PROs and CONs to Twist & Slack

Oct 24, 2018

Both Slack and Twist have features that I like, and things I don’t like. Here is a small list of things I think are pros and cons between the two.

# SLACK PROs:

1. Built on top of IRC (but no longer uses IRC), Good for chatting between team members
2. Has a nice “Code Block” feature just by clicking on the plus sign
3. Github integration works bi-directional (once you figure it out).
   1. Github integration works on a organization level, but does need to subscribe to each repository you want to monitor.
4. Some integrations work better
5. Can post pictures.
6. Can PIN posts (posts stay - this may be good for posting instructions or code of conduct, or something like that.)
7. Sharing files is easy.
8. The #general channel can be made as a read only channel (making it good for announcements).

# SLACK CONS:

1. Some functions are limited with the free account.
2. Threads are weird and hard to use.
3. Finding a post is hard and time consuming (Channels, are a rolling chat (like IRC), a post has to be specifically made into a thread and even then it’s a bit confusing)
4. Overlapping Chat (can and does happen - even in the small “test” group we have now)
5. And the Channel can become crowded and confusing

# SLACK FEATURES (neither pro or con):

1. Can use a “modified” version of markdown for some posts, making highlight (bold, italics, strike, code, and quote) - They don’t call it markdown, but it is similar.
   1. <https://get.slack.help/hc/en-us/articles/202288908-Format-your-messages>
2. Can thumbs up posts, and leave smiles.
3. By clicking on the plus you can make something called a “POST” - this is a longer message, that allows for limited (Slack style) markdown, and carriage returns.
   1. Drawback: You have to share these posts for others to find them and see them
   2. They show up in the files sections
   3. They are hard to find in the channel they are being shared with.
4. People that want to share Google Drive documents all have to set up the integration for their own Google Drive (This probably is a pro - but it’s a little bit confusing.)

There are many things I like about how Slack works, it’s biggest failure for me is in how it handles “Threads”.

Twist was build with “THREADS” in mind. Threads work something like email, with a chat component. That has more of a BBS style, or a forum style to it.

# TWIST PROS:

1. THREADS - should I say that any louder, it has real Threads, that are more or less easy to use, and less confusing (after you used Slack you’ll get that last one)
2. Asynchronous Chat/Discussion
   1. This give it more a forum post style or email and BBS stlye.
3. Ability to choose who will get a notify when a post is made
4. Has the ability to have “Time OFF”
5. Can “Star” a post for your own use later (I don’t think stars go across all users)
6. Easy(ier) to find a Thread you want, and post within that thread

# TWIST CONS:

1. Code sharing is a little harder (but not impossible)
2. No way to make a read only channel (Announcement only channel) This would be a nice feature in the future.
3. No “PIN” feature (see my #5 under PROs)
   1. PINing isn’t strictly needed as the THREADed design makes it much easier to find a post or topic you are looking for.
4. Github integration is one way (a post to twist) It also needs to be setup for each repository you want to integrate with.
5. File sharing isn’t a straight forward (not a directory or list of files) It is still pretty easy to share a file however.
6. Not as intuitive to use as (I) originally thought it would be.

# TWIST FEATURES (neither pro or con):

1. The Free account does have some limitations (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Lq-5aDpkiP-ta7QpI6GzgTzH_sfxHlRBPsS3r2sHpOI/edit?usp=sharing> )
2. Also uses a variation of markdown, which appears to be closer to github markdown - it doesn’t appear to be the full markdown set.

There are things about both platforms that I really like, I almost think that the group as a whole would get more use from a Threaded system vs A Chat system.

(Chat system) Slack does have some features I would really like to see in (the Threaded system) Twist.

I’ll update this list as needed over time.

This is an interesting posting from some people that switched from Slack to Twist - and why it works better for them - it actually highlights good points on both platforms.

[Why We switched from Slack to Twist - medium.com/balance-io](https://medium.com/balance-io/why-we-switched-from-slack-to-twist-43dfdddbe1ba)