

SLACK RESEARCH



From searching to finding: The new era of AI-powered enterprise knowledge



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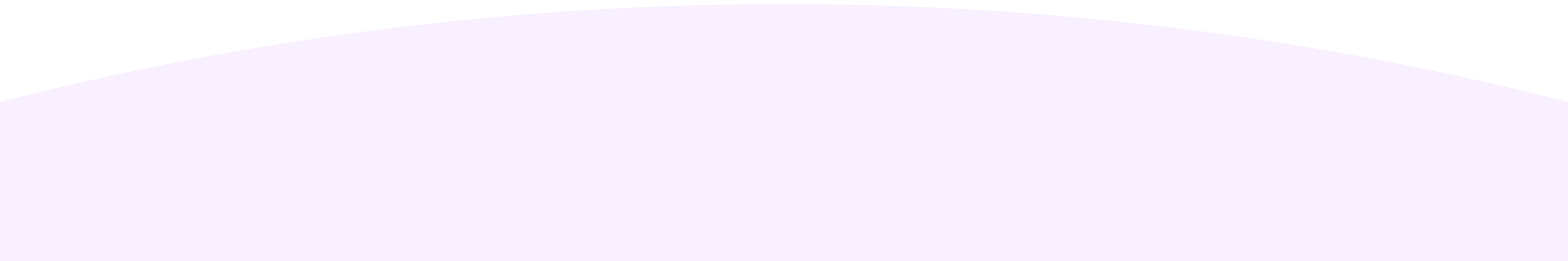
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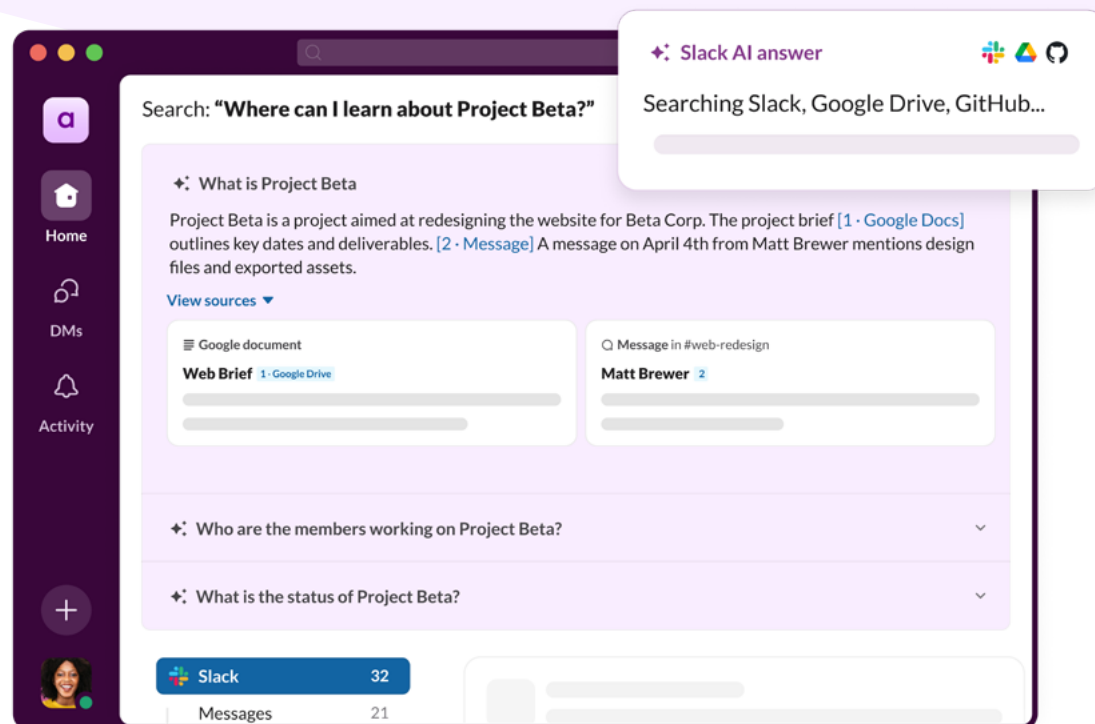
Introduction: The search problem at work

Finding information at work shouldn't be the hard part of the job. But for most teams, it is. The average desk worker spends [a third of their day on low-value tasks](#), whether that's searching for answers, digging through documents, or pinging teammates for links they've already seen before. This is frustrating, slows down decisions, breaks focus, and drains productivity.

And it's getting worse. As more tools, files, and conversations spread across different systems, the more disconnected your company knowledge becomes. Search tools haven't kept up.

Basic keyword search means you have to know the right terms, where to look, and what you're even looking for. That's a big ask when your team just wants to get work done.

This is where [enterprise search in Slack](#) changes everything. Instead of making you go find information, it brings the right knowledge to you – securely, instantly, and in the flow of your work.



“Our AI-powered enterprise search understands your tasks, goals, and context. This allows it to personalize and present the relevant information to you based on your role and projects. The more employees talk and share with each other, the smarter your entire company becomes.”

PETER DOOLAN,
CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER, SLACK

01

One place to find everything you need

Enterprise search helps you find what you need, across all your tools, teams, and conversations. Messages, files, and app data are all connected in one place, so you can ask a question and get an answer without switching context or chasing links.

Think of it as your company's knowledge, all searchable from a single bar.

How it works

Slack's enterprise search performs real-time queries across your connected tools, delivering the most current information directly from the source systems. This method respects permissions: You only see what you are allowed to see, based on your existing access in each system.

Why it matters

When knowledge lives in separate apps and teams, finding what you need takes longer. That slows down decisions, leads to duplicated effort, and drains focus.

Enterprise search helps by:

- Cutting down on time spent looking for answers
- Making it easier to act quickly with the right information
- Giving people the confidence to move forward without second-guessing

The more connected your knowledge is, the faster your team can move.

“Enterprise search in Slack has been a game changer. Its ability to pull information from multiple sources has helped me quickly find what I need. At one point, I had been searching everywhere for a specific demo video, and after I connected to Google Drive in Slack's enterprise search I found it immediately – as well as the thread where I needed to share the demo. Being able to quickly surface that video, and stay grounded in the place I needed to take action, saved me lots of time and context switching.”

NEIL BRADY,
DIRECTOR, PRODUCT LINE, SALESFORCE

02

Built to search like you work

Slack was built for this. From day one, S.L.A.C.K. stood for “Searchable Log of All Communication and Knowledge.” The idea was simple: If every conversation is searchable, knowledge becomes easier to find and reuse.

As teams adopted more apps and created more data, Slack’s search grew with it. What started as basic keyword search is now a full enterprise search experience that understands questions, connects systems, and keeps everything secure.

The evolution

Slack search has gone from simple word matching to understanding the intent behind your question. With enterprise search, you can ask a natural-language question like “What’s the status of the Acme project?” and get real-time results from conversations, files, and connected apps. This gives you the latest information from the source systems, all without switching context.

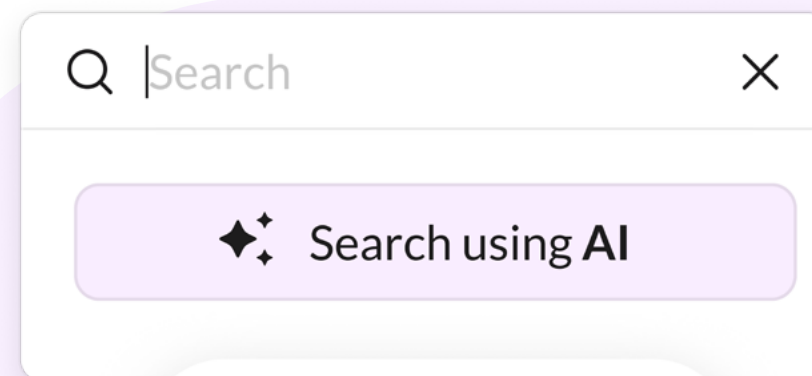
What Slack search can do today

- Search across messages, channels, files, third-party apps, and systems like Salesforce or Drive.
- Return live results without storing external data. The data stays in the source system.
- Show only the information each user has permission to access, based on existing roles and systems.

Slack brings all this into one interface, so you can stay focused, stay secure, and get what you need without leaving your workspace.

“By connecting all your systems – from Google Drive to GitHub, from Asana to Salesforce – Slack becomes a single, intelligent gateway to your organization’s collective knowledge,” said Peter Doolan, Chief Customer Officer at Slack. “Slack brings everything to you, personalized to your role, your projects, and your specific goals.

[The worker is at the center](#), and everything else revolves around your needs and your workflow.”



03

Smarter questions, better answers

Search used to mean thinking of the right keywords and hoping for the best. AI changes that. In Slack, you can ask questions the way you would ask a teammate. The system understands what you type *and* what you mean.

Smarter ways to ask

AI-powered search uses natural language processing, so you can ask things like:

- “What’s our latest plan for Q3?”
- “Where is the outage postmortem?”
- “Which pull requests shipped last week?”

There’s no need to guess file names or scroll through old threads. You ask, Slack gets it.

Smarter ways to understand

AI doesn’t just match words. It recognizes what you’re trying to do. It can tell the difference between someone looking for a document and someone trying to learn about a topic.

It also considers context. Slack search adapts to your role, your recent work, and the way your team communicates. Over time, the results get more relevant.

Smarter ways to respond

Instead of a long list of links, AI can summarize the most important points from multiple sources. You get one clear answer, drawn from messages, files, and connected tools.

Slack uses a method called retrieval-augmented generation (RAG). When you search, it looks across your systems in real time, gathers the most useful content, sends it to a language model to generate a response, and returns that answer to you. Then it discards that data. Nothing is stored. Only what you’re allowed to see is used.

“What makes Slack truly exceptional is that it turns raw data into insights employees can use,” said Doolan. “This is what I call ‘enterprise wisdom’: where the knowledge you need for your job is delivered to you in a way that makes it effortless to understand exactly what to do with it.”

Search feels faster, sharper, and more like a conversation.

“We need a single pane of glass for all our data sources across our different systems. Enterprise search in Slack delivers exactly that. With the help of AI, we can surface all the right information directly in front of our users.

HC MADSEN,
SENIOR IT SYSTEMS ENGINEER, EASYPARK GROUP

Less hunting, more doing

Enterprise search undoubtedly saves time. But it also changes how teams work together, make decisions, and stay focused.

Less switching, more finding

With Slack, you don't need to leave your workspace to get answers. Whether the information lives in a doc, a message, or a third-party app, you can find it without opening a new tab or breaking your flow.

Collaboration that builds on shared knowledge

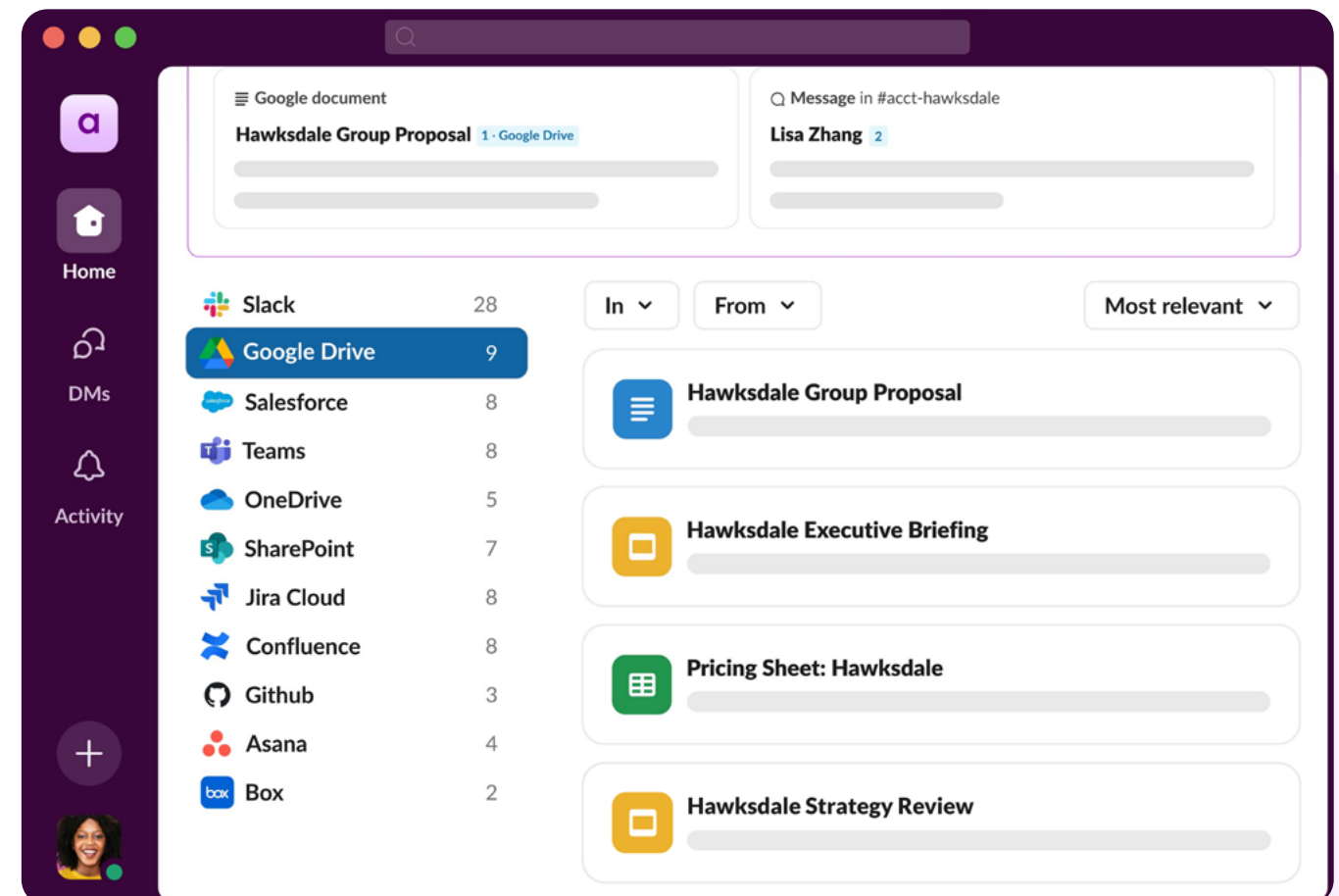
Search happens where conversations happen. That means it's easy to share what you find, bring others into the context, and keep work moving forward. When everyone has access to the same information, collaboration improves naturally.

Faster decisions with better information

The more connected your knowledge is, the quicker your team can act. Instead of waiting on replies or piecing together scattered info, you get a complete view in one place. That makes for more confident, informed decisions.

More time for the work that matters

When people aren't spending hours looking for answers, they can focus on work that drives real progress. Enterprise search pinpoints the most relevant information so your team can stay on task and get more done.



05

Smart search that stays secure

Enterprise search only works if it protects your data. That's why Slack is built to keep information secure while making it easier to access.

Respecting permissions

Search results in Slack follow the same rules as the systems they come from. If you don't have access in the source system, you won't see it in Slack. No shortcuts, no leaks.

Real-time queries, no stored data

When you search across external apps, Slack queries those systems live. That means your data stays where it is. Nothing is copied or stored. You get the freshest results without compromising security.

Trusted by design

Slack's enterprise search follows strict enterprise-grade standards for security and compliance. It does not use customer data to train models. The system is designed to deliver useful results without exposing sensitive content.

You get smart, AI-powered answers, with your privacy and compliance needs fully respected.

How to make enterprise search work for your team

01 Start with real needs

Look at where your teams spend the most time looking for information. Focus on high-impact use cases—like sales reps checking customer histories, or product teams tracking project updates.

02 Map your sources

Identify which systems hold your most valuable knowledge. Prioritize the ones used most often. Connecting the right tools first makes search immediately useful.

03 Help people ask better questions

Show teams how to use natural language search. Instead of hunting for file names, they can ask real questions and get real answers. A little training goes a long way.

04 Make search part of the culture

Encourage teams to search first before asking around. When enterprise search becomes the default way to find answers, knowledge starts flowing faster across the company.

06

Where search is headed next

Enterprise search is just the beginning. As AI gets smarter, the way we work with knowledge is shifting from search-and-retrieve to ask-and-act.

Search agents that do more

You can already give Agentforce agents access to enterprise search. That means they can find what you need and bring it into your conversations. From there, they can help move work forward – flagging risks, generating summaries, or kicking off tasks.

Continuous improvements

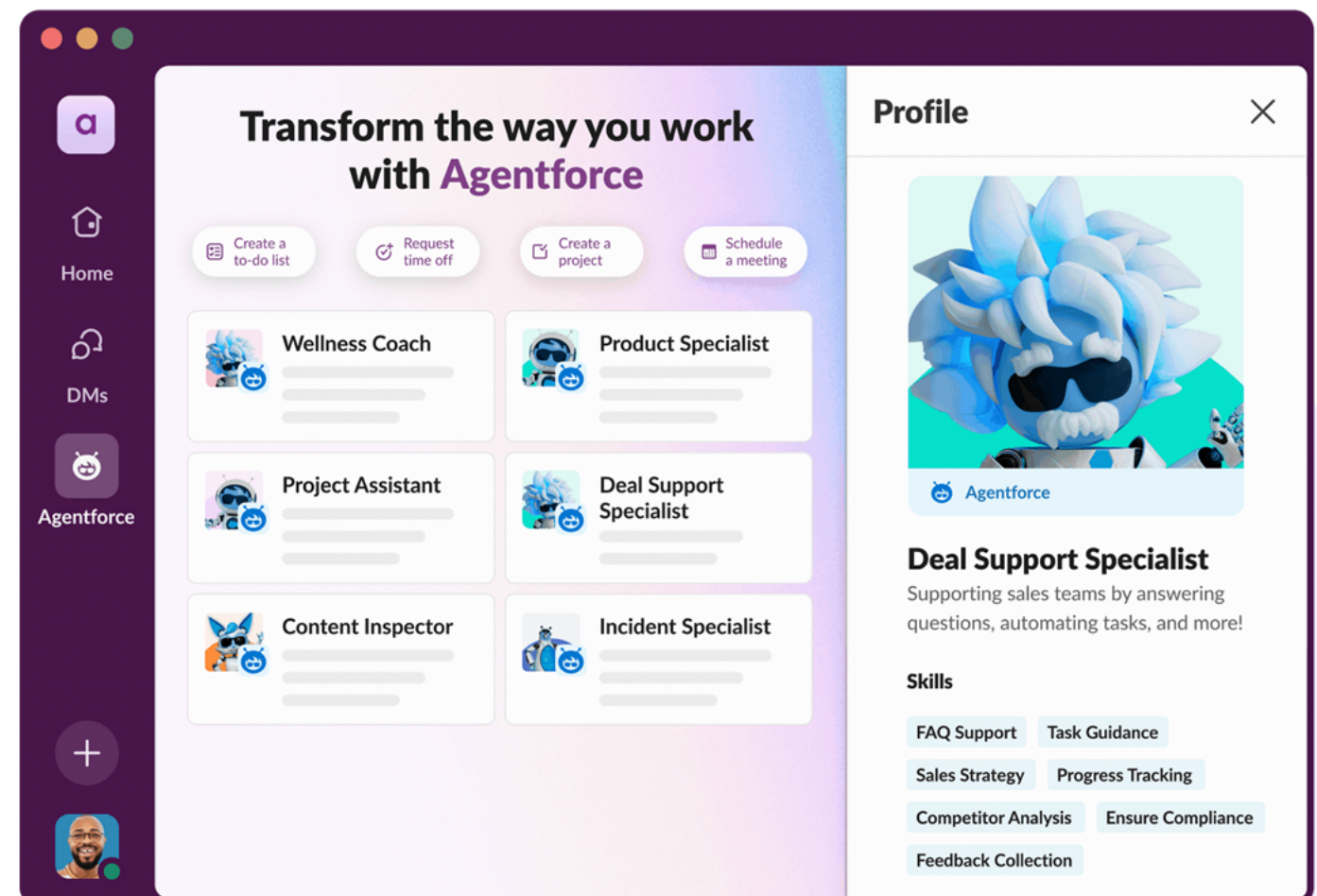
Slack's search experience gets better over time. Feedback loops, internal testing, and real-world use help refine how results are ranked and returned. The system adapts based on what people actually need and use.

A more conversational way to work

The long-term vision is simple: you ask a question in Slack, and you get a useful, trustworthy answer. No switching apps. No searching tabs. Just the knowledge you need, right where you're working.

“Here's my challenge: Don't wait for answers. Let Slack's enterprise search deliver them directly to you.”

PETER DOOLAN,
CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER, SLACK



Conclusion: Search that fits the way your team works

The way we work has changed. We move faster, use more tools, and rely on more information than ever before. Finding the right knowledge shouldn't slow us down.

Enterprise search in Slack brings that knowledge to your fingertips. It connects conversations, tools, and files in one place. It understands your questions and gives you the right answers, right when you need them. This isn't just better search. It's a better way to work.

When knowledge is easy to find, decisions are faster, collaboration is smoother, and teams can stay focused on what matters.

In Slack, enterprise search isn't a separate step. It's built into the way work gets done.





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