

WÖRKESTRA

A REMOTE WORK
EXPERIMENT

THE PROBLEM

During the COVID-19 pandemic, **millions of knowledge workers** across North America have struggled to move their work lives online.

Approximately 4.7 million Canadians who do not usually work from home did so during the week of March 22 to 28.

Statistics Canada, 2020

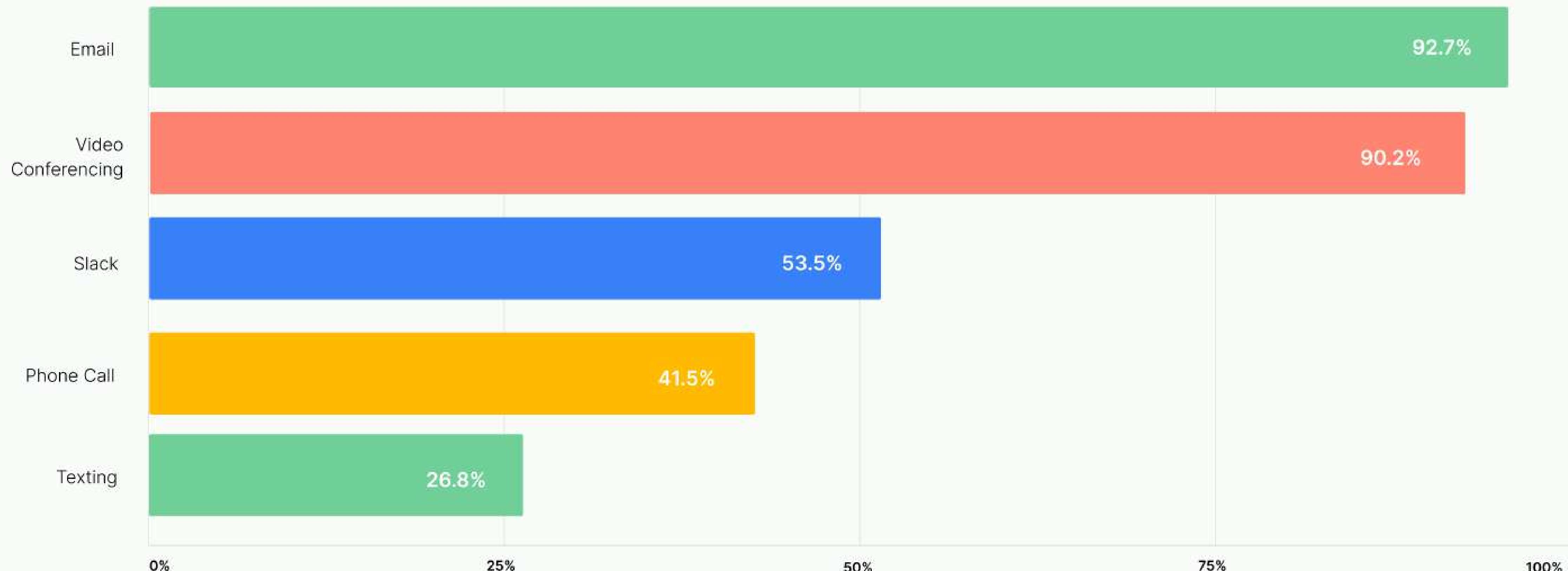
How are teams currently connecting online?

We surveyed 41 knowledge workers and interviewed 9.

“

The percentage of [Canadians] saying that [video calling] makes them feel truly connected has plummeted as usage has increased.

- Angus Reid Institute, October 2020



95.1% of survey respondents stated that it was difficult getting to know and socialize with their coworkers in a remote setting.

IN GENERAL

Although conversations have been able to move online, remote teams are still feeling less connected than before.

FRICTION 1

New hires feel **isolated from their work community** and struggle to find their place within their team

“

Interacting with my team in a casual remote setting feels awkward.

“

All the junior devs seem to be working extra hard ever since the pandemic started. It's hard to keep up.

FRICTION 2

The **lack of visibility** in remote work makes it difficult to know who's present throughout the day.

“

I don't know when to strike up a conversation. Is my co-worker free?

“

I used to pop by my coworkers desk to ask a quick question or just to say hello, but during COVID I just figure things out on my own

FRICTION 3

Newly remote workers **miss the spontaneity** of the office environment as remote social interactions often feel forced or superficial

“

I miss grabbing lunch with the team. All we talk about is work now.

“

There are much fewer unplanned conversations. It's difficult to chat about non-work related things. I don't feel as “close” to my coworkers anymore.

Edith, 26

JUNIOR DEVELOPER



Having started a new job during COVID-19 and never met her coworkers in-person, Edith is struggling to find her place on the team. Remote work has made informal interactions less frequent, which contributes to her feeling lonely and unsupported at work.

GOALS

Comfort and Confidence with Coworkers

Instead of having to worry about office politics and competition, she desires camaraderie and mutual assistance from her project team.

Workplace Visibility

While doing individual work in between meetings, Edith is focused and works hard. She wants to ensure that her manager and other teammates see her efforts.

FRUSTRATIONS

Feels Disconnected From her Team

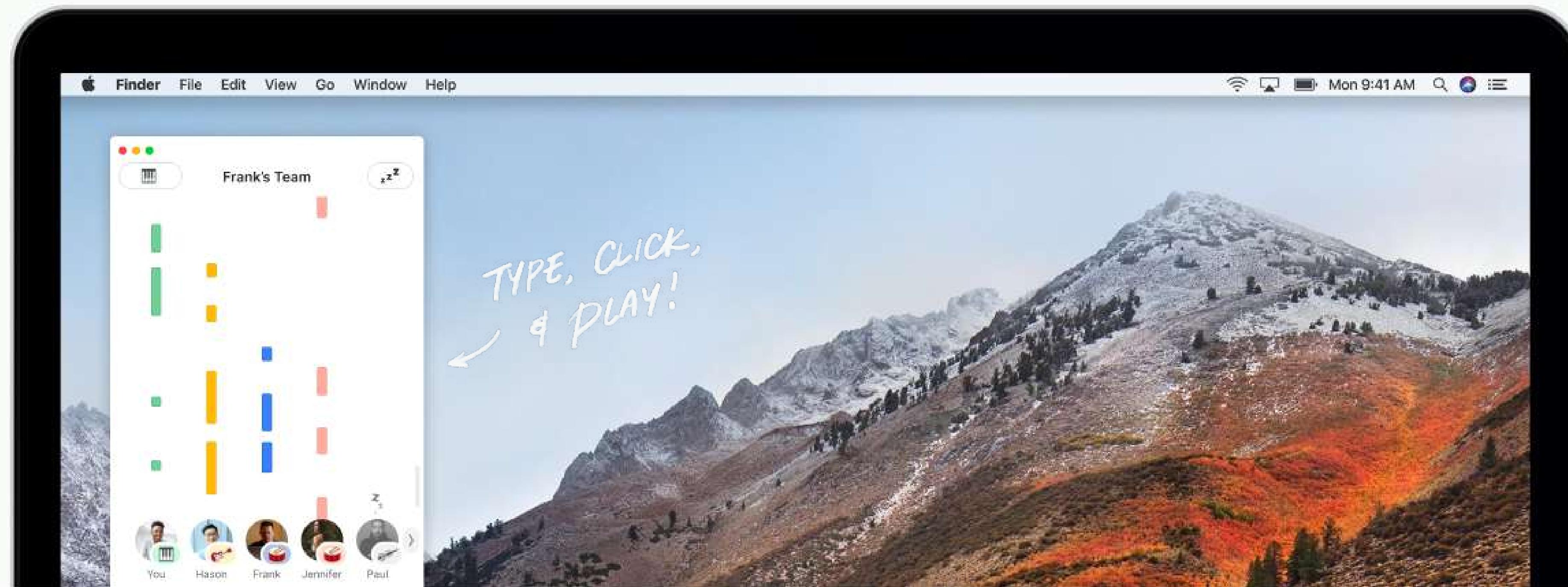
Edith dislikes the competitive culture fueled by coworkers working longer hours. She feels disconnected from her workplace community and worries that she does not fit into her team's culture.



INTRODUCING WÖRKESTRA

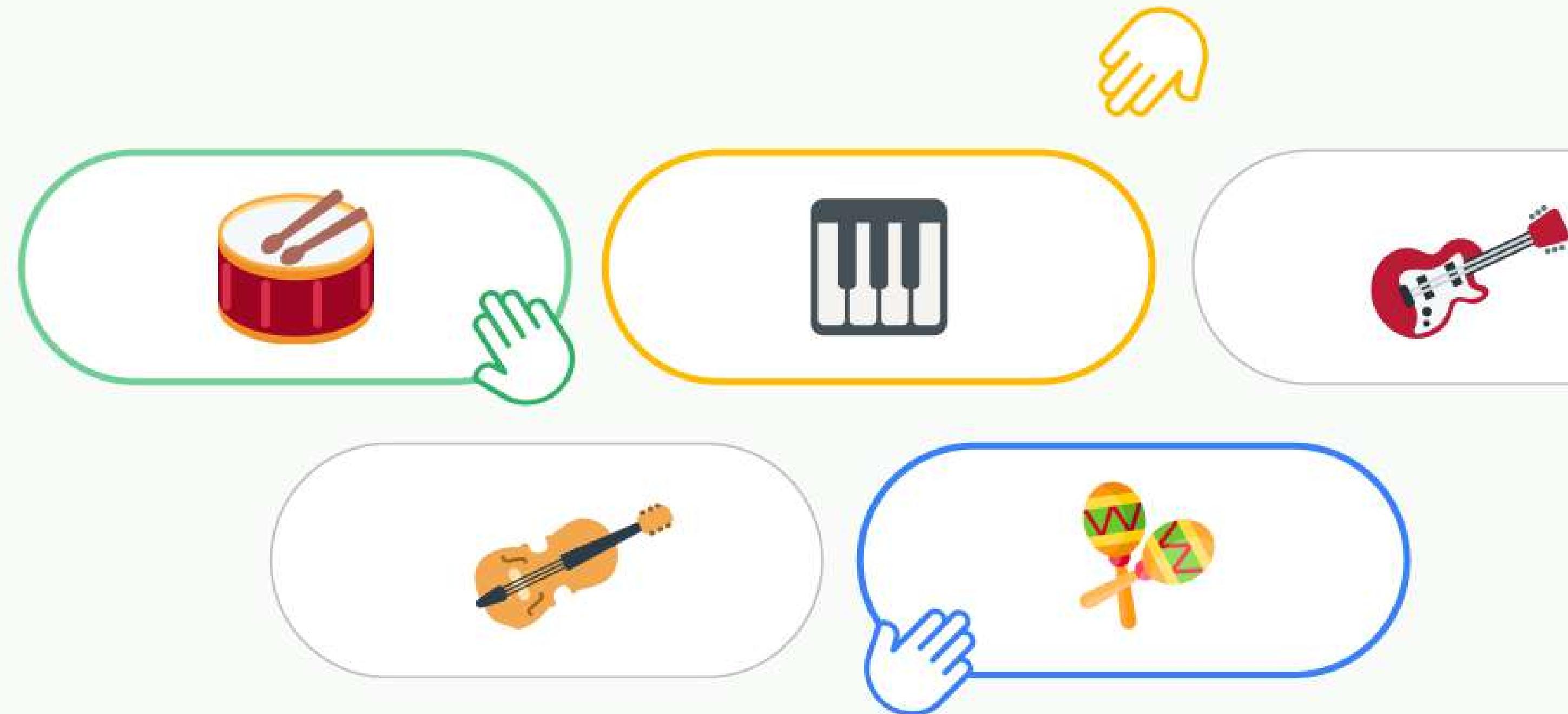
Bring your remote team
together through **music**

Wörkestra is a desktop and mobile app that allows remote coworkers to see and hear each other's keyboard and mouse clicks. Wörkestra is an exploration of how teams can be more present with each other over distance while bringing joy into the remote workday.



Pick an instrument

At the start of the workday, team members can choose which instrument they want to play. Instruments are a fun way to express yourself and distinguish your sounds from the rest of your team.



Grab your coworker's attention with a wiggle

Click + Drag any of your coworkers' icons back and forth to mess with the quality of their sound. Think of it as a tap on their shoulder or a friendly way to say hello.

⇧ Shift + Click + Drag to wiggle the whole team



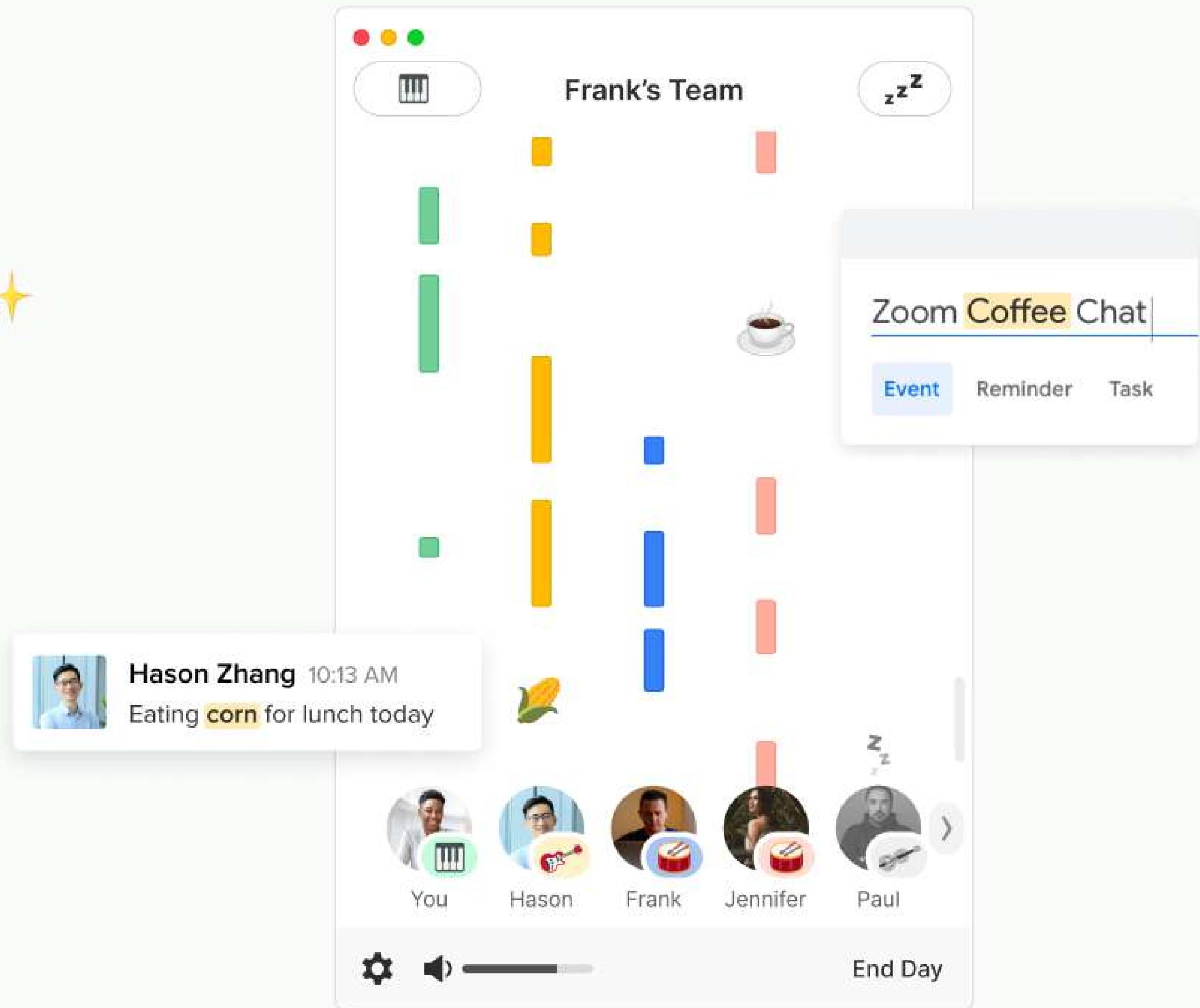
You



Frank

Add an element of spontaneity with ✨emojis✨

Type **keywords** and phrases like “breaktime” or “coffee” in any application to give your team a hint about what you’re doing and where you are in your workday.



Sync up with your coworkers

Remote work can be lonely. Wörkestra shows when you and your coworkers are both typing above 90 words per minute — in other words: “in the zone” — by making your instruments sound more resonant.



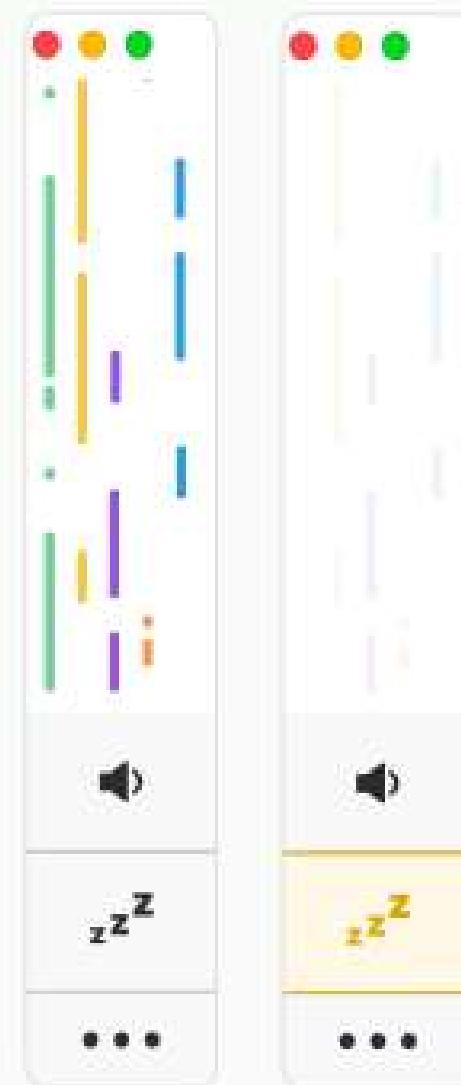
You



Jennifer

Take a Break

No need to update your availability status in Wörkestra. Simply press the “away” button to let your team know that you’re stepping away from the computer and press it again when you’re back.



*WÖRKESTRA stops listening to
your clicks while away is on*

The screenshot shows the Wörkestra app interface. On the left, the main screen displays "Frank's Team" with a tempo setting of "60BPM". Below this are several vertical bars of different colors (blue, yellow, green, red) representing tasks or work periods. At the bottom, there are five team member profiles: You (drum icon), Hason (guitar icon), Edith (bar chart icon), Jennifer (drum icon), and Paul (piano icon). A button labeled "End Day" is at the bottom right. On the right, a modal window titled "Invite People" shows a list of users with their roles: Frank Sinatra (you) is an Admin, Edith Smith is a Member, and Hason Zhang is a Member. There is also an "Add people" input field.

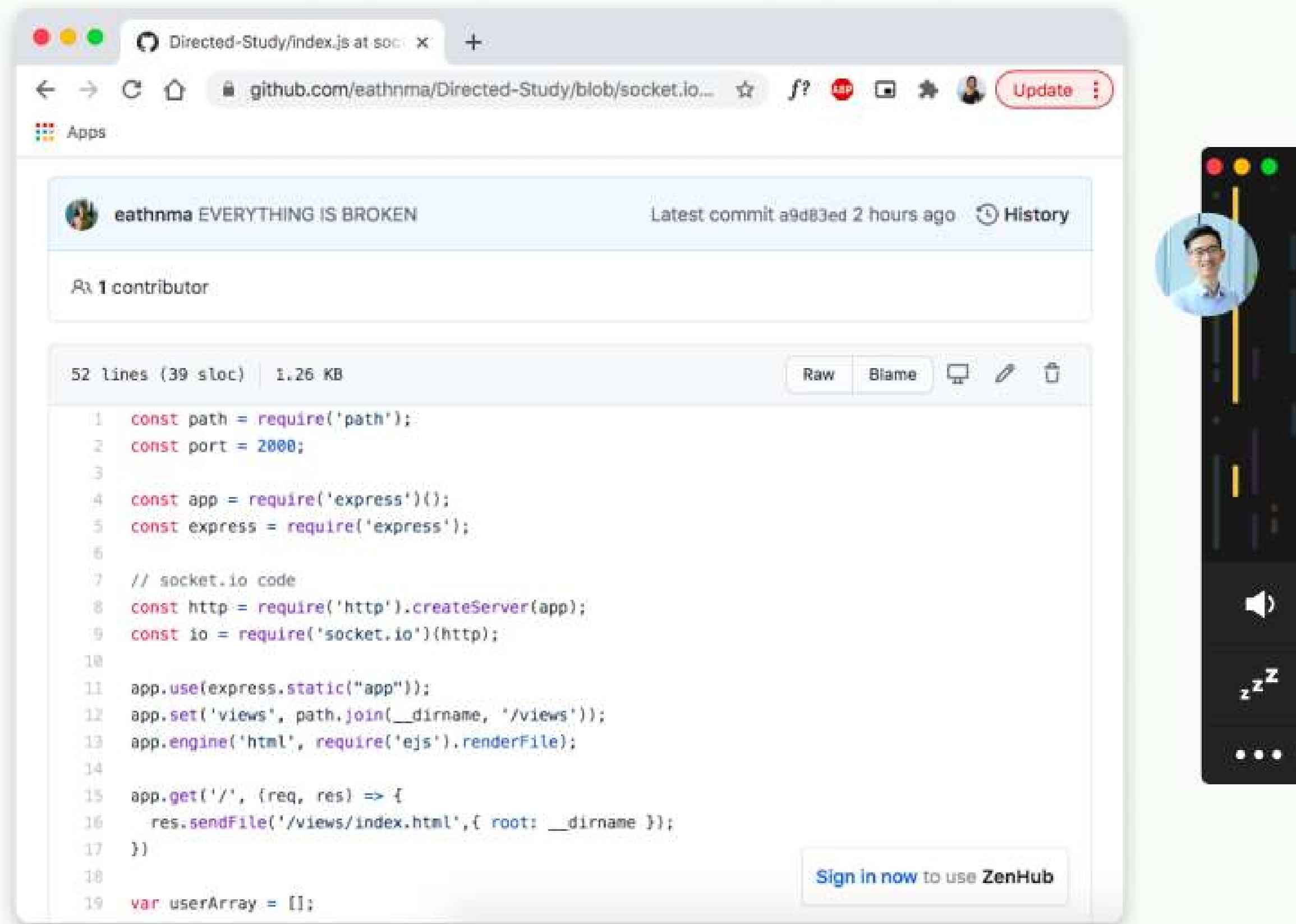
User	Role
Frank Sinatra (you)	Admin
Edith Smith	Member
Hason Zhang	Member

Features for Team Leaders

Every team on Wörkestra is led by an admin, who can assign roles, add members, and set the tempo for the workday.

Keep Wörkestra on the Side

With minimized view, team members can still see their coworkers in their peripheral vision.

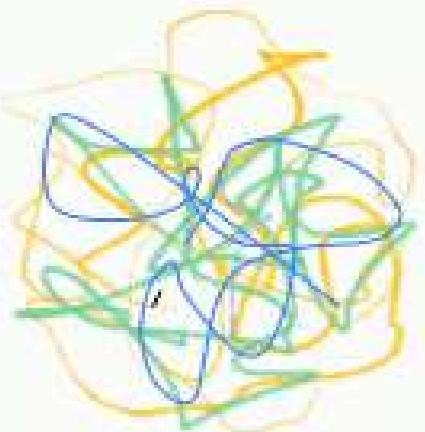


Light or Dark?

Team members can switch between two colour modes to fit their desktop's aesthetic.



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Don't cause **stress**

Respect your users' headspace. Create joy, but not so much that it's a distraction from their work.

Sound and colour first

Talking online can be exhausting. Use sound and colour to keep people feeling connected when they're not in conversation.

OUR GOAL

Help **reduce workplace isolation** during COVID-19 by creating an informal and more joyful way for remote teams to connect throughout the workday.

try the Prototype



TINYURL.COM/WORKESTRA-TEST

