

Analysing the Use of Online Communication Software in Companies in the Czech Republic

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Abstract: The use of online communication software has become essential for modern companies, a trend significantly accelerated by the covid-19 pandemic which required many employees to work remotely. This paper maps the current use of these tools in Czech companies, analysing how they facilitate team interaction and improve organizational performance. Based on a 2024 survey of approximately 400 companies, the study examines the key features influencing software selection, such as accessibility, security, integration, and cost. The results highlight the dominance of certain platforms, particularly in large organizations, and reveal distinct usage patterns based on company size. The findings provide practical insights for managers and underscore the need to include training on these tools in university curricula for management and ICT.

Keywords: Analysis, Online communication, Software tool, Company

1. Introduction

In recent years, online communication software has become an integral part of the corporate environment. Its importance grew significantly during the covid-19 pandemic, when most employees were forced to switch to working from home and find new ways to communicate effectively with their colleagues. This situation has accelerated the adoption of digital tools, which today play a key role in ensuring team collaboration, flexibility and overall performance of organisations. The aim of the paper is to map the current state of the use of online communication software in Czech companies and analyze how individual tools contribute to effective team interaction and employee engagement. Today, online communication not only enables instant problem solving and increased productivity but also reduces costs by allowing remote working and virtual meetings. In addition, regular online meetings promote employee engagement and strengthen team cohesion. The paper focuses on the key features that companies consider when choosing a communication tool—availability, speed, multimedia support, group communication, interactivity, security, integration with other tools and price. User-friendliness and ease of use also play an important role. The research part of the paper is based on a questionnaire survey conducted in 2024 among approximately 400 Czech companies of various industries. The paper concludes with an overview of the advantages and disadvantages of each software solution and offers recommendations for their effective use in practice.

2. Theoretical Background

Online communication software platforms serve as a vital tool of information management. Information management, as a discipline, provides a methodological context for understanding the role of communication technologies in organizations. The term *information management* was first introduced in 1966 at a conference organized by R. S. Taylor, initially focusing on the economics of technical information processing (Vodáček and Rosický, 1997). By the late 1970s and 1980s, it evolved to address the economic efficiency of information and communication technology (ICT) projects (Vodáček and Rosický, 1997). According to Vodáček and Rosický, information management is a discipline that integrates system science, management, and informational tools, permeating the entire organization (Vodáček and Rosický, 1997).

As defined by Doucek, information management employs a distinct methodology and conceptual apparatus, leveraging system approaches to study management methods and their application in IT management within companies (Doucek, 2010). This discipline interweaves system science, management, and business informatics, with management functions—such as those outlined by Henry Fayol—playing a critical role. Among these, the organizing function is particularly relevant, as it relates to the relationship between organizational structure and information flow, a concept explored by early theorists like March, Simons, Thompson, and notably, Jay Galbraith.

Galbraith's seminal work, *Organization Design: An Information Processing View*, posits that the greater the task uncertainty, the more information must be processed among decision-makers to achieve desired performance levels (Galbraith, 1974). In large organizations, effective management relies on coordinating specialist groups and resources through partial subtasks. As uncertainty increases, so does the need for enhanced information processing capabilities. Galbraith proposes two primary strategies to address this challenge:

Reduce the need for information processing: Achieved through the creation of slack resources or self-contained tasks.

Increase information processing capacity: Accomplished by investing in vertical information systems or fostering lateral relations.

Galbraith's ideas have been further developed in later works, such as his collaborations with Kazanjian and his book on designing organizations (Galbraith, 1986; Galbraith, 2014). His concepts also resonate in W. R. Scott's work, which identifies three dimensions of technology affecting organizational structure: complexity, uncertainty, and interdependence (Scott, 1992). Scott emphasizes that organizational structures serve as mechanisms for processing information—subduing, summarizing, and simplifying it (Sor, 2004). Automation of processes, as Scott notes, reduces the information processing demands on organizational structures, aligning with the capabilities of modern ICT.

Recent studies, such as those by Sor (2004) and Dubey (2021), continue to validate Galbraith's framework, highlighting its relevance in empirical analyses of organizational flexibility and data analytics capabilities (Sor, 2004; Dubey, 2021).

Online communication software platforms, such as Slack, Microsoft Teams, or Discord, complement Galbraith's framework by enhancing organizations' information processing capabilities. These tools streamline communication, facilitate collaboration, and integrate with other productivity platforms, aligning with the principles of information management. They enable real-time messaging, file sharing, and task management, which reduce the complexity and uncertainty in organizational workflows.

By providing instant communication and project management tools, online communication software improves managerial efficiency. For example, Slack's workflow automation and Trello's Kanban boards allow managers to assign tasks, track progress, and allocate resources effectively. A study published on ScienceDirect (Afridi et al., 2023) underscores the impact of digital communication tools on project performance, emphasizing the importance of user-friendly interfaces for seamless integration into daily operations.

These tools support Galbraith's strategy of increasing information processing capacity by enabling vertical information systems (e.g., centralized dashboards) and lateral relations (e.g., cross-team channels). This reduces the need for hierarchical communication, allowing for faster decision-making and more agile management practices.

By enabling virtual meetings and remote collaboration, online communication software minimizes transportation demands, further supporting Galbraith's approach to reducing information processing needs. According to Global Workplace Analytics, remote work can save 30 billion vehicle miles annually in the USA, reducing CO2 emissions and fuel consumption (Global Workspace Analytics, 2021).

Galbraith's view of organizational structures as information processing mechanisms is particularly relevant in the context of modern ICT. The integration of online communication software with vertical information systems can replace traditional organizational structures, enabling greater flexibility in design and redesign. As Scott suggests, automation reduces the need for complex structures by streamlining information flow (Sor, 2004). This raises an empirical question: What is the current situation with the use of modern communication tools in the Czech Republic?

While Galbraith's framework remains robust, as validated by recent studies (e.g., Dubey, 2021; Sor, 2004), it assumes high task uncertainty in larger organizations, which may not always apply to smaller Czech firms with simpler structures. Online tools like MS Teams address this by scaling information processing, but their effectiveness depends on user adoption and training.

3. Review of Selected Communication Platforms

3.1 Discord

Besides its popularity in software development and gaming communities, Discord is being increasingly used in education since the ability to communicate is critical for enhancing the learning experience. Its popularity in the context of online education in the Czech Republic is mentioned in Smrčka et al. (2023). Craig (2022) links the importance of integrated messaging applications such as Discord with the rising numbers of digitally mediated courses. The Discord application allows educators and students to readily communicate learning experiences within asynchronous and synchronous environments by sending messages, images, links, audio, and video. Craig (2022) conducted a systematic review to understand the advantages and disadvantages of using the Discord application in higher education courses. The paper summarises the findings of eight empirical studies in the field of global higher education. Benefits of using Discord included ease of access, user-friendliness, useful communication and interaction, and increased social presence leading to enhanced student learning outcomes. Challenges included the increased potential for distraction and technology issues, both of which can inhibit engagement. (Craig, 2022).

Another point widely discussed by researchers is the fact that the shift in the teaching and learning landscape from conventional classes to e-learning was called for by the covid-19 pandemic. The online learning and distance learning platforms that are massively adopted due to this shift are especially MS Teams, Zoom US, and Google Classroom. Numerous papers comment on the fact that the aforementioned require a monetary subscription to unlock the platform's full potential, which proved detrimental to its accessibility in education during the pandemic, i.e., not all students and/or educational institutions had the available means. Uong et al. (2022) seek to affirm the capability of Discord as an alternative online learning platform that is not only efficient in its own right but also comes at no expense. In their experiment, a group of English teachers who had been teaching online via various free platforms were offered to switch to Discord for a fixed amount of time. They received instructions and support from the research team concerning the platform along the way and were asked to participate in a survey afterward. With the use of SPSS for statistical data analysis, Uong et al. pointed out that Discord achieved a high compatibility level for both parties in use, namely the teachers and the students. (Uong et al., 2022)

3.2 Slack

Slack is a modern communication platform for teams that is seeing wide and rapid adoption by software development teams. Not only does Slack facilitate team messaging and archiving, it also supports a wide range of integrations with external services and specific integrations called *bots*. Lin et al. (2016) found that Slack and its integrations (bots) are playing an increasingly significant role in software development, replacing email in some cases and disrupting software development processes. To understand how Slack impacts development team dynamics, they designed an exploratory study to investigate how developers use Slack and how they benefit from it. The paper finds that developers use Slack for personal, team-wide and community-wide purposes. The research also reveals that developers use and create diverse integrations (bots) to support their work. The study by Lin et al. (2016) was viewed by the authors as an initial step towards understanding the role of Slack in supporting software engineering.

Johnson (2018) characterizes slack as a cloud-based digital workspace and information management system used to manage productivity and improve team efficiency. The author mentions a survey of Slack administrators which found, for example, that 32% of respondents said that Slack had increased their productivity, reducing internal email by 48.6% and meetings by 25.1%. Further, 79% of respondents felt that Slack helped to improve the culture of their teams, with 88.6% of administrators indicating they felt more connected to their teams. In terms of information management, 80.4% of respondents cited improved transparency within the team environment, while 62.4% of survey respondents believed that Slack made it easier for them to locate information (Slack Survey Results, 2017, in Johnson, 2018).

Focusing on the free version of the product, Ferreira et al. (2021) review Slack as a communication platform. Among the many useful features of Slack, they point out those related to accessibility, streamlined communication, content organization, and platform integration. Slack is found broadly accessible, in that members can access their workspaces via the web, a desktop plugin, or a mobile application, and compared to other products, it was the least likely to be blocked by an institutional firewall. The paper lists further benefits of the platform. They state that Slack provides members with a number of options to organise content. Initially, this is done by channel, and more granularly via posts and cloud-based document storage. The

platform enables streamlined communication that goes beyond email. It enables both broad communication via real-time chat and direct, private messaging. Slack also archives all content posted to public domains (i.e., not direct message), making it easily searchable, barring limitations described below. Finally, Slack integrates with hundreds of native and external applications, acting as a central location for content from project-related platforms such as Google Drive, Trello and SurveyMonkey. (Ferreira et al., 2021)

In the experimental part of their paper, Ferreira et al. (2021) were testing the accessibility of Slack by all team members, including those from organizations with various levels of security. Their team had varied access with HipChat and Glip, which were said to offer features similar to Slack's. Their results showed that team members at academic institutions were able to seamlessly create accounts with HipChat and Glip, but users at hospital libraries were not always successful due to firewalls. Of HipChat, Glip, and Slack, Slack was the only tool that was accessible to all team members. (Ferreira et al., 2021)

3.3 Skype

Until recently, Skype was an Internet communications platform that allowed users to connect via voice calls and video calls, and also provided a messaging service. Launched in 2003, it used VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) technology and attracted hundreds of millions of users worldwide who had access to its basic features for free. For those looking for additional features such as landline calling or enhanced communication options, Skype offered a premium version at a reasonable price. The platform was particularly popular among individuals for keeping in touch with family and friends and among businesses for conducting meetings remotely.

Microsoft discontinued Skype as of 5 May 2025. This affected both free and paid users. Skype users can now switch to Microsoft Teams, where many of the same features are available. (Lewis, 2016)

3.4 Microsoft Teams

One of the market leaders, powered by its connection to the Microsoft 365 suite, the cloud-based Microsoft Teams collaboration platform has attracted the attention of researchers. As e.g. Schumann (2020) states, its potential is driven, among other things, by the fact that today's organizations can utilize such a platform when they link work across organizational units in the form of shared projects, leveraging specialized knowledge from different areas of the organization to meet specific quality criteria within a defined timeframe and at a set cost. Project managers are integral to success and often act as knowledge centers both within projects and in relation to the rest of the organization, even over time. For that reason, they are increasingly using technology to support knowledge sharing and to promote digitalisation in their daily work, often considering aspects of remote working. In the view of project managers in their chosen research setting, such technology largely enables knowledge sharing activities in everyday work, both presenting new opportunities for more effective implementation and leading to additional challenges. (Schumann, 2020)

Schumann finds that the introduction or increased use of technology seems to change not only the way knowledge is shared, but also the way individuals work with respect to what knowledge, when and how they share. However, whether an individual project manager perceives such a change as positive or negative depends on a number of factors, such as technical proficiency, length of use, and personal preferences regarding structure and organization of work. Nevertheless, the technology supports the daily knowledge sharing of project managers to the extent that all those who have fully migrated to the technology report using it daily and in a range of knowledge sharing activities. (Schumann, 2020)

4. Results

4.1 Methodology

At the end of 2024, a survey was conducted on the use of online communication platforms in Czech companies. The survey was conducted by students of the College of Polytechnics Jihlava as part of their study activities under the supervision of the authors of this paper. The survey was carried out through contact persons at companies with which the students cooperate (as part of student practical placements or temporary jobs) or on the basis of personal connections. This approach was chosen to ensure access to relevant respondents and to obtain practical data from the real business environment. The survey method allowed for the rapid collection of information from a diverse range of companies, but due to the non-probability sampling of respondents, the results cannot be generalized to the entire group of companies in the Czech Republic.

The questionnaire was distributed electronically and contained questions focused on the types of online communication systems used, the frequency of their use, perceived advantages and disadvantages, and basic company characteristics (size, industry). It combined multiple-choice questions for quantitative data collection (e.g., software prevalence, usage frequency) with open-ended questions to capture qualitative insights into the reasoning behind user satisfaction and criticism. A total of 432 completed questionnaires were obtained, leaving 363 valid respondents after removing duplicate and incomplete responses. Respondents represented companies of various sizes (from small businesses with less than 10 employees to large companies with more than 250 employees) and industries, primarily in the information technology, manufacturing and services sectors.

Data was analysed using descriptive statistics, including calculation of frequencies and percentages.

4.2 Findings

The results are presented in graphs and tables that illustrate the representation of companies by size, industry, and level of use of the online communication software. The chart below shows the representation of companies by number of employees.

Table 1: Representation of companies by number of employees

Company size	Number of companies
Up to 5 employees	60
5 to 10 employees	45
11 to 25 employees	40
26 to 50 employees	45
51 to 100 employees	48
100 or more employees	125
Total	363

Table 2: Use of online communication software in companies by number of employees

Company size	Yes	No	Not found	Number of companies
Up to 5 employees	36	24		60
5 to 10 employees	34	11		45
11 to 25 employees	28	12		40
26 to 50 employees	31	14		45
51 to 100 employees	40	8		48
100 or more employees	112	10	3	125
Total	281	79	3	363

Approximately 77% of companies reported using communication software. Four per cent of companies use multiple communications software simultaneously. *Figure 1* shows that MS Teams software was the most common, with 54% of companies using it. The next most popular tools were Discord and Skype, used by 19% and 13% of companies respectively.

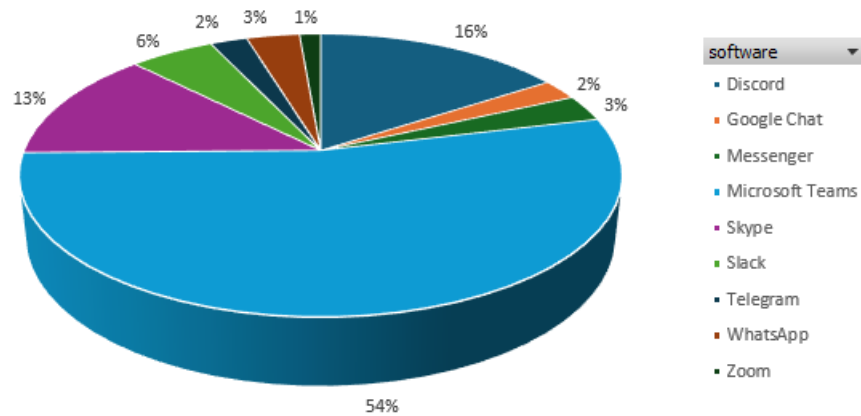


Figure 1: Share of communication software types in all companies

The results for communications software types represented in companies with over 100 employees show a slightly different situation, with MS Teams being used by 71% of these companies (see Figure 2).

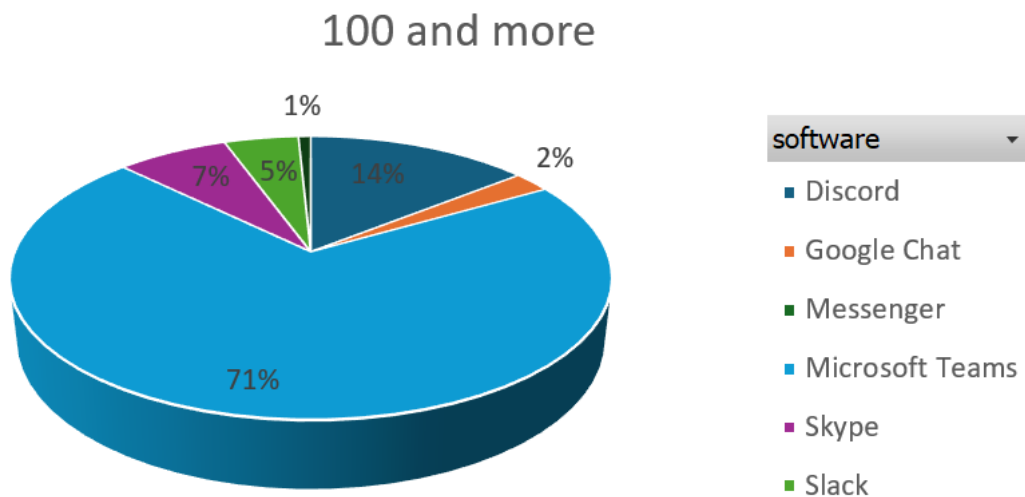


Figure 2: Share of communication software types in companies with 100 or more employees

In the segment of companies with up to 100 employees (see Figure 3), MS Teams was present in 41% of the companies.

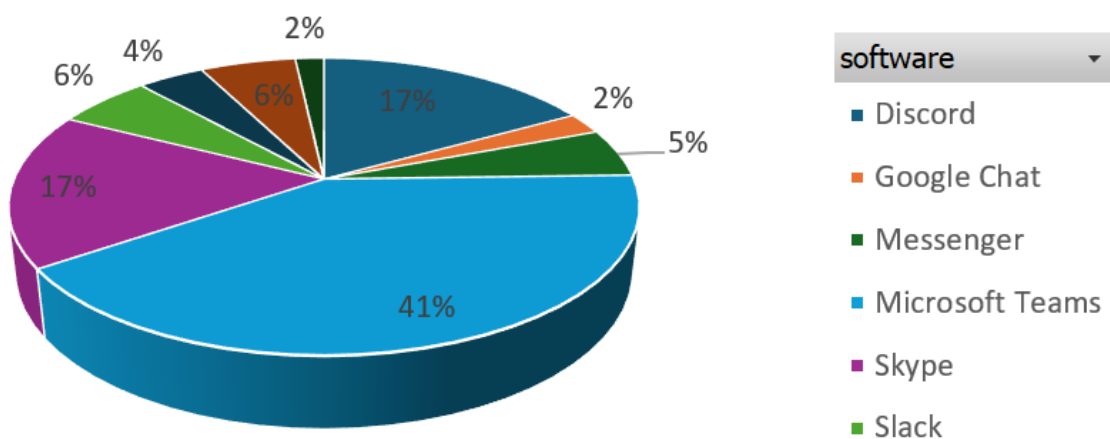


Figure 3: Share of communication software in companies with less than 100 employees

Evaluation of the individual relevant communication software types based on the questionnaire results

Discord

According to the respondents, the advantages of Discord software include: efficient communication, intuitive control, wide accessibility, real-time communication, video conferencing, screen sharing, integration with other tools, division into channels and servers, teamwork organisation, speed, clarity, stability and the existence of a free version. Disadvantages include limited integration with enterprise software, technical challenges in connecting to video calls, security and privacy risks, low speed, hardware intensity, small upload size, and limited image upload. Furthermore, some users rate the interface as unclear and criticize the impersonality of the communication.

Skype

The advantages of the software include ease of use, ease of control, suitability for beginners, free version existence and available free features, the fact that Skype works on multiple devices, provides group video calls, screen sharing, reliability and security, and calendar integration. Respondents consider the drawbacks to be low video and audio quality, frequent connectivity issues, limited features in the free version, outdated interface and technology, low clarity for larger teams, high connection and data requirements, and lack of advanced teamwork features.

Slack

Benefits of the software include fast real-time communication, integration with other tools and applications, organization into channels and private messages, file sharing and history search, multi-platform functionality, security and clarity, flexibility and customization to meet team needs, and a pleasant and simple environment.

Disadvantages of the software include higher price for advanced features, limited features in the free version, information and notification overload, difficult training for new users, limits to suitability for large teams without a paid version, and limited storage space.

MS Teams

Benefits include Microsoft 365/Office 365 integration, fast and efficient real-time communication, group calls, video conferencing and screen sharing, organization into channels, clarity and ease of use, real-time document collaboration, file sharing and message history, security, encryption, stability, multi-platform availability (PC, mobile phone), and suitability for hybrid work and large teams. Respondents consider the disadvantages to be high performance and connectivity requirements, frequent technical problems and outages, overwhelm with information and notifications, complexity for new users, need for training, limited features in the free version, impersonal communication, loss of social connections, compatibility and stability issues, higher price and licensing costs, low visibility with multiple teams and channels, security and privacy concerns.

In addition to the four most used online software types, companies also use Google Chat, Messenger, Telegram, WhatsApp and Zoom.

5. Discussion

The results of our survey, conducted in late 2024, indicate a high adoption rate of online communication software among Czech companies, with 77% of respondents confirming their use. This widespread adoption, significantly accelerated by the covid-19 pandemic, highlights the transition towards digitally mediated collaboration. The central finding of our research is the clear dominance of Microsoft Teams, which is utilized by 54% of all surveyed companies. The prevalence of MS Teams becomes even more pronounced when analyzed by company size, reaching 71% in organizations with over 100 employees, compared to 41% in smaller enterprises. This finding strongly aligns with the information processing theory proposed by Galbraith. Large organizations inherently face greater task uncertainty and complexity, thus requiring a higher capacity for information processing to maintain performance. MS Teams, with its deep integration into the Microsoft 365 ecosystem, serves as a powerful vertical information system that enhances this capacity. The platform facilitates lateral relations through cross-departmental channels and real-time document collaboration, directly addressing Galbraith's strategies for managing organizational complexity. The advantages reported by users—such as integration with other tools, real-time collaboration, and security—are precisely the features that enable large organizations to streamline information flow and improve coordination. The reported disadvantages, such as higher costs and the need for training, represent a trade-off that large enterprises are evidently willing to make for these advanced capabilities.

In contrast, smaller companies exhibit a more diverse preference in communication tools. The lower market share of MS Teams (41%) in this segment suggests that factors like cost, ease of use, and less complex integration needs play a more significant role. This explains the notable presence of platforms like Discord (16%) and Slack (6% overall). Discord's appeal lies in its robust free version and intuitive interface, making it an accessible option for teams with limited budgets. However, its limited integration with corporate software and perceived security risks makes it less suitable for larger, more structured organizations. Similarly, while Slack is praised for its flexibility and user-friendly environment, its advanced features are locked behind a paywall, posing a barrier for some smaller businesses.

5.1 Requirements for Online Software

Based on the results of the questionnaire survey, we can define the basic requirements for online communication software. It must enable effective real-time communication, including the rapid sharing of messages, files and information between team members. It should support video conferencing and screen sharing to enable remote meetings and presentations. Operation must be intuitive and simple so that even beginners can use it easily without extensive training. The tool should be available for free or at low cost, ideally with a functional free version. It must be multiplatform, i.e., available on computers, mobile phones and tablets. Integration with other tools such as calendars, email clients or office applications (e.g., Microsoft 365) is required. It should allow communication to be organised into channels or teams, providing clarity and structure. Security and stability are key, including data encryption and reliable connectivity. The tool should support real-time collaboration on documents, which increases the efficiency of teamwork.

Respondents consider the limited possibilities of integration with company systems to be a disadvantage of online software. For new users, the environment tends to be complex and challenging to master, requiring training. Another disadvantage is the requirement for a high-performance device and a stable Internet connection, which can be a problem when working remotely. Being overwhelmed by notifications and information can reduce concentration and productivity. Security risks and limited customisation options are additional weaknesses, especially in corporate environments. In addition, the higher price of premium versions can be a barrier for smaller teams or organisations.

6. Conclusion

The results of the survey confirm that communication software plays a key role in corporate communication across different sizes of companies in the Czech Republic. The majority of companies actively use communication software, with MS Teams having the largest presence, used by almost half of the companies surveyed.

At the same time, larger companies with more than 100 employees were found to have even higher levels of use of this software, indicating its importance for internal coordination and communication. Although the general trend is that the larger the company, the more often it uses communication software, this tendency is slightly contradicted by smaller companies with 5 to 10 employees.

The findings have both practical and theoretical implications. For managers, this research provides a data-driven overview of the current software landscape in the Czech Republic, which can inform their strategic decisions when selecting or implementing communication platforms. For educators, the study underscores the importance of incorporating practical training on modern communication and collaboration tools into university curricula for management and ICT courses. From a theoretical perspective, our results empirically validate Jay Galbraith's information processing view of organization design, demonstrating its continued relevance in the age of digital transformation. The observed patterns show how organizations invest in information processing capacity to manage complexity, just as the theory predicts. Another limitation naturally lies in the fact that the data represents a snapshot from late 2024 and is geographically confined to the Czech Republic. Furthermore, the findings are based on self-reported data from the respondents.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that the adoption of communication software directly reflects organizational needs, aligning with Galbraith's information processing theory discussed earlier. For large companies, facing greater complexity and uncertainty, these tools are a strategic necessity to enhance information processing capacity and maintain performance. In contrast, the adoption in smaller companies is more directly influenced by specific operational factors, cost-effectiveness, and ease of use, reflecting a different scale of organizational and communication challenges. These findings can serve as a basis for further research on the effectiveness of communication platforms in different types of businesses.

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AI declaration: No AI tools were used for the creation of the paper contents. DeepL was used for assistance in proofreading and improving the clarity of the English language.

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