

Improve user education for Slack “Save for Later”

Slack thrives on seamless, real-time collaboration—but in a fast-moving workspace, important information is often lost in the flood of messages. ‘Save for Later’ is designed to solve this, yet only 12% of users leverage it. This case study explores how we can drive adoption through strategic education and workflow integration.

1. Understanding the Core Problem: Why Do Users Need "Save for Later"?

Before we jump into solutions, let's deeply understand **what kind of messages users save for later** and **why they use (or don't use) this feature**.

What "Save for Later" Solves:

Slack is a **real-time, fast-moving communication tool**. Users are constantly bombarded with messages, tasks, and discussions. The *Save for Later* feature acts as a **lightweight bookmarking tool**, helping users:

- ✓ **Remember important messages** that may get buried in channels.
- ✓ **Track pending tasks or follow-ups** without relying on external tools.
- ✓ **Store useful links, files, or decisions** for future reference.
- ✓ **Reduce cognitive overload** by offloading key discussions to revisit later.

When Do Users Typically Save Messages?

- **During a meeting or discussion** → Users need to follow up later.
- **Task or action item mentioned** → Users don't want to forget.
- **Useful link or file shared** → Users want to reference it in the future.
- **Too busy at the moment** → Users want to come back when they have time.

Why Aren't More Users Using "Save for Later"?

Even though this feature is useful, **only 12% of users** leverage it. Why?

1. **Unclear Value Proposition** – Users don't immediately see why they should use it over alternatives (DMing themselves, pinning messages, external task tools).
2. **Lack of Habit Formation** – Unlike features like *Reactions* or *Threads*, there are no reinforcements or reminders to nudge users into using it frequently.
3. **Rigid Organization** – Once saved, messages are dumped into a single bucket with no categorization, making retrieval difficult.

4. **Poor Workflow Integration** – Messages saved for later don't automatically turn into actionable reminders or tasks.

Key Takeaway: "Save for Later" is a **powerful yet underutilized feature** because it's **hard to discover, lacks reinforcement, and doesn't fit neatly into user workflows**.

2. Target User Segments

To effectively improve the adoption of *Save for Later*, we must first identify **who benefits the most from this feature** and **why they need it**. Based on user behavior, we can define two primary user segments:

1. Task-Driven Professionals (Project Managers, Team Leads, Engineers, Designers, etc.)

Pain Points:

- Frequently receive action items in Slack but struggle to track them.
- Messages get buried in fast-moving channels, making it hard to revisit key discussions.
- Currently rely on external task management tools (Asana, Notion, Todoist) or manually DM themselves to track pending items.

How "Save for Later" Helps:

- Provides a quick way to bookmark tasks for follow-ups without switching apps.
 - Serves as a lightweight task tracker within Slack.
 - Reduces the need for constant reminders from colleagues.
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2. Information Collectors (Researchers, Analysts, Content Creators, etc.)

Pain Points:

- Constantly find useful links, documents, or insights in Slack but have no structured way to store them.
- Important resources often get lost in cluttered channels.
- No easy way to categorize saved content for future reference.

How "Save for Later" Helps:


- Acts as a personal knowledge hub, allowing users to store key insights.
- Saves time by keeping all relevant content in one place.
- Makes it easier to retrieve and repurpose useful resources later.

3. Proposed Educational Strategies

To improve the adoption of *Save for Later*, we need to **educate users at the right moments** and **enhance usability** to make it a natural part of their workflow.

Here are two targeted strategies that address the pain points we identified earlier:


Strategy 1: Contextual Nudges & Smart Prompts

 **Description:** Introduce **timely, non-intrusive nudges** that surface *Save for Later* at the **right moments** when users are most likely to need it.

◆ Example Prompts:

- If a message contains **keywords** like “reminder,” “follow-up,” “task,” or “action item”, Slack suggests:
"Want to save this for later? Click here to add it to your saved list!"



Sagar 14:35 *Want to revisit this later? Save it for easy access!* 

Can you please review this and submit it with your inputs by tomorrow EOD?

- **Long messages with attachments or links**
If a user receives a long message with links, documents, or detailed information, Slack prompts:
"This might be important! Save it for easy access later."
- **Missed messages from key channels**
If a user has unread messages in a high-priority channel (e.g., #team-updates, #announcements), Slack suggests:
"Catch up later! Save key updates so you don't miss them."



How This Solves Pain Points:

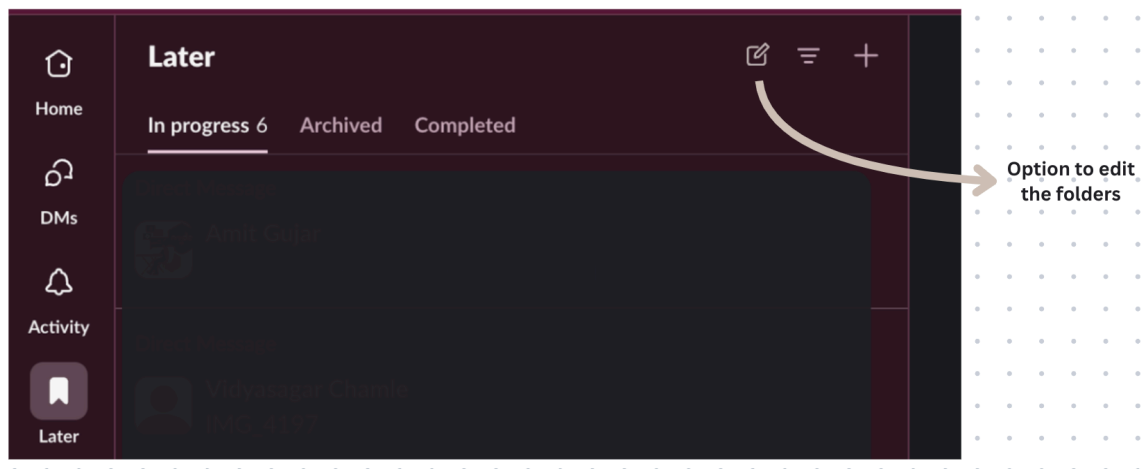
- ✓ **Improves Feature Discoverability** – Educates users at the exact moment they would benefit from *Save for Later*.
- ✓ **Reduces Information Overload** – Helps users manage important messages without losing them in the scroll.
- ✓ **Encourages Habit Formation** – Nudges help users develop a routine of saving important messages.

Strategy 2: Custom Folders & Smart Tagging

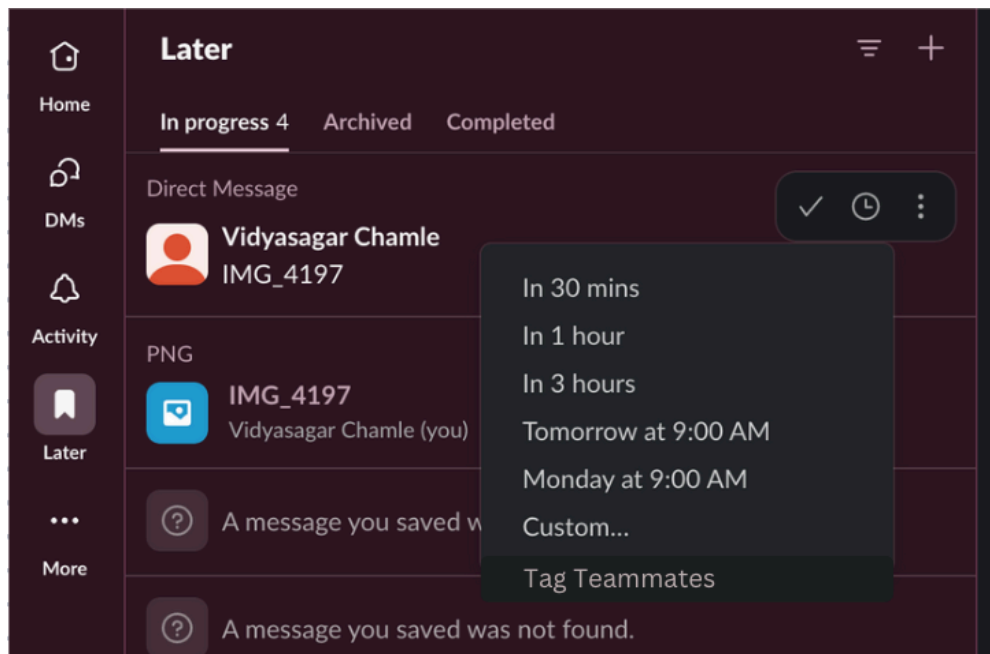
📌 **Description:** Allow users to **categorize their saved items** into **custom folders** (e.g., "Tasks," "Resources," "Team Updates") and introduce **smart tagging** to improve retrieval.

◆ Feature Enhancements:

- Users can **create custom folders** for better organization.
- Slack **automatically suggests categories** (e.g., "Meetings," "Tasks," "Files") based on message content.



- **Tagging & Mentions** – Users can tag teammates when saving an item for shared follow-ups.



How This Solves Pain Points:

- ✓ **Removes Clutter** – Users can structure their saved items instead of having a messy, unorganized list.
 - ✓ **Enhances Accessibility** – Saves time by making retrieval faster and more intuitive.
 - ✓ **Drives Collaboration** – Team-based tagging increases visibility and adoption through peer-to-peer discovery.
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4. Success Metrics

Feature Adoption Rate

- **What to Measure:** Percentage of active Slack users who save at least one message per week.
- **Why it Matters:** Tracks overall increase in usage, indicating whether nudges, prompts, and improved organization drive engagement.
- **Target:** Increase adoption from 12% to 20% within 3 months.

Saved Message Retrieval & Engagement

- **What to Measure:** Percentage of saved messages that are revisited, organized into folders, or tagged for follow-ups.
 - **Why it Matters:** Ensures that users aren't just saving messages but actively using and retrieving them, proving long-term utility.
 - **Target:** 30% increase in saved message retrieval and organization.
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5. Conclusion

By enhancing discoverability, reinforcing habit formation, and integrating Save for Later into existing workflows, we create a seamless and intuitive experience for Slack users. These solutions not only improve productivity but also deepen user engagement, making Slack an even more indispensable tool for teams.