboard, counter, progress, map, and chart views. In this example, see the that 1,359 hours of lost selling time have been captured this month and proposal generator crashes was the top cause of lost selling time, reported 17 times.



Data Access

Leaders can download data into a spreadsheet or add data to existing enterprise systems like Slack, Salesforce, or Tableau. Groopit makes it easy to see, use, and integrate data into existing enterprise systems.

Groopit Crowdsolving Solution

Groopit takes the complex, nonlinear dynamics of an extended team and simplifies how they work together by providing real-time direction, data sharing, and visibility capabilities. Whether ten or ten million people are involved, Groopit creates possibilities for people to solve any problem.

Build a problem-solving capability with Groopit

Here's the critical point: as leaders tackle one problem, they're also building the capability to solve any problem – a long-lasting capability where leaders and their extended teams establish the habits, practices, and systems to handle whatever comes their way.

When solving a big problem, scope is critical. Leaders need both a frontline view and a big picture view where they see all the variables that affect the situation. Leaders must answer three questions that form the basis of a crowdsolving strategy:

- What do we want to achieve?
- What data should we all share?
- Who is included in the extended team?

Ultimately, Groopit provides the three core capabilities needed to implement a crowdsolving strategy: real-time direction, data sharing, and visibility to enable crowdsolving.

In the following pages, you'll read about five examples of crowdsolving, how each leader answered the questions above, the substantive business problem they were solving and results.

When solving big problems, scope is critical. Leaders at all levels need both a frontline view and a big picture view where they can see all the variables that affect the situation.

Outsmarting the Competition

Leader: COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE DIRECTOR

Problem Solving: STOP COMPETITOR FROM TAKING MARKET SHARE

Extended Team: SALES, MARKETING, LICENSING, PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, AND POST-SALES SUPPORT

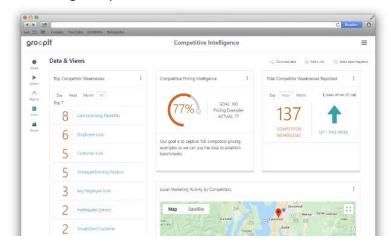
"It was unclear exactly how our competition was winning market share, but our employees each had pieces to the puzzle we needed to solve. So, we started crowdsolving."

Real-time Direction. Employees were asked to share five types of competitive intel:

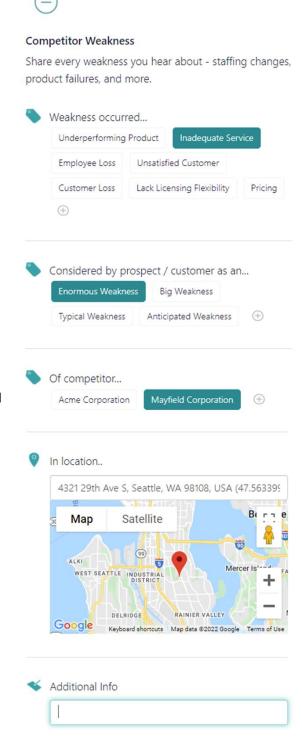


Real-time Data Sharing. They shared intel with a few quick taps from wherever they worked – Slack or Salesforce.

Real-time Data Visibility. Groopit aggregated data and provided a shared view. Everyone quickly saw patterns like, "Mayfield's lack of licensing flexibility emerged as a weakness 8 times this week." The extended team used this intel to inform sales, marketing, and product.



Results. One company grew their market share and revenue 42.7% after using Groopit to share competitive intelligence.



Cancel

Removing Revenue Blockers

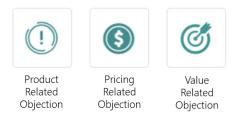
Leader: CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER + PRODUCT LEADER

Problem Solving: REDUCE ISSUES THAT SLOW REVENUE GROWTH

Extended Team: SALES, SALES OPS, CUSTOMER SUCCESS, PRODUCT

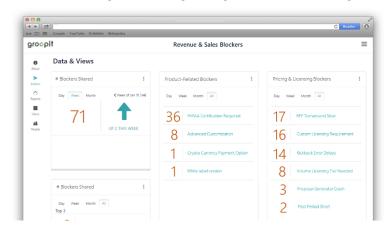
"Groopit has unlocked a massive amount of revenue potential by clearly and quickly identifying the most important and urgent blockers that sales and CS encounter."

Real-time Direction. The sales and customer success organizations were asked to share sales blockers that were impacting revenue growth:



Real-time Data Sharing. Employees shared product, pricing, and value-related objections that blocked sales or expansion opportunities directly from Salesforce and Teams.

Real-time Data Visibility. For the first time, the team now has data-driven insights detailing the significant blockers to growth.

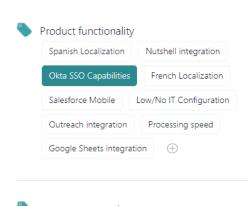


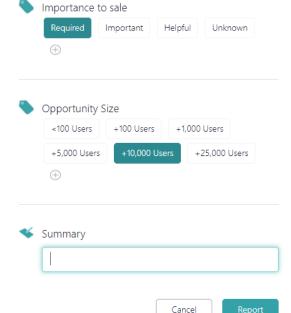
Results. The CRO communicated strategic priorities along with quantifiable impact, then partnered with the broader organization to remove these barriers. For example, the new insights empowered the product org to prioritize effectively and deliver targeted and timely high-value product updates that resulted in substantial revenue growth.



Product Related Objection

Share product-related objections that slow down the sales process.





Prioritizing Product Investments

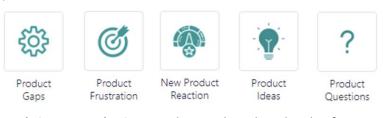
Leader: CHIEF PRODUCT OFFICER

Problem Solving: PRIORITIZE PRODUCT DECISIONS FOR CUSTOMERS

Extended Team: ALL CUSTOMER-FACING EMPLOYEES, PRODUCT

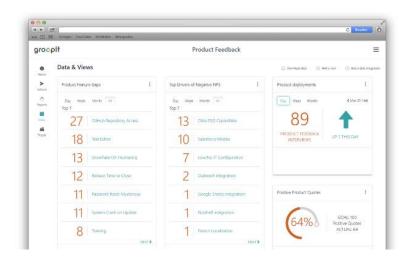
"With Groopit we're making product decisions at double speed and higher confidence that we're investing functionality that customers will love and that will ultimately drive growth."

Real-time Direction. The extended team was asked to share product feedback:



Real-time Data Sharing. Employees shared intel with a few quick taps and from wherever they worked – Groopit, Teams, Slack, and more.

Real-time Data Visibility. Groopit aggregated the data across channels and provided a shared view. Everyone quickly saw patterns like, "GitHub integration is the top request raised by 27 customers this month."

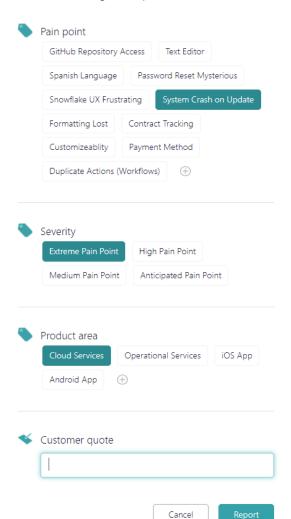


Results. Product net promoter score gained two points and product usage grew 34% within a 6-month period. The gain is largely credited to them quantitatively identifying the fixes and functions customers really want, then delivering.



Product Feedback

Capture every gap in the product where a feature needs to be added, changed or explored.



Rebuilding Our Workforce

Leader: CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER

Problem Solving: ACCELERATE HIRING SPEED

Extended Team: RECRUITING, HIRING MANGERS, DEPT. HEADS

"We lost a significant number of people during the pandemic and need to triple hiring speed. That means every recruiter, hiring manager and department head must track problems and eliminate slowdowns in their hiring process."

Real-time Direction. The team was asked to share five types of information:











Offer Hiring Accepted Planned

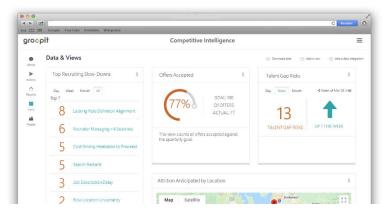
Recruiting Slowdown

Talent Gap Risk

Attrition Anticipated

Real-time Data Sharing. Employees shared intel from where they worked, predominantly Slack and a web-based HR portal.

Real-time Data Visibility. Groopit aggregated the data and provided a shared view so everyone quickly saw the slowdowns, the talent gap risks, and where attrition was anticipated. As problems occurred, people jumped in to solve them and subsequently learned together.

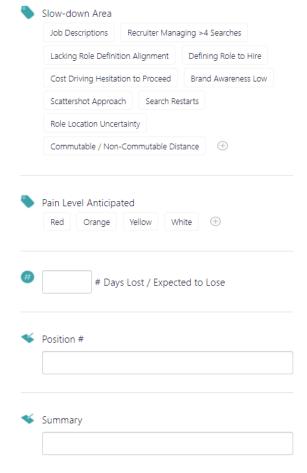


The result: The extended team systematically removed the slowdowns and worked together to reduce talent gap risks; putting them on track to reach the accelerated hiring goals.



Hiring & Recruiting Slow-Downs

Whenever you feel the system should move faster, share so we can understand and quantify slow-downs.



Cancel

Accelerating National Rollout

Leader: VP RETAIL SALES & MARKETING + VP OPERATIONS

Problem Solving: DECREASE TIME TO MARKET & NATIONAL ROLLOUT Extended Team: SALES, MARKETING, OPERATIONS, & STORE TEAMS

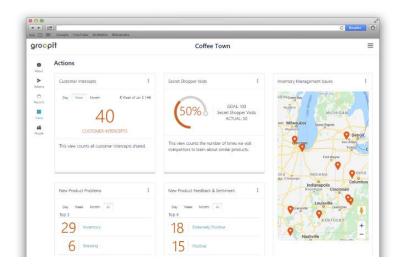
"What used to take many months to communicate and refine in the rollout development process, we were able to achieve in half the time and with higher confidence."

Real-time Direction. Employees testing in-store rollouts shared real-time feedback:

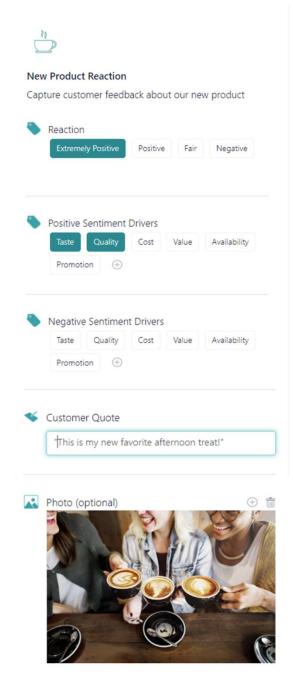


Real-time Data Sharing. Employees shared data while on-the-go with Groopit mobile and from existing web point of sale system with Groopit embedded.

Real-time Data Visibility. Groopit aggregated the data across test sites so everyone involved in rollout saw both problems and successes.



Results. The team accelerated rollout by 10 months, beat the competition to market, and exceeded sales goals by 21%.



Technology Architecture and Data

The Groopit SaaS solution is built on the Microsoft Azure cloud computing platform. This allows Groopit to leverage Microsoft's security, reliability, scalability, availability, and storage. Groopit takes data processing and security very seriously.

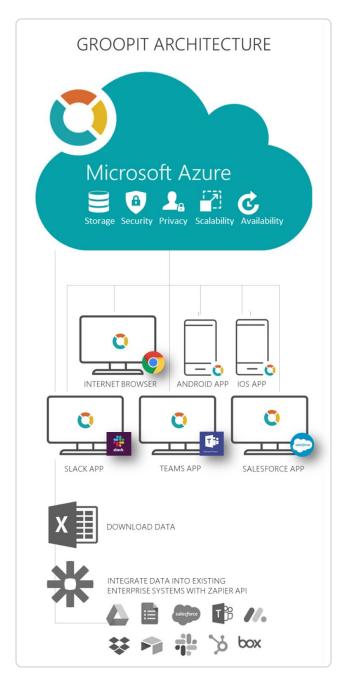
Data storage. All data is securely stored in Microsoft data centers, uses Microsoft's security features, and abides by Microsoft standards. We value Microsoft's commitment to security and building Groopit on their platform reflects our commitment as well.

Data privacy. Groopit does not sell user data. We believe that users own their data and Groopit does not have the right to sell it. Groopit is a subscription-based service, and user data is not sold or monetized by selling it to advertisers.

Data policy compliance. Groopit Enterprise Edition allows administrators to follow GDPR and HIPAA compliant data collection.

Data collection. Groopit facilitates data collection through crowdsolving, just as a survey provider facilitates data collection through surveys. Groopit suggests that administrators follow best practices for data collection. Many companies are regulated by data privacy laws and regulations, as well as internal policies. Administrators should ensure that they are familiar with their company's policies, as they will be responsible for ensuring data collection complies with requirements.

Data access and analytics. Groopit allows administrators to integrate data into existing data analytics tools used within their company.



Businesses have invested billions of dollars in data analytics solutions; Groopit is not a data analytics solution. Groopit digitizes human insights that can feed into existing data analytics solutions. This is achieved through a Zapier API that facilitates data integration into thousands of applications of your choice including Tableau, Microsoft Power BI, and more.

Single Sign-On (SSO). Groopit allows enterprises to control access through SSO.

Crowdsolving Success

How do you know when it is appropriate to apply crowdsolving? Consider crowdsolving if you are solving a problem or tackling a strategic initiative that requires:

- collecting data from an extended team
- working across multiple disciplines
- working in a geographically distributed environment
- understanding problems quantitatively
- tracking progress at scale
- making decisions when change is rapid
- insights from employees who talk to customers every day
- transparent processes to increase understanding and trust
- aligning people with different priorities
- getting instant input to inform a decision
- building a big picture view that empowers all employees to make good decisions

How do we get the extended team crowdsolving? Here are three principles that work.

- Keep it simple. Extended teams have zero time or tolerance for complexity, so keep it simple. Choose 1-5 types of information you wish your extended team would share and don't over complicate it.
- Work where they work. Extended team members often work in different systems (like Salesforce) so allow them to share from wherever they work, whenever possible.
- Build a habit. Establish a shorthand like "Did you groopit?" that people ask when they hear relevant information in a meeting or channel. It's checking to make sure the key data is shared, so everyone on the extended team is in-the-know and the key data is preserved to inform future decisions.

The customer success team at Groopit is here to help you apply these three principles and achieve success – starting with planning.

Planning. Groopit's customer success team will work with you to understand, plan, and simplify the data you want people to share. *1-hour working session*.

Set-Up. Groopit will suggest a crowdsolving structure, review and refine it with you, and set it up to get you started. *Up to 5 data sharing workflows*.

Training. Groopit will teach you how to customize and create new data sharing workflows, so that you can update Groopit as you make progress crowdsolving. *1-hour training*.

Customer Success Check-Ins. Groopit will be with you every step of the way, helping you learn, apply best practices, and strategize as needed. *Monthly check-ins*.

Groopit was explicitly designed to make something complex remarkably simple. The customer success team will help you start simply, keep it simple, and ultimately, achieve your goals.

Let's talk.

If you're interested in learning more about Groopit crowdsolving or how it might apply to your situation, let's talk. We're standing by, whenever you're ready. Just send email to hello@groopit.co and let us know you're thinking about it.

The Role of Groopit in Extended Team Success

An extended team is complex; there are many dependent and independent decision makers, including yourself.

Leaders and initiatives fail when the problems they are solving move faster than their extended team can move. That is exactly what happens when traditional strategies and technologies are used. The work of an extended team breaks down when there is a:

- 1. Lack of real-time direction
- 2. Lack of real-time data from people
- 3. Lack of real-time shared visibility

Crowdsolving gives leaders a new opportunity to conquer these challenges and get results that have never before been possible. Leaders now have what they need to get loosely connected people working together, with Groopit.

Groopit was founded to empower leaders all over the world to tackle their most audacious goals by enlisting extended teams. Groopit

takes what has always been complex behindthe-scenes and simplifies it for everyone. The outcomes: increased velocity, quality, competitiveness, profitability, results.

Tammy Savage, Groopit CEO and co-founder, became obsessed with understanding why and where extended teams break down. She studied the most intense problems where extended teams were essential – the prevention of crime and terrorism, recovery after a disaster, and outbreaks of infectious disease. Her mission was to understand why and where extended teams break down, and what keeps them from doing their best work. The aim of her research was to determine if there was missing technology infrastructure that prevents extended teams from achieving results.

What do you want to achieve? Who needs to be included in the extended team? What data should people share? Unleash the power of people to solve any problem. Groopit stands ready to help.

Start #Crowdsolving Today

