Introduction to Microsoft Flow



Agenda

- Microsoft Flow Fundamentals
- Creating and Testing Flows
- Using Control of Flow Actions
- Writing Flow Expressions
- Processing Data and Preparing Content



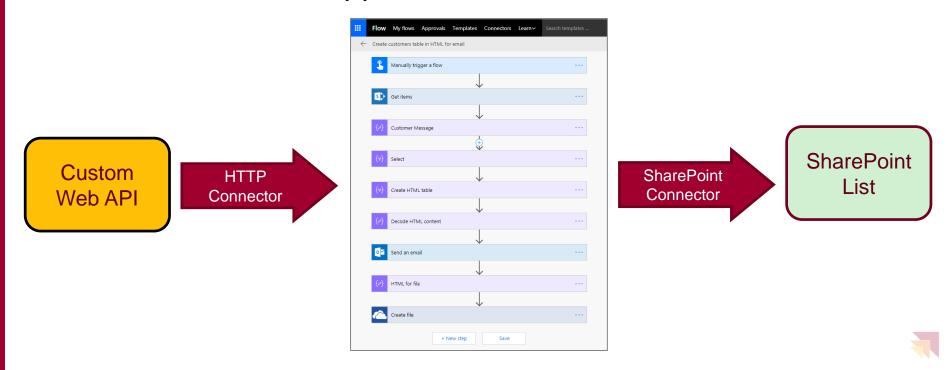
What is Flow?

- Service for automating workflows across other services
 - Designed by Microsoft for business users more than developers
- What can you do with Flow?
 - Get notifications
 - Copy files
 - Collect data
 - Automate approvals



Building Blocks of Flow

- Triggers events that start a flow
- Actions tasks and operation executed by flow
- Services sources and destinations for data
- Connectors wrappers to communicate with service APIs



Examples Services to Use with Flow

SharePoint Online

- Trigger a flow when a new item is added
- Trigger a flow when a new document is uploaded
- Add an action to create or update a list item

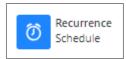
Twitter

- Trigger a flow when a tweet contains a specific hashtag
- Track tweet by sending email or write to SharePoint list
- Add an action to reply to a tweet



Flow Trigger Types

- Scheduled Flow Triggers
 - Runs periodically based on an interval



- Automated Flow Triggers
 - Runs when something happens







- On-demand Flow Triggers
 - Runs when a user clicks a button

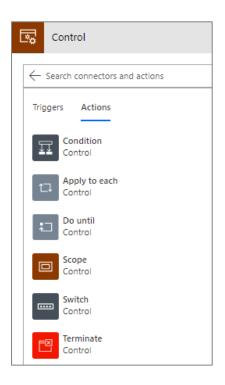


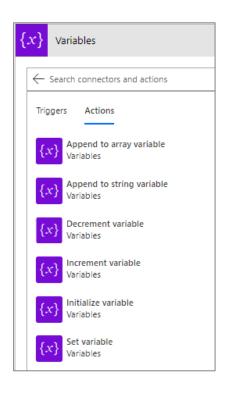


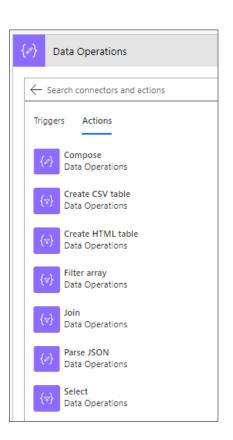


Core Action Categories

- Control: actions to provide control-of-flow
- Variables: actions to manage state within flow lifetime
- Data operations: action to process data & prepare content



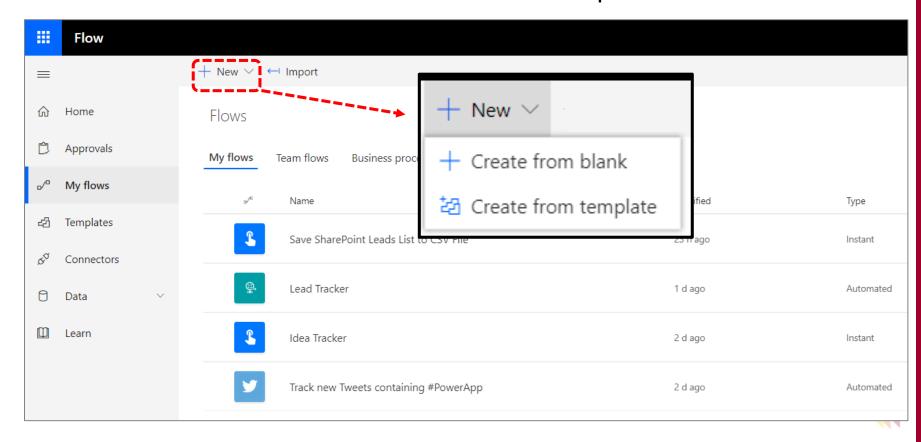






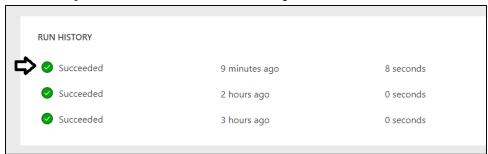
Creating and Managing Flows

- Flow user portal allows users to manage and edit flows
 - Accessible through https://flow.microsoft.com
 - Flow can be created from blank or from template

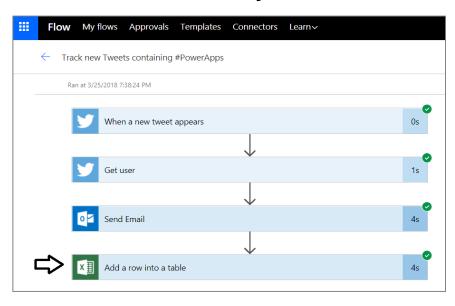


Run History

Flow provides history flows that have run



Provides read-only view of data for auditing & monitoring







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Flow Templates

- There are 100s of templates
 - Flow is built with pre-configured trigger and actions



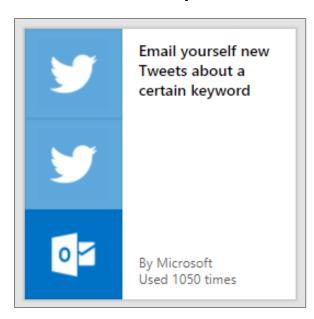


Creating a Flow from a Template

Use Create from template link



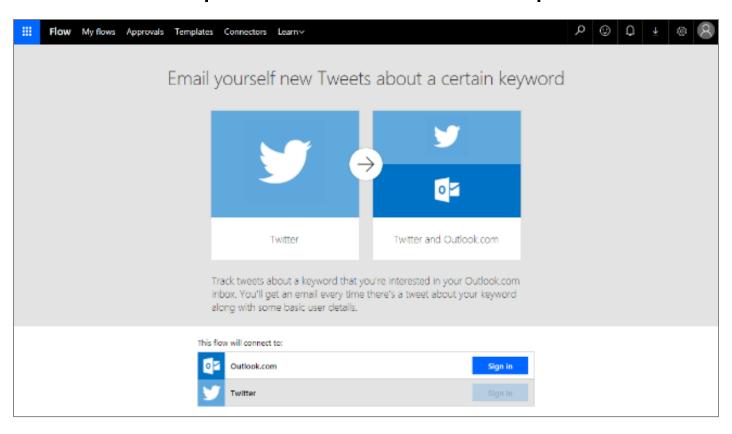
Select a template





Many Flow Templates Require Connections

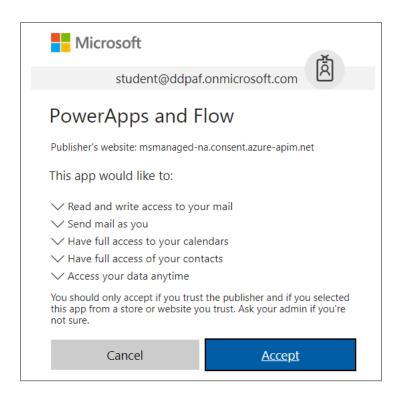
- This allows a flow to read and write data
 - Flow often requires user to authorize permissions





Authorizing an App to Connect to a Service

User must authorize app to use service

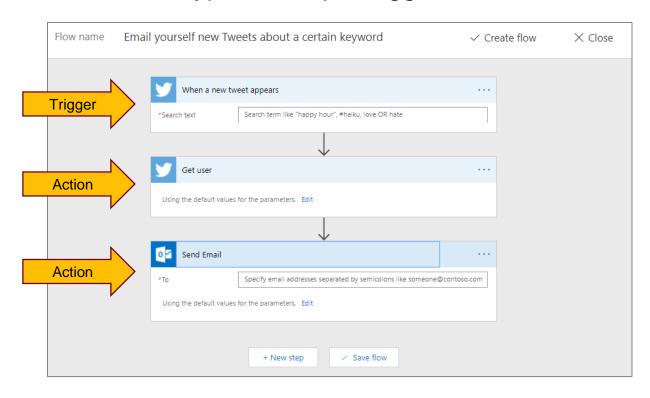






Working with the Flow Designer

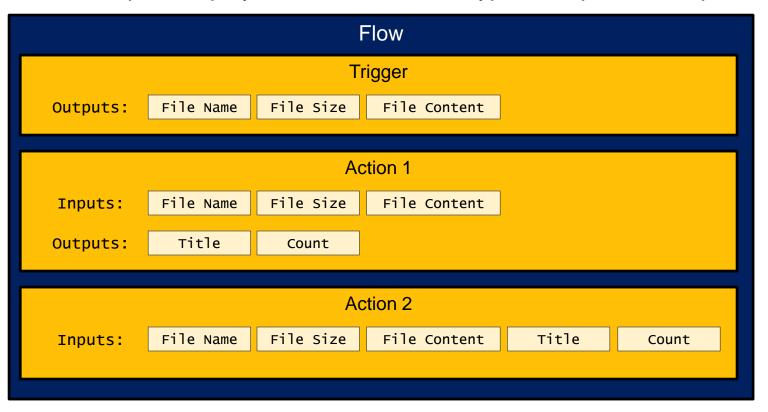
- Flow Designer provides UI for building flows
 - Somewhat similar to SharePoint Designer workflow designer
 - You build flows by adding and configuring steps
 - There are 3 types of steps: triggers, actions or conditions





Data Automatically Flows from Step to Step

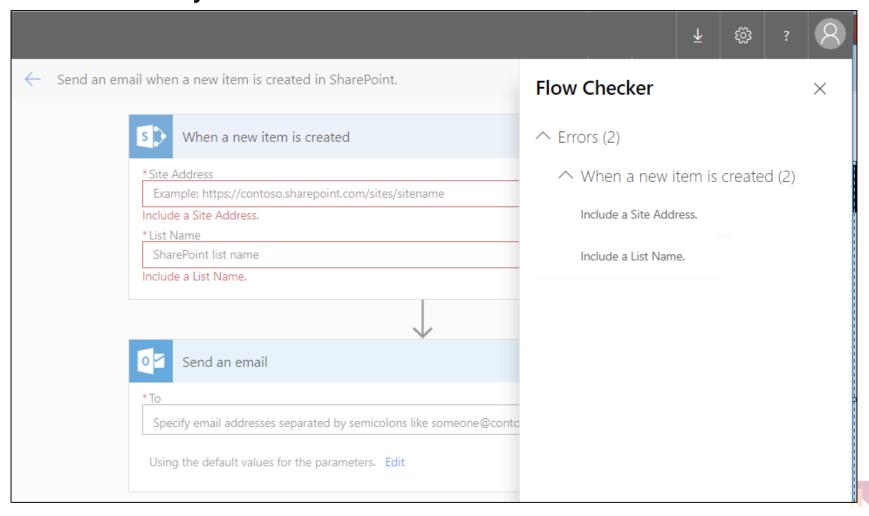
- Data in flows added by step outputs
 - Data added in step output is available in later steps
 - It's easy to configure step input data using output data in previous steps
 - Certain outputs displayed/hidden based on types of input and output





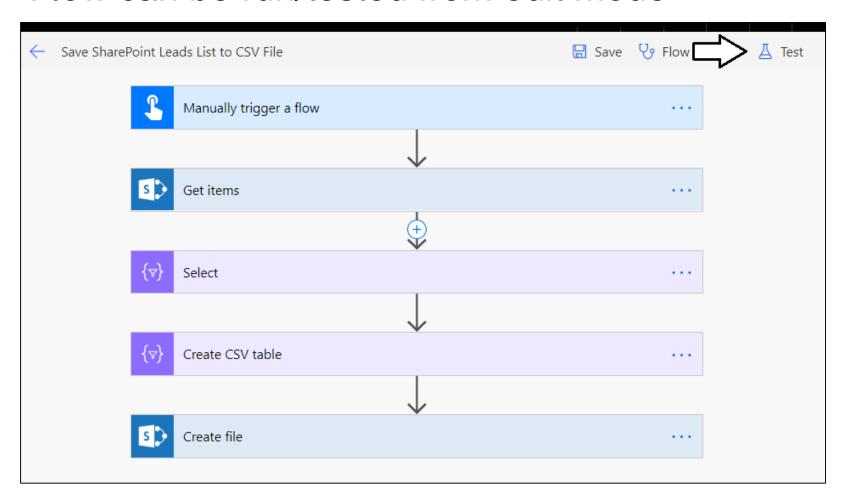
Flow Checker

Automatically checks flows for errors and omissions



Testing a Flow

Flow can be run/tested from edit mode





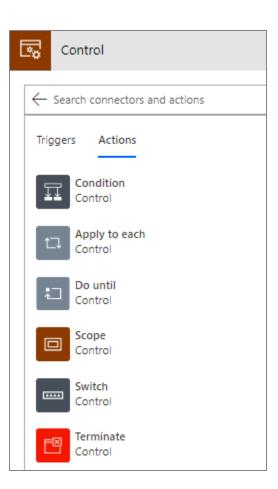
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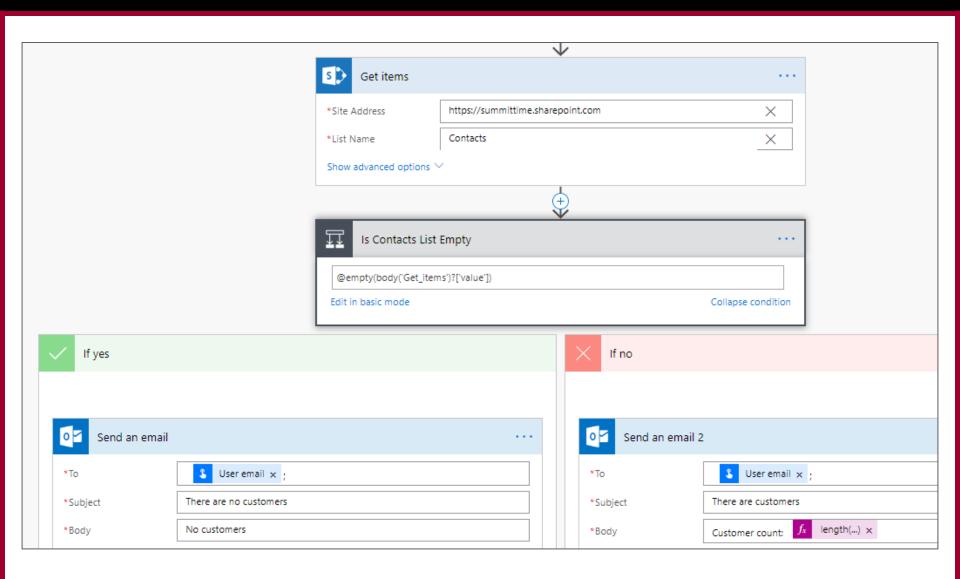
Control of Flow

- Condition
 - Provides logical structure for If Then Else
- Apply to each
 - Enumerate through collection (e.g. list items)
- Do until
 - Repeat until condition changes
- Scope
 - Create an action container with a private scope
- Switch
 - Select Case flow
- Terminate
 - Completes a flow





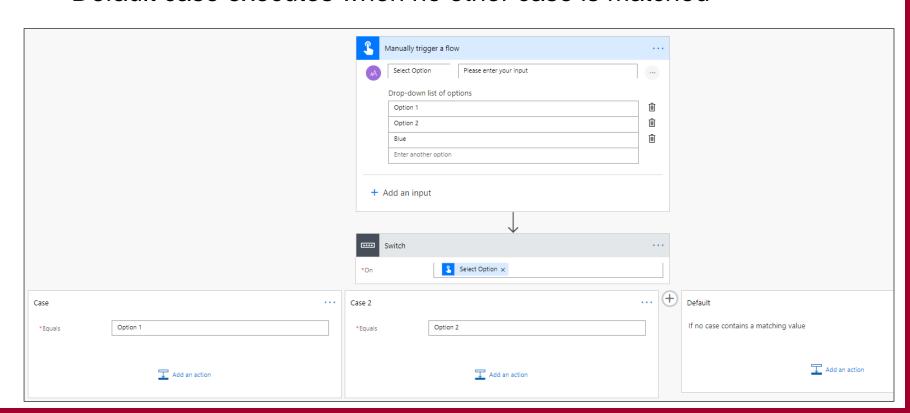
Condition Action





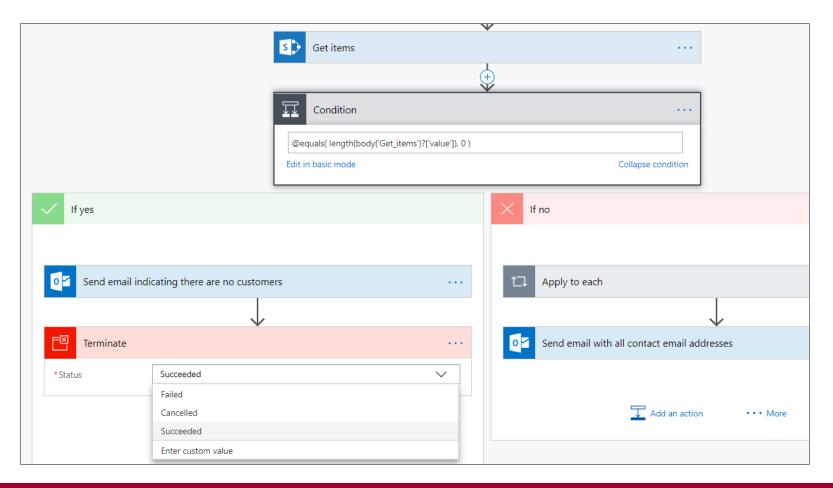
Switch Action

- Switch actions provides cases
 - Each case represents separate execution path
 - Only one execution path will execute
 - Default case executes when no other case is matched



Terminate action

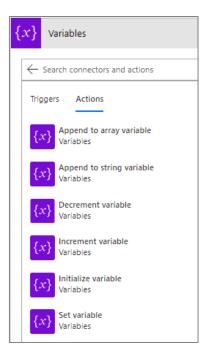
- Used to stop a flow at any point
 - Terminate status can be set to Succeeded, Cancelled, Failed

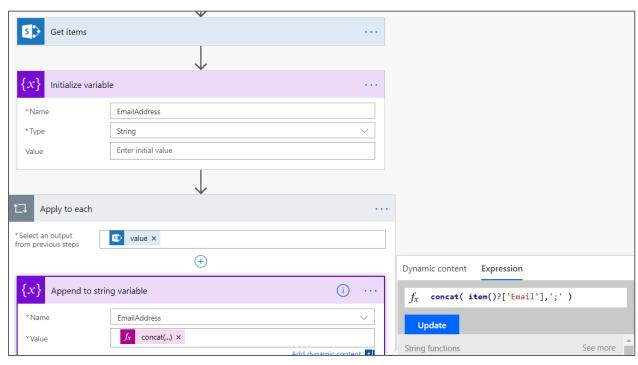




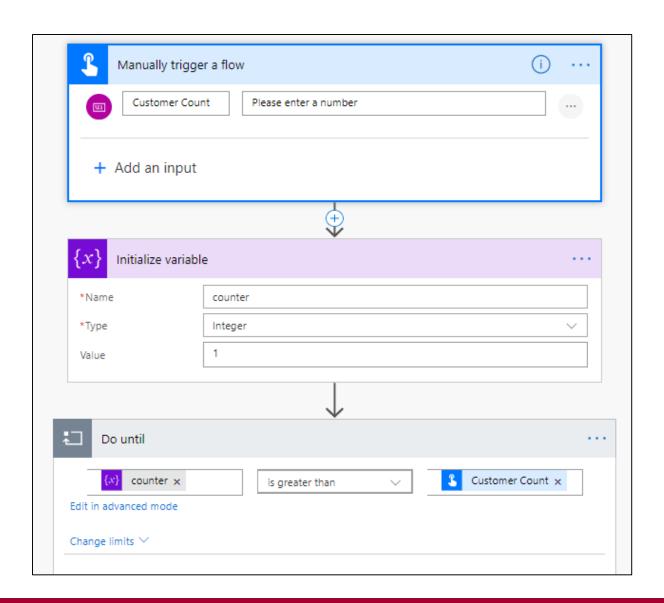
Tracking State using Variables

- Variables used to track state during flow lifetime
 - Initialize Variable used to create variable with Type and Value
 - Other variable actions uses to update variable values
 - By default, variable stored within flow until end of flow lifetime
 - Variables can be initialized inside Scope action to reduce lifetime



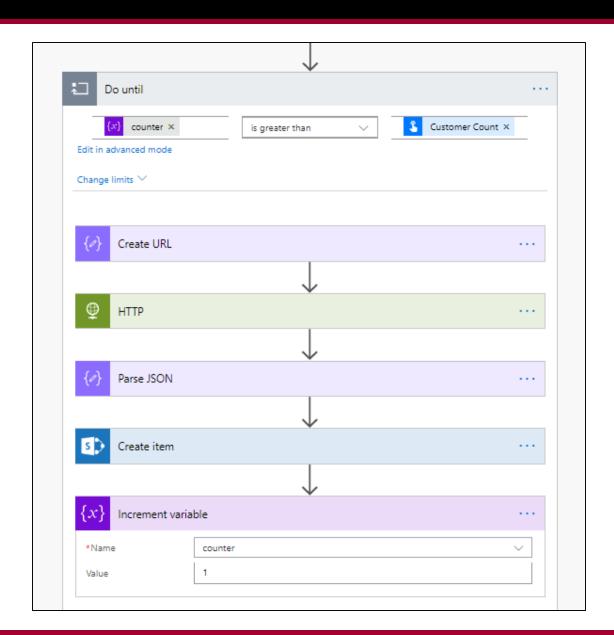


Do Until Action with Counter Variable





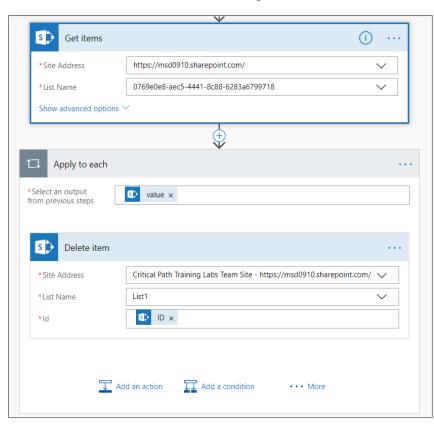
Executing Operations inside Do Until Loop





Using Apply to Each

- Automatically added when list is used from output
- Destination step enumerates over list items





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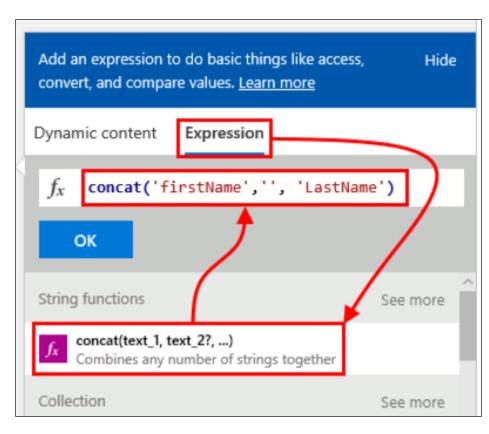
Writing Flow Expressions

- Scenarios for writing Flow expressions
 - Perform string manipulation
 - Generate a GUID or a random number
 - Convert types
 - Perform simple inline calculations
 - Handling optional values
 - Writing conditional statements using "If" statements
 - Working with arrays



Writing Expressions

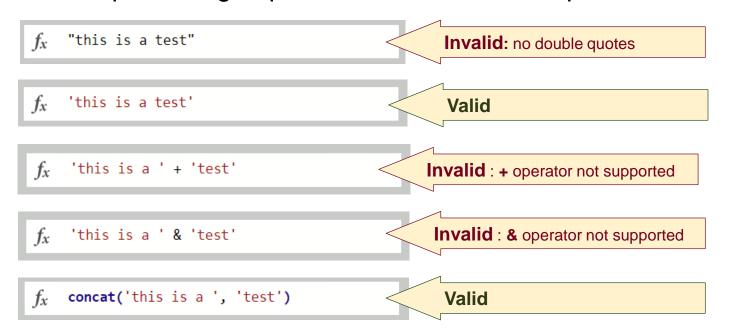
- Expressions written in fx textbox
- Click OK to enter expressions





Workflow Definition Language (WDL)

- Flow expressions written in Workflow Definition Language
 - Same language used in Azure Logic Apps
 - WDL is more powerful yet more complicated than PowerApps
 - WDL does not overload operators like PowerApps does
 - WDL requires single quotes instead of double quotes

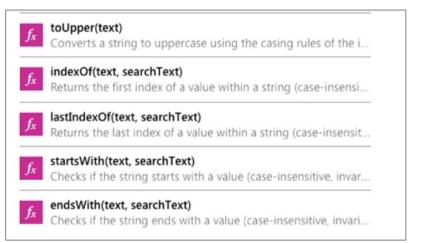




Working with Strings

- Parse text together using concat()
- Parse out text using substring()
- Convert casing using toLower() and toUpper()
- Search string using indexOf and startsWith()
- Create new GUID identifier using guid()

fx	concat(text_1, text_2?,) Combines any number of strings together
fx	substring(text, startIndex, length) Returns a subset of characters from a string
fx	replace(text, oldText, newText) Replaces a string with a given string
fx	guid() Generates a globally unique string (GUID)
fx	toLower(text) Converts a string to lowercase using the casing rules of the i





Performing Arithmetic Operations

- You cannot use standard arithmetic operators
 - No support for familiar operators such as +, -, *, /
 - This does not work: 2 + 2
 - This works: add(2, 2)
 - min(collection or item1, item2?, ...)
 Returns the minimum value in the input array of numbers

 max(collection or item1, item2?, ...)
 Returns the maximum value in the input array of numbers

 fx rand(minValue, maxValue)
 Generates a random integer within the specified range (inclu...

 fx add(summand_1, summand_2)
 Returns the result from adding the two numbers
- sub(minuend, subtrahend)
 Returns the result from subtracting two numbers

 mul(multiplicand_1, multiplicand_2)
 Returns the result from multiplying the two numbers

 div(dividend, divisor)
 Returns the result from dividing the two numbers

 mod(dividend, divisor)
 Returns the remainder after dividing the two numbers (mod...



Understanding Arrays in Flow

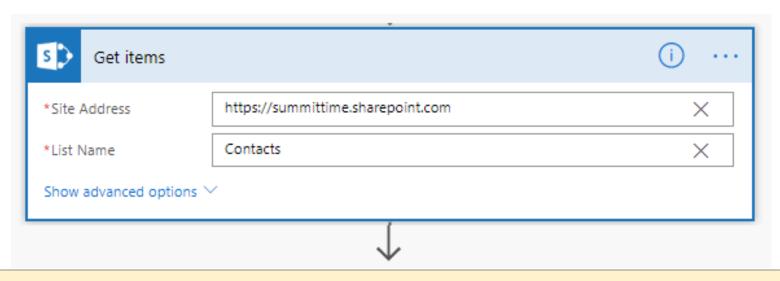
- Flow arrays are zero-based
 - Primitive value arrays

0	Daugherty		
1	Hernandez		
2	Mack		
3	Wiley		

Object arrays

	Last Name	First Name	Company	Business Phone	Home Phone
0	Daugherty	Cindy	Wonka Industries	1(337)111-4444	1(337)111-7777
1	Hernandez	Zane	Vandelay Industries	1(757)666-3333	1(757)777-1111
2	Mack	Chang	Wonka Industries	1(480)111-4444	1(480)777-0000
3	Wiley	Ramona	Ecumena	1(201)777-8888	1(201)777-2222

Accessing an Array using ['value']



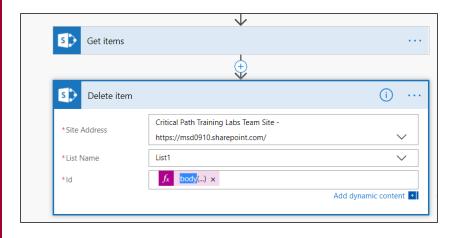
body('Get_items')?['value']

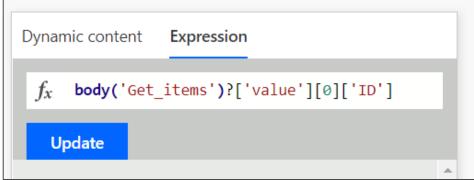
	Last Name	First Name	Company	Business Phone	Home Phone
0	Daugherty	Cindy	Wonka Industries	1(337)111-4444	1(337)111-7777
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3	Wiley	Ramona	Ecumena	1(201)777-8888	1(201)777-2222



Retrieving List Items

- Use first() and last() to get lead at head or tail
- Individual items retrieved using zero-based array syntax
 - SharePoint list item array body('Get_items')?['value']
 - First item field value body('Get_items')?['value'][0]['ID']







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Transforming Arrays

- Use Select action
 - Two input modes: fill key-value pairs or typing directly
- Create array object objects
 - Useful for passing array to another action

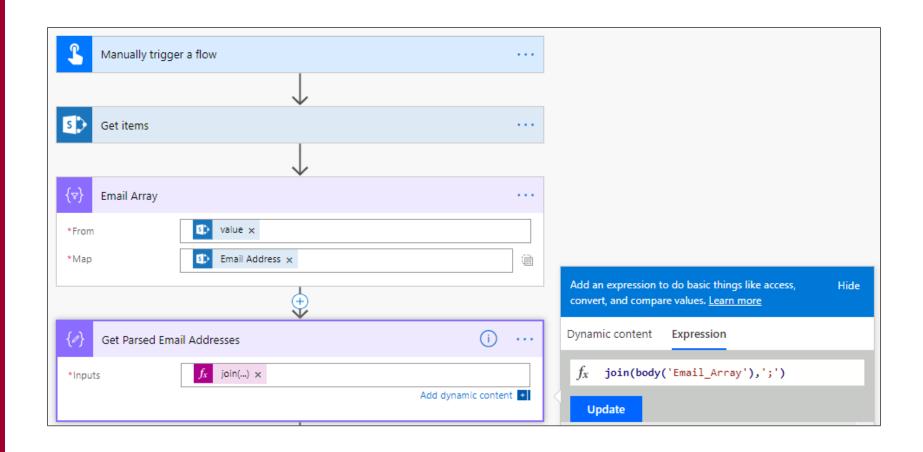


- Create a simple array of strings, numbers, Booleans, etc
 - Useful for creating simple list (e.g. email addresses)





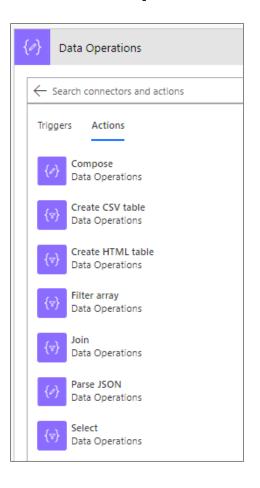
Converting an Array using Select





Data Operations

Used to process data and prepare content



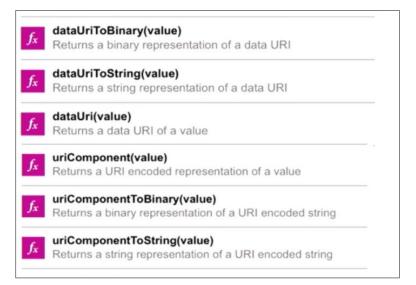
```
Compose
                            "ratpack":[
                              "firstName": "Frank".
                              "lastName": "Sinatra".
                              "firstName": "Dean",
*Inputs
                              "lastName": "Martin",
                              "firstName": "Sammy",
                              "lastName": "Davis Jr",
                                                                              Add dynamic content +
```



Handling Type Conversion

- Some conversion is automatic
 - Sometimes conversions are performed for you
 - In other cases, you must explicitly convert between types

	string(value)
	Convert the parameter to a string
	float(value)
	Convert the parameter argument to a floating-point number
	bool(value)
	Convert the parameter to a Boolean
ı	base64(value)
	Returns the base 64 representation of the input string
	base64ToBinary(value)
	Returns a binary representation of a base 64 encoded string
	base64ToString(value)
	Returns a string representation of a base 64 encoded string
	binary(value)
ı	Returns a binary representation of a value





Flow Type Conversion Matrix

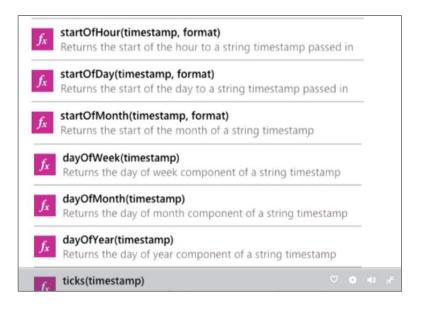
		— Ul ad	dds automati	cally —							
To →	String	Base 64	Binary content	Data URI	URI comp.	Floating -point	Integer	Bool.	Array	JSON Object	XML content
String	Yes	base64()	binary()	dataUri ()	uriCompo nent()	float()	int()	bool()	<pre>split() json()</pre>	json()	xml()
Base 64	<pre>base64ToS tring()</pre>	Yes	<pre>base64ToB inary()</pre>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Binary content	string()	base64()	Yes	dataUri ()	uriCompo nent()	*	*	*	*	*	*
Data URI	<pre>dataUriTo String()</pre>	*	dataUriTo Binary()	Yes	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
URI comp.	uriCompon entToStri ng()	*	uriCompon entToBina ry()	*	Yes	*	*	*	*	*	*
Floatin g-point	Yes	base64()	binary()	dataUri ()	uriCompo nent()	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Integer	Yes	base64()	binary()	dataUri ()	uriCompo nent()	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Bool.	Yes	base64()	binary()	dataUri ()	uriCompo nent()	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Array	join() string()	*	*	*	*	No	No	No	Select Action	Select or Compose	xml()
JSON object	string()	*	*	*	*	No	No	No	Select or Compose	Compose Action	xml()
XML content	string()	*	*	*	*	No	No	No	xpath()	xpath()	Logic apps only



Working with Dates and Time

- Get Greenwich Meantime using utcnow()
- Use add*() functions to move time back/forward
- convertTimeZone() used to handle local times
- formatDateTime() used to format



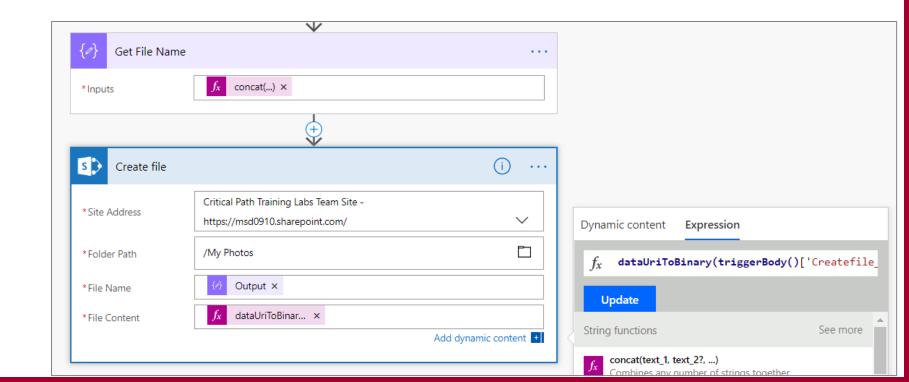




dataUriToBinary()

- PowerApps photos require conversion
 - Allows you to upload phots to SharePoint
 - Accomplished using dataUriToBinary() function

dataUriToBinary(triggerBody()['Createfile_FileContent'])



Normal action execution

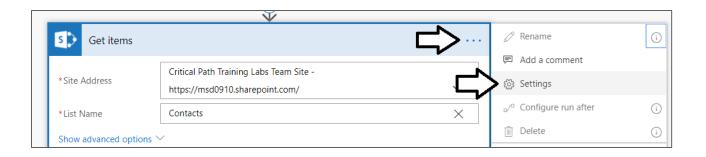
- Standard behavior of a flow
 - Action steps execute in sequential order
 - Flow terminates if error occurs (failure or timeout)
- After flow runs, every action left in 1 of 4 possible states





Action Settings

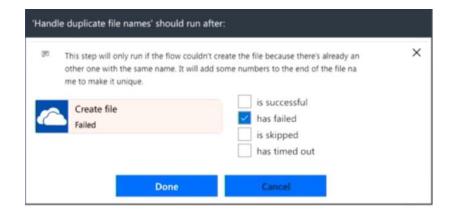
- Settings let you configure
 - Async Actions
 - Timeouts
 - Retry Policy
 - Sequential Behavior
 - And more!

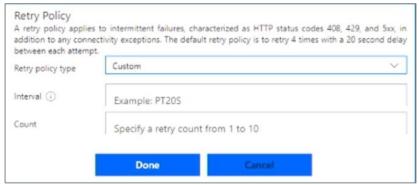




Error Handling

- Select the Run after option from action menu
 - Choose which error conditions, the arrow will turn dotted red
 - Use parallels for errors that are not at end of flow
 - Retry policy by default handles transient failures
 - Recommended to select exponential as they last a long time

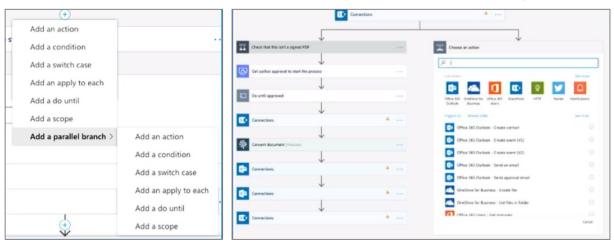




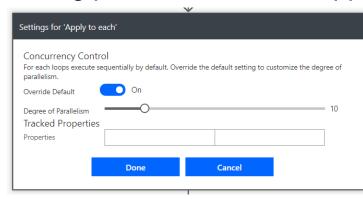


Parallel Execution

Add parallel branch from above using

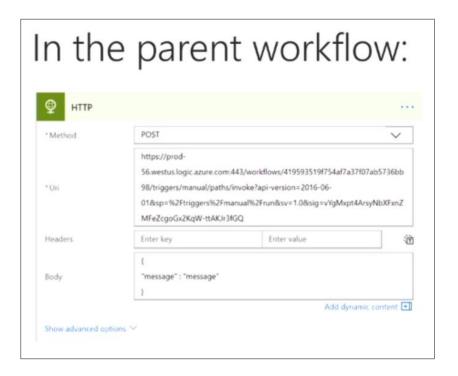


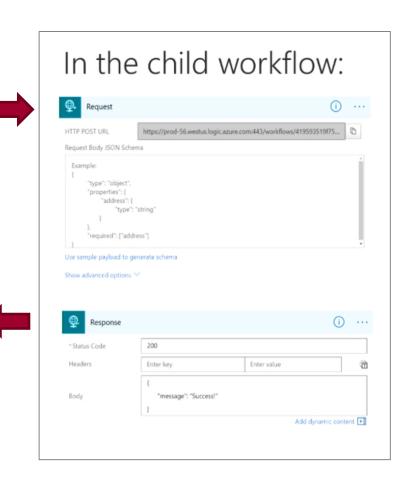
- Apply to each is sequential by default
 - Adding parallel execute to Apply to each





Calling Flows using the HTTP action





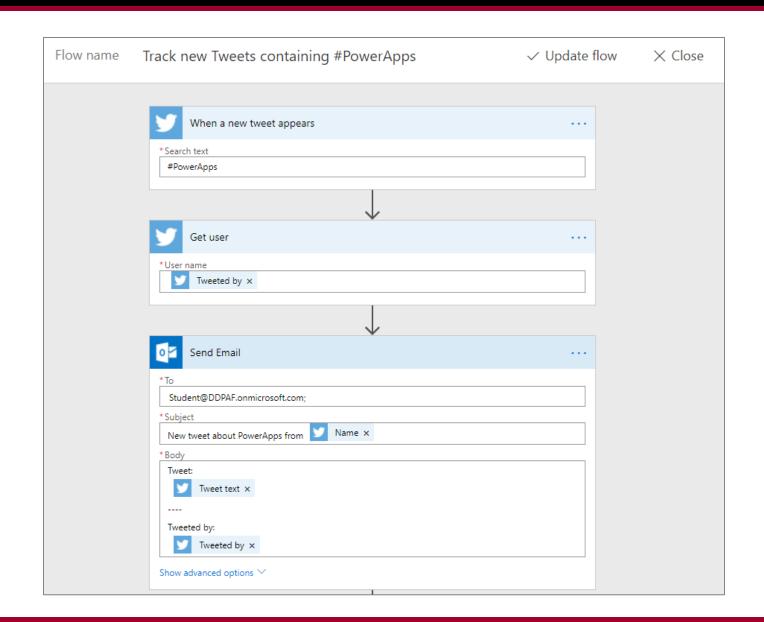


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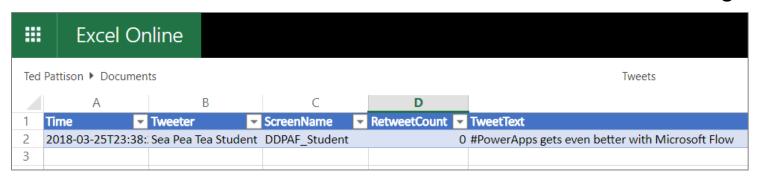
Building a Flow



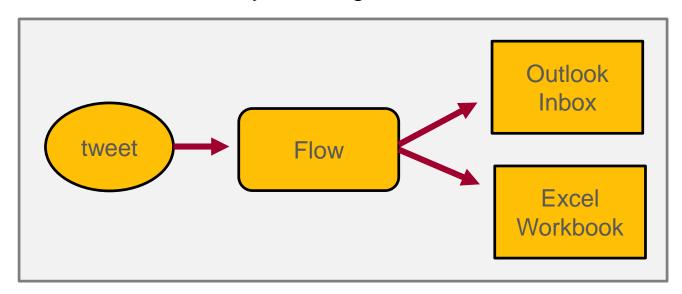


Updating a Table in an Excel Workbook

Flow now writes tweets to Excel workbook as well as sending email

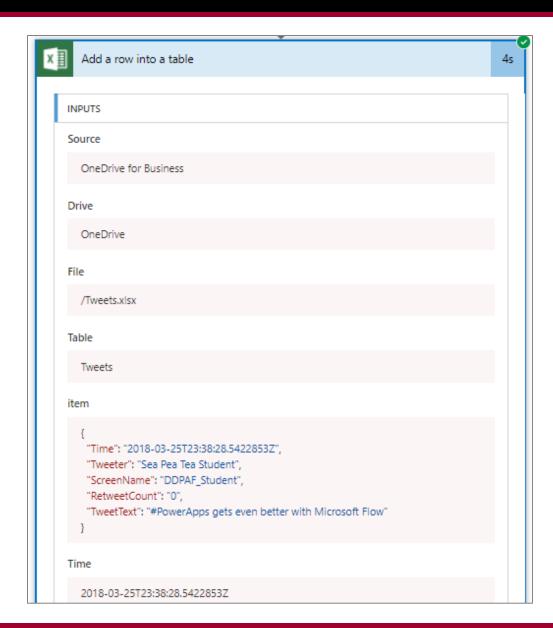


Observation: It's easy to design a flow to write data to multiple services





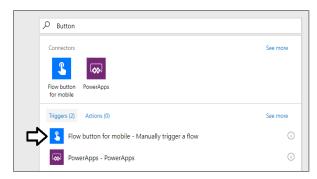
Run History Details



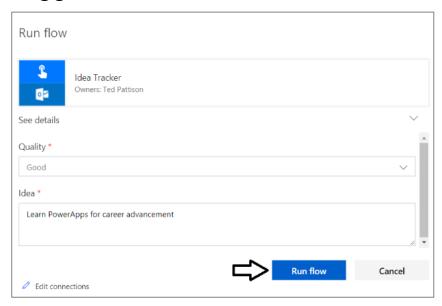


Creating a Flow Trigger by Manual Button

Use Run button for Mobile as flow trigger

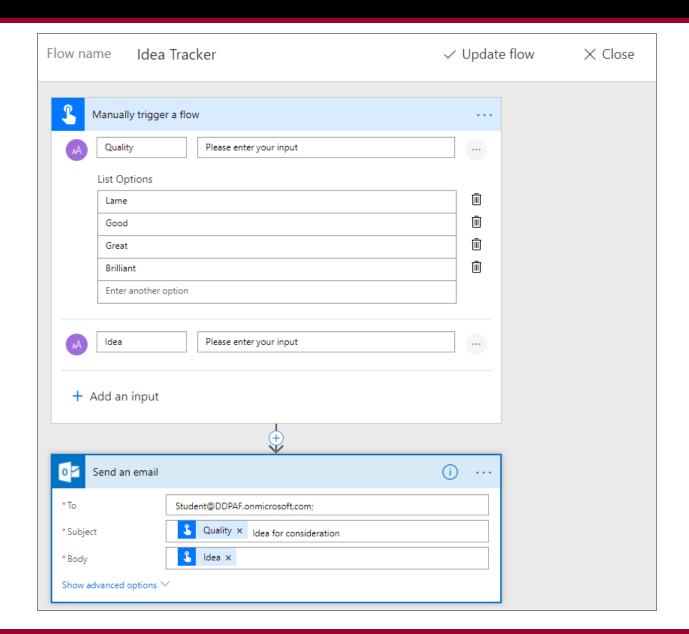


Trigger can be extended with one or more input fields





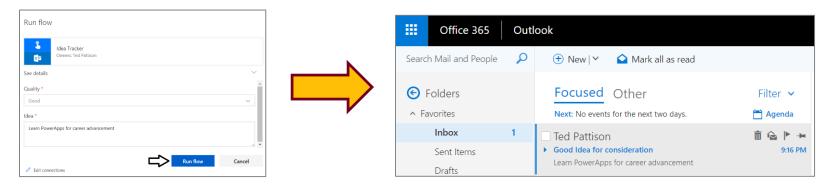
Building Out The Idea Tracker Flow



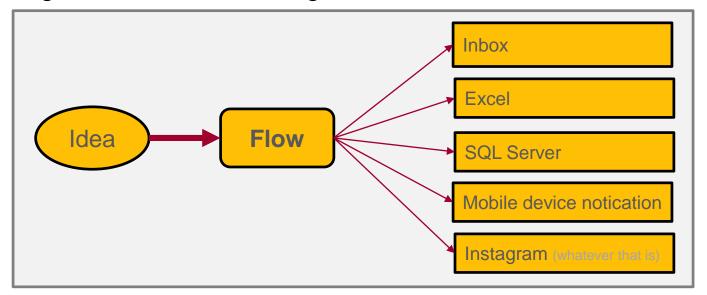


Where Should You Write the Idea?

You can track the idea by sending an email

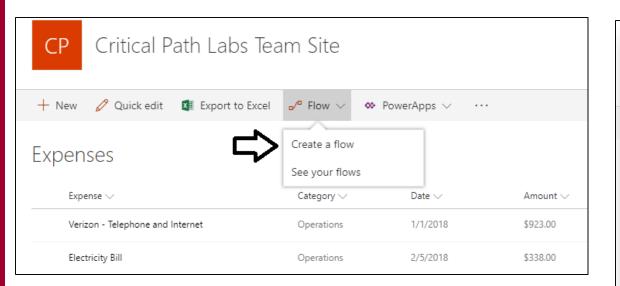


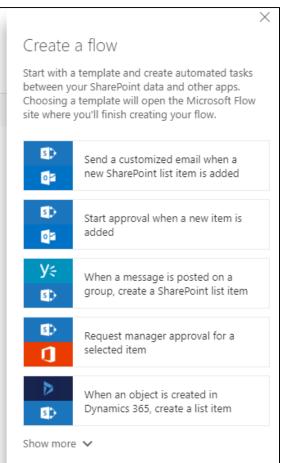
Or get even more extravagant





Creating a Flow for a SharePoint List

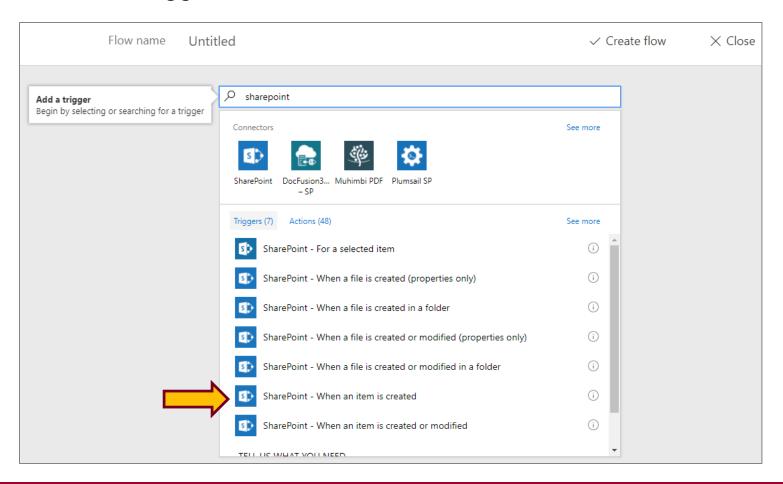






Another Way to Create Flows for SharePoint

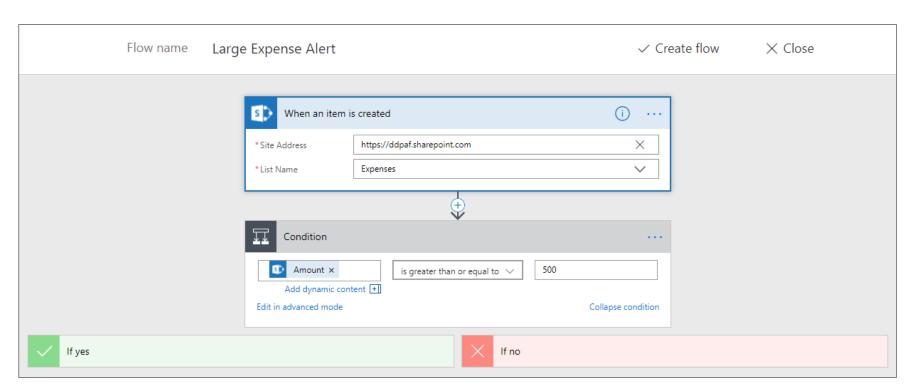
- Create the flow from blank using the Flow Designer
 - Then add trigger based on SharePoint item event





Using a Condition

- Send alert email if expense amount greater than \$500
 - Condition runs test which returns true or false
 - Condition provide If yes branch and If no branch





Build Out Branches using Actions

