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# **Incorporating the use of Web Parts in conjunction with associated AJAX settings**

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*Relevant to all version of SharePoint 2010, 2013  
and Office 365*



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# What's the point of and what's the use of Web Parts

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## Purpose

Having spent many days delivering End user training to a wide variety of classes and companies, a common aspect of the training and a question often raised is: What exactly is a Web Part and why would I need to use it and what use and where and how does AJAX fit in to the overall greater scheme of things? Is the AJAX setting ever any use?

This white paper is designed to assist a potential site owner in taking full advantage of a seldom mentioned but important topic used with web parts when designing and creating a Web Part page in SharePoint 2013. That of Web parts and incorporating and using the associated Ajax settings available within the Web part configuration options in a standard or foundation installation. How can a site owner keep the information portrayed by the Web Part up to date and current within the confines of the usual site settings?

It is not always entirely necessary to have at your disposal or to be a professional or so called Web Site designer or indeed a bona fide Software Developer to customize your SharePoint 2013 sites in order to meet or suit your site members requirements. By using the built-in Web Part features and settings described in this White paper, you can easily customize your sites' and various pages and the other Web Part Pages that are stored in your site that are at your command.

You will need to be familiar with Web Part customization techniques and have a range or repertoire of page-customization choices at your disposal. For example, customising your site's home page so that it displays any specific information that your team needs, that is up to date. You should also be familiar with rearranging the list items on a home page, able to add lists to it, or even change the images on your home page.

As you become more familiar with Web Part Page customization techniques, you can build interactive Web Part Pages that make the data in lists more dynamic and useful, and you can add new Web Parts that provide access to external data and Web services. Taking full advantage of the AJAX settings.

**This White Paper sets out to illustrate the usefulness of the AJAX settings in the edit item of the Web part properties.**

# Prerequisites

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## Required Permissions

If you are going to change any of the home page or Web Part page you need to have at least the necessary permissions to do this. You must be a member of the Site Group with at least the Add and Customise Pages permission level. Add and Customise Pages permission is included in the permissions levels of the Designer and Owners groups.

## Publishing and Non-Publishing Sites

Within this example a non-publishing site is used however if you wish to use a publishing site use the page editing tool bar or ribbon where you can add, edit, modify any of the associated web parts and ultimately save your changes made to the corresponding publishing site.

## Intended Audience

The primary intended audience here is the SharePoint Power End User or budding Site Owner who wishes to extend the functionality and usefulness of his or hers site and corresponding pages utilising AJAX settings within an appropriate Web Part.

## Terminology

### **Web Part**

Is a building block that is designed to be reusable for the purposes of displaying certain types of data, which can be text, Hyper Text Markup language, or even images.

### **Web Part Page**

A unique page that combines and merges data this can often be lists, charts or indeed libraries contained in a site. It could be web content such as straight forward text or any relevant images.

### **Web Part Zone**

These are the containers that can contain the web parts on a Web Part Page. It helps to organise and group the individual Web Parts that are placed on the page. Each zone on the page has a corresponding header and associated footer which can be edited

### **Web part Gallery**

This is where most of the Out of the box web parts are stored in SharePoint 2013

## AJAX

AJAX stands for Asynchronous JavaScript and XML. This is a web development technique enabling you to build more interactive, rich web sites. Updates corresponding site or web parts with a short time delay in seconds, as in this paper's example.

Creating a List in SharePoint 2013 this will ultimately be AJAX enabled to update another page using a Web Part with asynchronous behaviour features to be set to on.

## Overall Objectives

To create a new list which will, in turn, communicate with a Wiki Page or similar, updating or refreshing information every 15 seconds via a web part. The team members are then kept up to date with the latest news or topic(s) of discussion.

## Task 1

Create a new list called Team Comms add a new column called Message to Team Comms remove hide or delete all other columns except these two: **Created By** and **Created**.

### How to Steps:

Create a list called Team Comms in SharePoint 2013. From your home page select the Cog and choose Add an app and follow these steps:

**Step 1.** After Adding an App> Under the heading 'Noteworthy' select Custom List > Custom List (Add name "Team Comms"), Click Create.

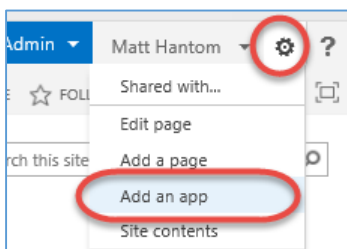


Figure 1 - Adding an App

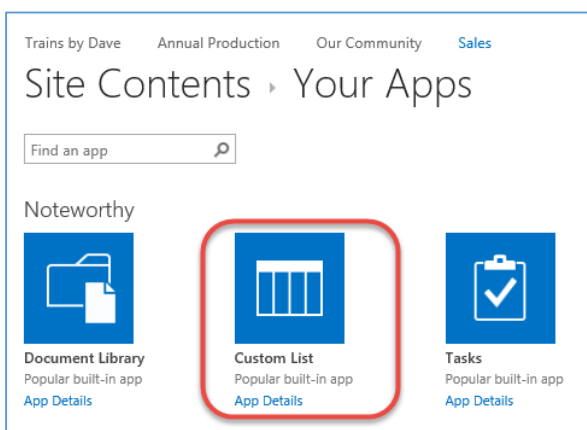


Figure 2 - Custom List

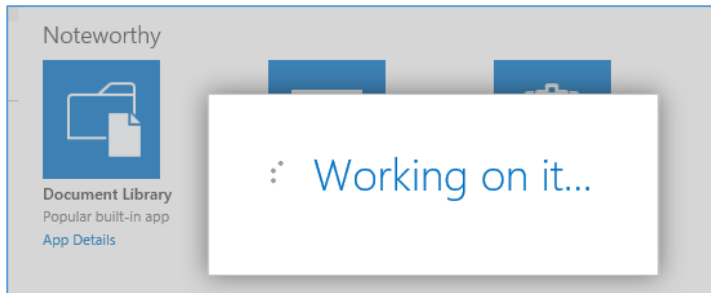


Figure 3 - Wait for a few seconds

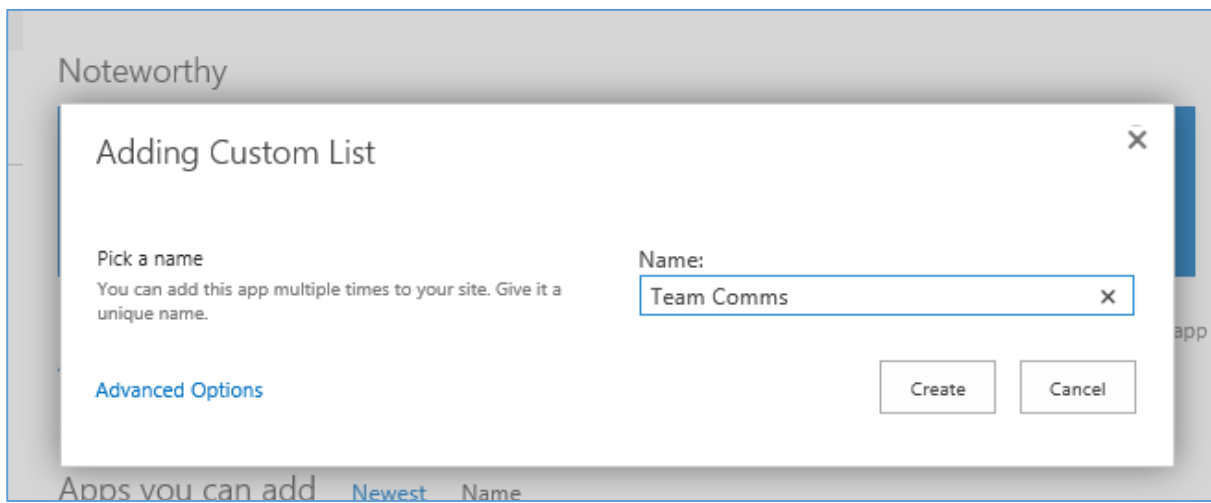


Figure 4 - Name your new list

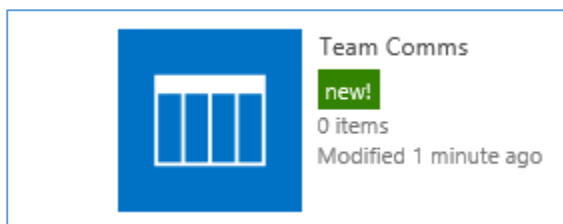


Figure 5 - New list 'Team Comms' created

**Step 2.** From the Team Comms List, click the List tab, Select and click List Settings, in the columns section, click “Title” and rename it “Message”, leave all other settings as default. Click OK.

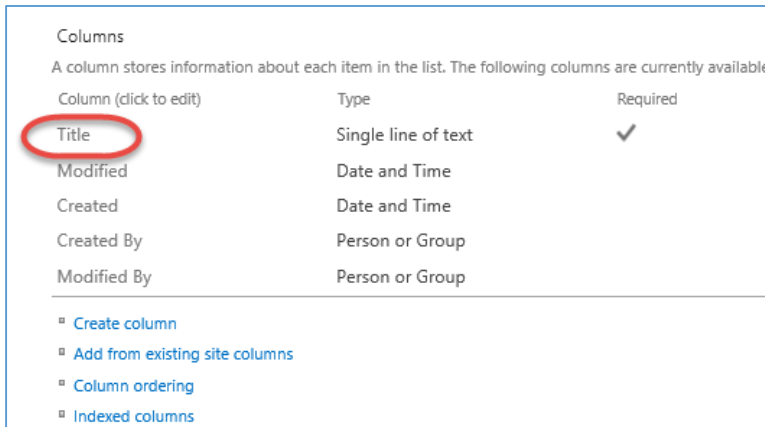


Figure 6 – Select the 'Title' column

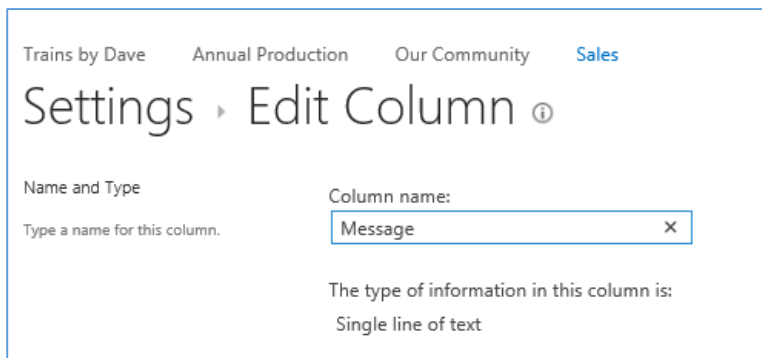
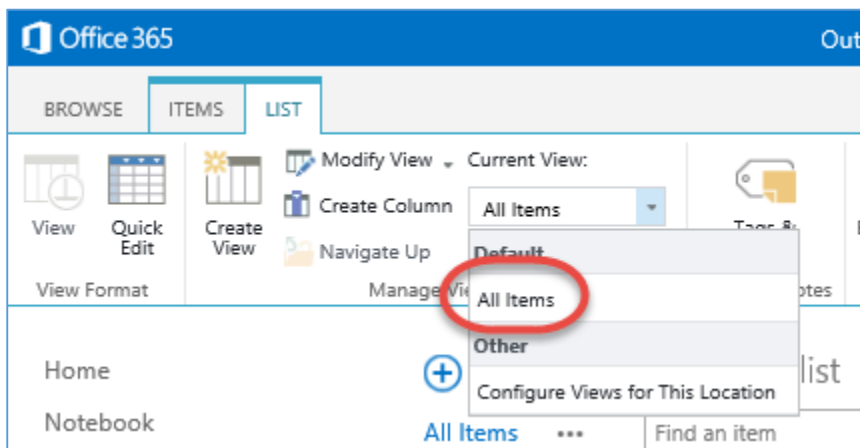


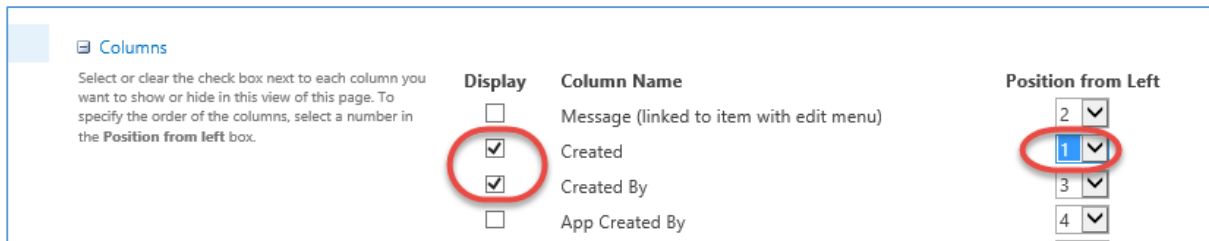
Figure 7 - Modify column 'Title' and change to 'Message'

Select Advanced Settings and in the Item-level Permissions area. Switch the **Create and Edit access** to “**Create items and edit items that were created by the user**” scroll down and click OK

**Step 3.** Switch back to the “All Items view” of the list. Using the ribbon.



On the Ribbon go to the Manage views group and select modify view.

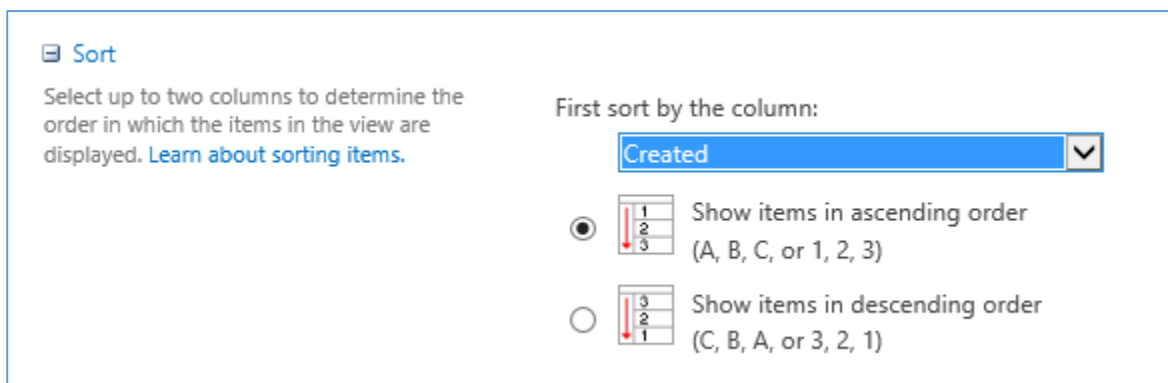


Display	Column Name	Position from Left
<input type="checkbox"/>	Message (linked to item with edit menu)	2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Created	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Created By	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	App Created By	4

In the “Modify View”, tick the “Created” and “Created By” tick boxes.

In this example the order of the buttons can be changed in order to rearrange “Created” and “Created By” but this is purely optional you may think it looks better!

Scroll down to the “Sort” section and sort by column “Created” in ascending order.



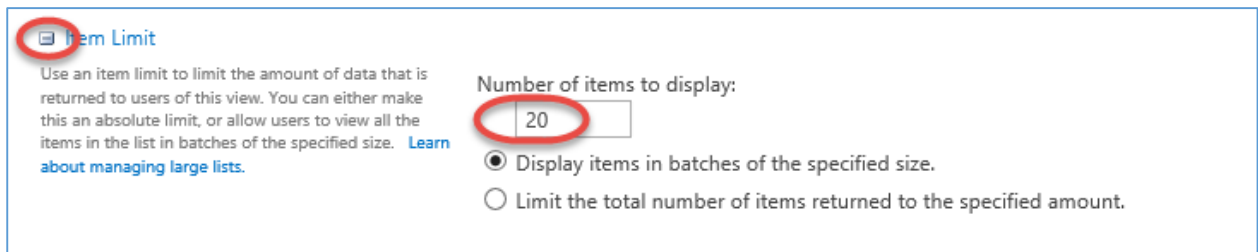
First sort by the column:

Created

Show items in ascending order (A, B, C, or 1, 2, 3)

Show items in descending order (C, B, A, or 3, 2, 1)

Scroll down to the “Item Limit” and expand using the + section and reduce to 20 so that it doesn’t take up too much of the main page.



Number of items to display:

20

Display items in batches of the specified size.

Limit the total number of items returned to the specified amount.

Scroll to the bottom (or top) and click OK.

**Step 4.** Go back to the main page (or any page you want to show this chat on) and go into edit mode. Insert a web part and select the new Chat list “Team Comms” you just created and click add. See task 2

**Step 5.** Participants can now chat away by clicking “Add new item” and adding their message



## Task 2

Create a new page (Wiki) and configure the Team Comms Web part to be AJAX enabled and associate the Team Comms List with this Page.

Select the Cog and click **Add a Page**.

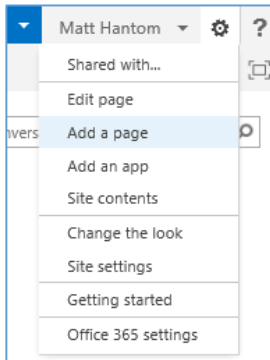


Figure 8 - Adding a page

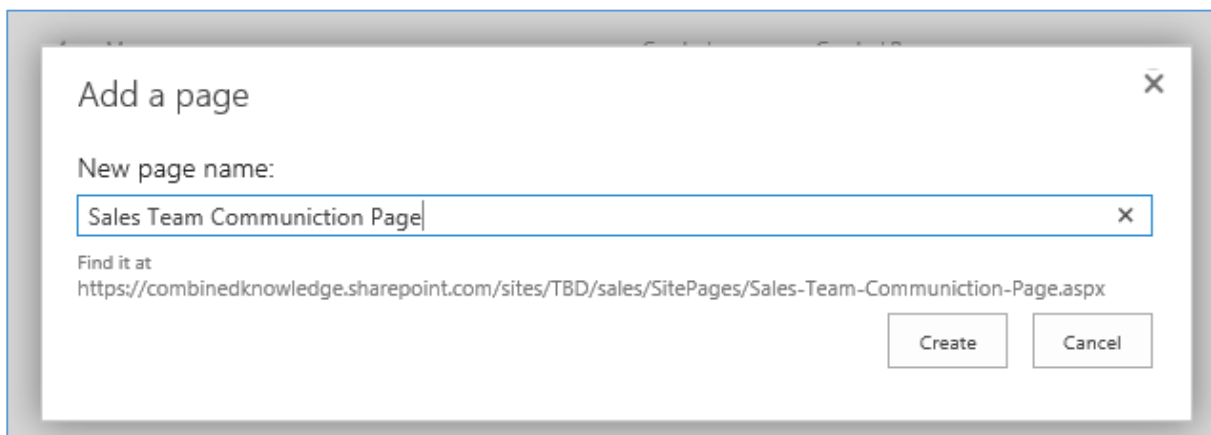


Figure 9 - Naming your new page

Name the page **Sales Team Communications**

**Note: The page will load in Edit mode**

**Step 1.** Use the drop down menu from the downward triangle that appears in the top right of the web part when you hover your mouse over it.

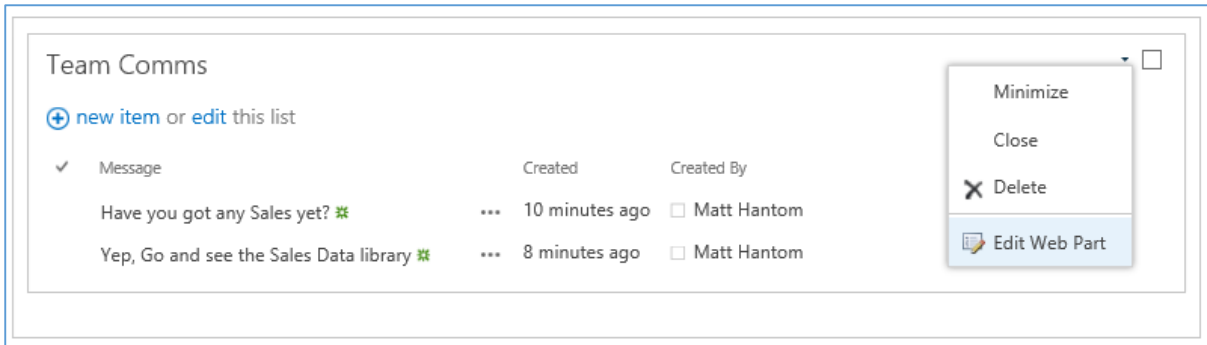


Figure 10 - Editing the Web Part

**Step 2.** Select “Edit Web Part” you will get an options bar on the right hand side of the screen. In the selected view, choose “All Items”

A pop up will appear, click ok,

**Step 3.** Go down to the “AJAX Options” section and tick the “Show Manual Refresh Button” and “Enable Asynchronous Automatic Refresh” options, change the number in the box below to 15 (This is the lowest setting or number of seconds it will allow you to go).

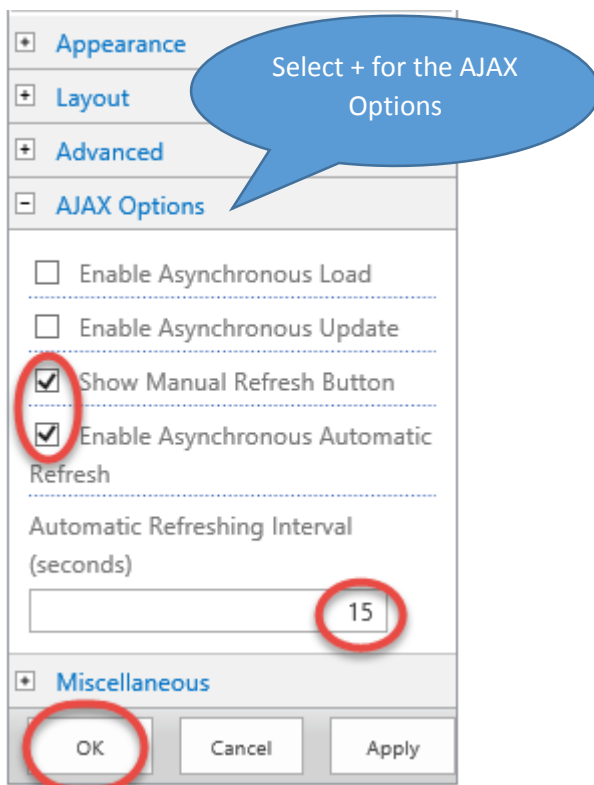


Figure 11-Choosing the AJAX options

Click OK at the bottom.

Save and Close the Page.

**Step 4.** Test the above by creating a new message in the Team Comms library. Use Create *new item*.

View the Communications page. You should then see the message has been updated. Don't forget to use or try the Refresh button you created on the Communications page earlier on to instantly update the page, list or library.

## Conclusion

**Incorporating the AJAX** settings as part of a web part in a site can be an extremely effective and useful when for example when two items within a site require the data being transferred between them be kept up to date from one item to another such as one list or library to another. Having or adding major practical benefit to the End user experience. Members, Owners and Visitors alike.

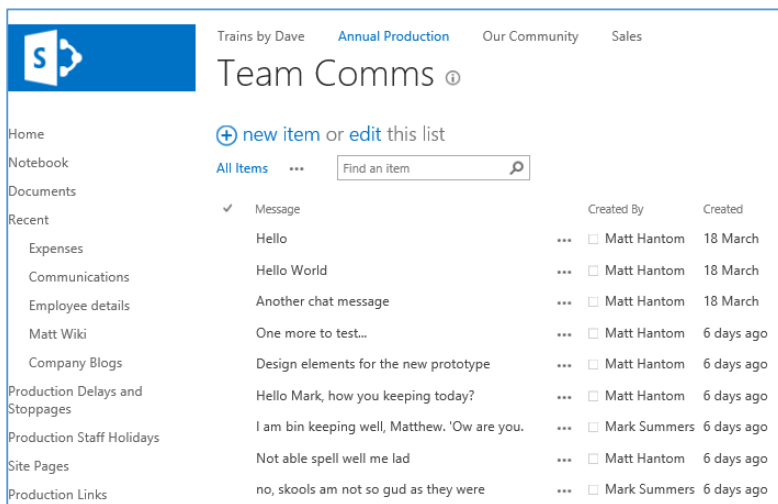


Figure 12-List Generating Chat messages

Original messages in the team Comms list

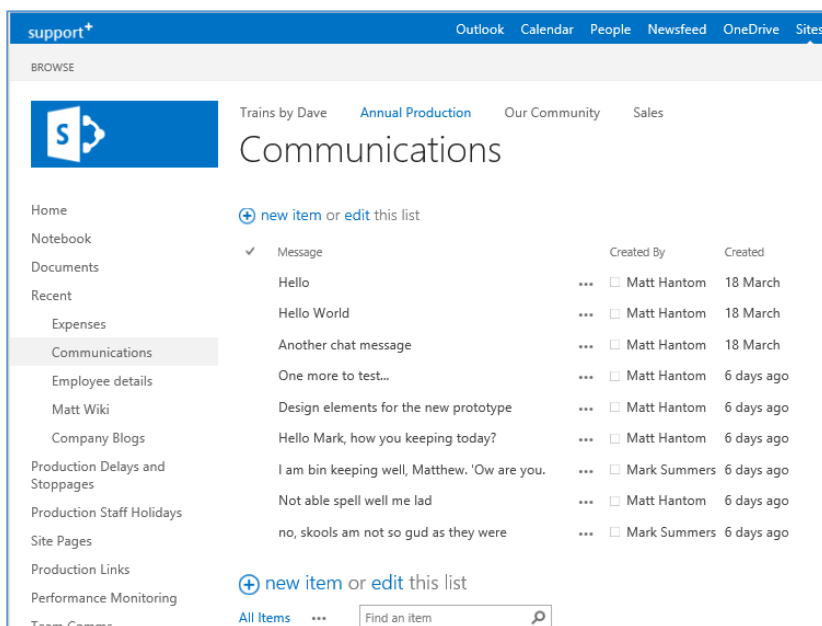


Figure 13- End Result Messages generated and updated via AJAX web part

End result using the AJAX settings in the Communications List Web part settings

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