



Bayer employees discover productivity and collaboration benefits using generative AI and Microsoft Copilot

Bayer has been committed to its purpose, “Science for a better life,” for more than a century and a half. As a leading company in life sciences, it understands the possibilities that emerging technologies bring. “We are very open to trying new technologies, such as Microsoft Copilot, to stay at the forefront of innovation. Our employees have more power to support farmers, help cure diseases, and see consumers healthier,” says Christoph Sieger, Vice President, Head of Global Digital Workplace at Bayer.

For many employees, including Lewandowski, Copilot reduces the overload of communications by summarizing emails and attachments, providing an initial draft of a message or content for a document, or expediting the process to search for data. As a result, it saves hundreds of hours that would be spent looking for information. Copilot also improves collaboration by making it easier to find out who is working on research projects worldwide.

“Last week I received an email with five documents attached. Each one had approximately 20 to 50 pages each. I asked Microsoft Copilot to give me a summary which saved me about 45 minutes of reading time,” Sieger explains.

“We have more than 700 use cases for generative AI; we are seeing a big impact. Copilot use cases are growing. In Microsoft 365, easily getting data from Excel files, creating a first draft in Word, or creating a PowerPoint presentation are some of the top examples.”

Sarah Lewandowski
Global Technology & Innovation Lead, Bayer

Bayer is experimenting with Microsoft Copilot across its Crop Science, Pharmaceutical, and Consumer Health divisions to understand its potential impact and value across functions. “We are seeing a lot of curiosity in our HR, R&D, IT, Procurement, and Marketing groups. Already, people are saying they are getting more productive every day,” says Sieger. Employees are getting better insights from meetings and quickly discovering documents, which makes collaboration simpler.

“We have more than 700 use cases for generative AI; we are seeing a big impact,” says Sarah Lewandowski, Global Technology & Innovation Lead at Bayer. “Copilot use cases are growing. In Microsoft 365, easily getting data from Excel files, creating a first draft in Word, or creating a PowerPoint presentation are some of the top examples.”

REALIZING THE VALUE OF COPILOT IN THREE AREAS

Lewandowski receives feedback from employees and can attest to the benefits she is experiencing with Copilot. “We are seeing meaningful impact in our daily lives. It makes a difference when we are able to find information faster or we are shown relevant content,” she says. “We are more agile; Microsoft Copilot is helping us to have the right information at our fingertips.”



SAVED DAYS OF SEARCH TIME WITH AI



SAVED HOURS OF READING WITH AI SUMMARIZATION



MORE THAN 700 USE CASES FOR GENERATIVE AI AND GROWING

Copilot is providing value in three main areas, according to Sieger. First is increased productivity. He notes that employees are now more productive answering emails, sorting messages, and reviewing documents. Second is collaboration. It's easier to find who is doing what on projects to be able to work collaboratively together. People can connect with each other to share and sort through ideas easily. Third is creativity. Copilot generates ideas and suggestions to start a first draft. The use cases continue to grow daily.

BETTER ACCESS TO DECADES OF RESEARCH KNOWLEDGE—QUICKLY

Bayer's Crop Science division developed a new way to manage research models for their work on identifying potential insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides to help farmers have their crops flourish. Every day, new data is added to the decades of existing research, creating difficulties for teams using these unstructured data sources recorded in slide decks or reports. The team faced several obstacles in the process of trying to identify information in the studies, find existing models, and know who was conducting what research, because of the overwhelming volume of information.

Working with Microsoft Teams engineering, Bayer developed the Model Store, a Copilot plugin, which leverages extensibility provided by the Teams platform to search for information using natural language, as well as PowerApps embedded in Teams, as the interface to the scientific data stored in Bayer's knowledge repository. The Model Store closes communication gaps between Bayer's data scientists and laboratory researchers, locates the source of the data faster and reduces the barriers to finding information.

"Technology is an essential part of what I'm doing. Most of our projects are a couple of decks or reports, and digging through these is a tedious task, because often what you need is a specific chemistry detail from a model. Understanding who knows what and getting that contact to help you solve a task can take up quite some time," says Florian Häse, Research Scientist at Bayer.

With Microsoft Copilot, researchers and data scientists can use a few key phrases to quickly locate studies and predictive models that can support them in their project challenges. Based on the experiences of Häse and Lewandowski, Copilot provides more than the relevant models; it identifies who is responsible for the research, making it easier to connect with the expert source on a specific topic. Ultimately, it helps the Crop Science division speed the laboratory processes to provide products to help farmers.

Häse reflects on the big challenges that Copilot is helping solve. In one example, a researcher in the United States was working on a project that would require a significant amount of time to complete. By using Copilot to investigate the Model Store, the researcher identified a predictive model developed by a researcher in Germany, preventing a duplicate model from being developed and saving two to three months of work. The researcher moved forward with better knowledge to solve the outstanding issues. By bridging time zones and research teams, Microsoft Copilot prevents potentially redundant work, which speeds up the time to get a product to farmers.

"Having Microsoft Copilot at my side to help me find information and point of contact immediately is incredibly helpful. You can now just use plain language, saying something like, 'I need a model for this specific experiment,' or, 'Is there something with this idea.' Previously, it could take days, if not weeks, to find the information," explains Häse. *"Microsoft Copilot immediately extracts the relevant models for a certain task and connects you to your colleagues in Microsoft Teams."*



EXTENDING USE OF COPILOT WITH GITHUB, ACCELERATING DEVELOPMENT

Bayer's IT department has piloted Microsoft Copilot with GitHub to developers to help them build their code knowledge and speed up their development process. "Developers are thrilled with a virtual assistant providing ideas on how to create the right code. For junior developers learning new languages, or someone who might not have recently used a language, it increases the speed of knowledge," says Lewandowski.

With innovation as a core strength at Bayer, the company is continually seeking new areas where Copilot will bring value. Part of the company's ethos is to look to trusted partners like Microsoft to help it continue to stay ahead with emerging technologies.

EMPLOYEES ASK FOR MICROSOFT COPILOT

Bayer sees employees, both technical and non-technical, coming together to passionately discuss how Copilot can help them have a big impact every day. Lewandowski says, “The first experience with Copilot sparks the imagination of what it can do, and people are sharing how it’s working for them. Demand is increasing as we continue to use it.”

Bayer employees are experiencing a greater potential to move faster, because Microsoft Copilot is eliminating mundane tasks and providing insights into the wide range of projects happening across the company. “Copilot gives our employees more power and more freedom to focus on our mission: “Health for all, hunger for none,” says Sieger.

Bayer discovers and generates new knowledge every day in a world that is changing at an unprecedented rate. It will continue to experiment with Microsoft Copilot as a tool that helps employees spend more time on developing innovative products and getting them to market faster to support farmers with their crops, help cure diseases, and enable consumers to be healthier.

