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Yenta Lenthall



uploaded this image: **Batch 42 is ready for tasting in the new office!**





PJ Duncan 11:11 AM

What happened to batch 41?



Matthew Roth 11:30 AM

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Slack launches threaded messaging to take conversations off to the side

Matthew Lynley 10:00 AM PST · January 18, 2017

Slack has spent most of its life as a dead-simple workplace communications tool, with small changes happening here or there. But to keep things dead simple means that you have to be very careful when you decide to make any big changes — even if it's something users have wanted for a long time.

Today, Slack is finally starting to roll out one of those major changes in threaded comments. With threads, users can pop out of the chaos of an ongoing chat and pin bits of conversations off to the side that they can address on a more regular basis. Users can jump in and out of their existing threads much like they do channels and direct messages, and when they want to share new comments back into a chat stream, they can do so by hitting a small checkbox at the bottom of their new message.

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Butterkup, Inc. ▾
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3 new replies

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office
PJ Duncan and you

PJ Duncan 11:11 AM
What happened to batch 41?

Pablo Bailey 11:48 AM
@pj Needed more nutmeg. See [#taste-notes](#).

Add a reply 😊

taste-notes
Bob Loblaw, Yenta Lenthall, and 10 others

Bob Loblaw 16 hours ago
👉 Batch 41 is ready for feedback!

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Yenta Lenthall 16 hours ago
Is that cardamom? Needs more nutmeg either way.

Noreen Zamboni 16 hours ago
Ditto, let's do 2 min less + more nutmeg.

Add a reply 😊

ops
Hugh Legrenouille, Yenta Lenthall, and Noreen Zamboni

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The threads belong in what Slack calls the flexpane, which is a panel that pops out on the right side of your screen that has additional tools and resources for your existing rooms and direct messages. Starting a thread is as simple as clicking on a button next to a message in a room, much like you would add a reaction, and then it peels off into a new conversation within the flexpane.

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message,” Slack VP of product April Underwood said. “Threads is an example of where we’ve been hearing this demand for customers, and felt the need to have sidebar conversations. But it was nontrivial and non-obvious on how to get it there. It’s one of our values as a company — not just build products, but everything we do we value our craft.”

Threads has been a long-demanded feature for Slack, as it makes it even more competitive with existing enterprise collaboration tools like Convo or others that are already trying to swat Slack away. With Threads — even though it’s been in development for more than a year — Slack is once again signaling that it intends to be a complete suite of tools for workforces rather than just a simple and easy-to-use messaging client.

There haven’t been many seismic changes in Slack since it launched. That’s part of what’s charmed Silicon Valley and made it one of the hottest startups around today, and propelled it to a \$3.8 billion valuation [when it raised \\$200 million in April last year](#). The last major change we saw was the addition of developer tools to build bots for the platform, which launched in tandem with Slack’s own investment fund to invest in those developers. Slack has since hit 1.25 million paying members.



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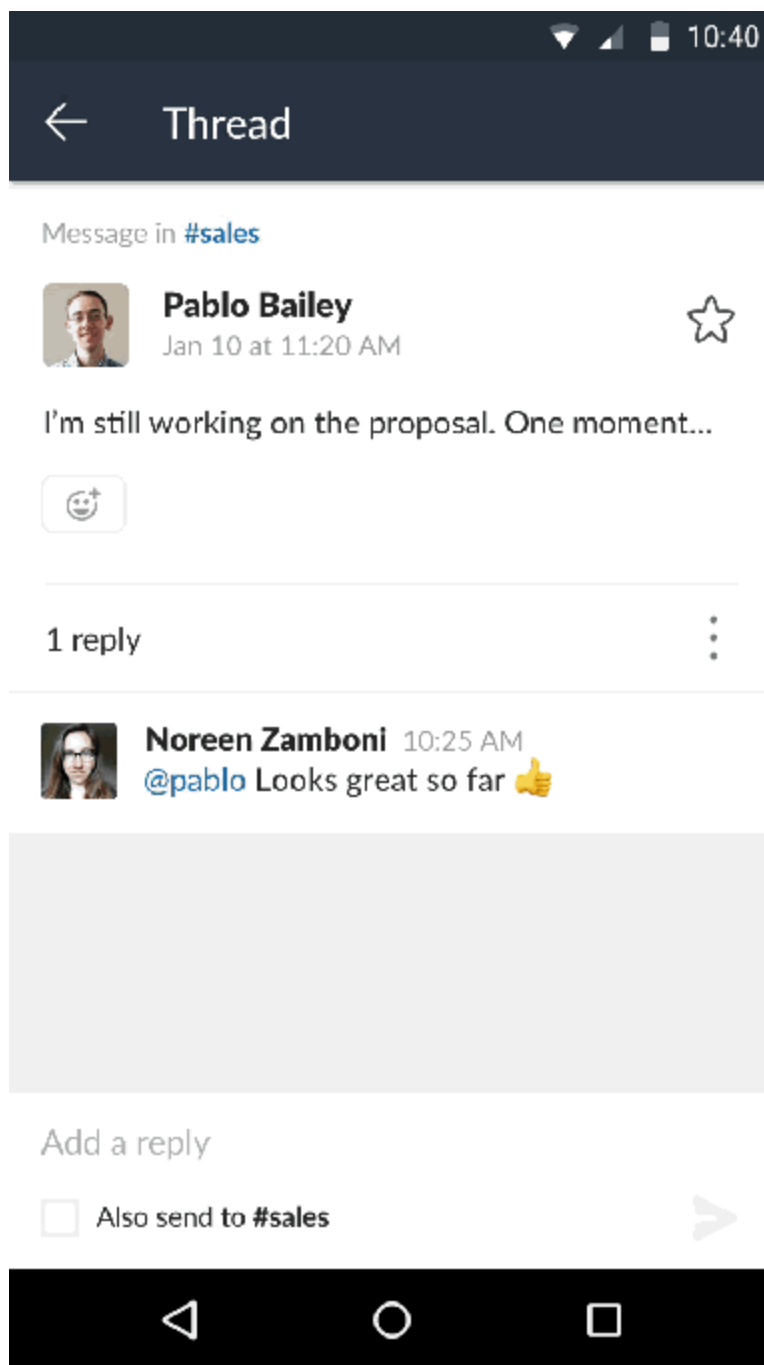
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But since taking off like a rocket ship — at least, in Silicon Valley — Slack's growth has started to stall a little bit. That's really to be expected, as startups can't expect to continue tripling in size and whatnot once they start to reach millions of users. So it has to figure out new ways to grow, which could involve expanding into new markets, investing into marketing and customer acquisition or building new products that makes it have a broader appeal than sitting in a niche within Silicon Valley.

And being able to have those kinds of conversations away from the noise of a full chat may end up giving Slack that additional use case it needs to hold onto customers as they continue to get larger and larger. Slack core works great for small teams, but as a company gets bigger your pane might rapidly fill up with tons of channels and private conversations, many of which might be just dumpsters for funny GIFs. Slack has to figure out how to cut out the noise while still maintaining that simplicity.

The same tools will be available on the mobile application. All of this is an attempt to essentially emulate the things we do in real life in the workplace, but find ways to seamlessly put them within an online service. The goal for Threads, however, is not to replace Slack proper, core product lead Paul Rosania said.

“Our expectation is not that threads we're gonna replace the message input,” Rosania said. “If that were the case we'd make the feature more prominent. Threads are really intended to solve use cases that are a little challenging. Either if you have a lot going on or want to structure conversations. There's an upper bound probably of usage where we think we'd go too far.”



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Still, for now, this is a product that's been tested within Slack and not within the broader population. Slack does seem quite willing to work with its users in order to make its tools work, and it's going to have to be ready if their users decide to revolt and push back against the new tool despite it being high up on the wish list. Slack has done its best to get the tool to as many people internally and within a closed network as it can, but in the end it's a broader user base that figures out the best use cases for all these tools.

"I don't think it's possible for us to read the tea leaves for how customers are gonna use those products, but we know what our customers are asking for," Underwood said.

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Matthew Lynley

Reporter

Matt Lynley was a reporter at TechCrunch covering elements of the AI industry.

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