KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

Smart Tiles: Solution Overview

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Table of contents

Introduction 4

Where Smart Tiles works 4

What a tile can be 5

Settings that shape the whole panel 6

Editing on the page 7

Visitors 7

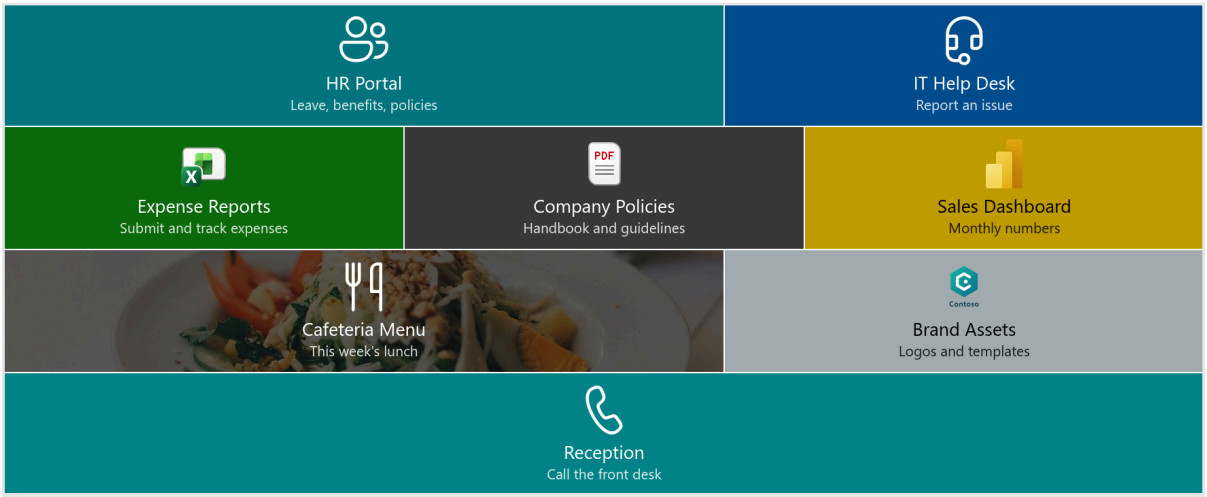
Licensing 8

Terms 9

Introduction

Every intranet page has a handful of destinations that people open far more often than anything else: the HR portal, the time-sheet system, the team's **document library**, the help desk. Smart Tiles turns those destinations into a panel of large, colored, icon-bearing tiles that visitors recognize at a glance and reach with a single click.

Smart Tiles is a **SharePoint** Framework **web part** for modern **SharePoint Online** pages. A page author adds it to a page, draws the tiles directly on the page in edit mode - no lists, no configuration files - and publishes. This article introduces the web part: where it works, what a tile can be, and which settings shape the panel as a whole.



A Smart Tiles navigation panel on a SharePoint Online page

Where Smart Tiles works

Smart Tiles is deployed to a **Microsoft 365 tenant** from the **app catalog** as a single package. After deployment the web part is available on every **site** of the tenant without further activation. It can be placed:

- on any modern page - a **site page**, a **news post** or a home page;
- in a regular section, in a section with columns, or in a **full-width section**, where the tiles stretch across the whole screen;
- on a single-part **app page**, where the tiles are the only content of the page.

The web part follows the theme of the site, including dark themes and the color variants of a section, and its interface is available in more than 40 languages, selected automatically from the language of the user.

Note

Smart Tiles supports modern pages only. It cannot be added to classic pages.

What a tile can be

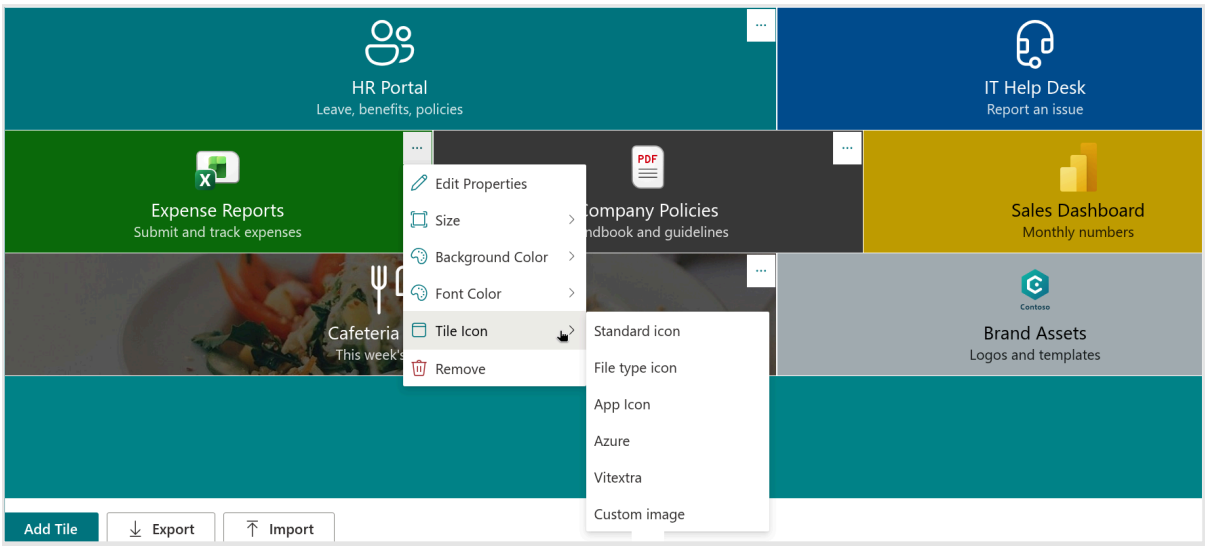
Each tile is a link with a look of its own. The properties of a tile fall into four groups.

Texts. A tile has a title and an optional description. The description is shown in smaller text under the title and in the tooltip of the tile; it can be switched off for the whole panel when a compact look is wanted.

Link. A tile can open a page, a document or any web address, in the same window or in a new tab. Beyond ordinary links, a tile can start an e-mail (`mailto:`), dial a number (`tel:`), send a text message (`sms:`) or open a **Microsoft Teams** chat or channel (`msteams:`). A link to a YouTube video is recognized automatically: the tile can show the video thumbnail as its background and gets a play button instead of an icon.

Look. Every tile has a background color and a font color, chosen from the six accent colors of the site theme, a palette of predefined colors, black and white. Instead of a color, a tile can carry a background image - entered as a URL or picked from a document library of the site. The icon comes from one of five icon sets - Standard (Fluent UI), File type, App (Microsoft 365), Azure and Vitextra - or is replaced by a custom image, such as a company logo. A tile comes in six sizes, from Extra Small to Full Width.

Audience. A tile can be shown only to members of selected SharePoint groups of the site or **Microsoft Entra ID** groups. Tiles without an audience are visible to everyone.

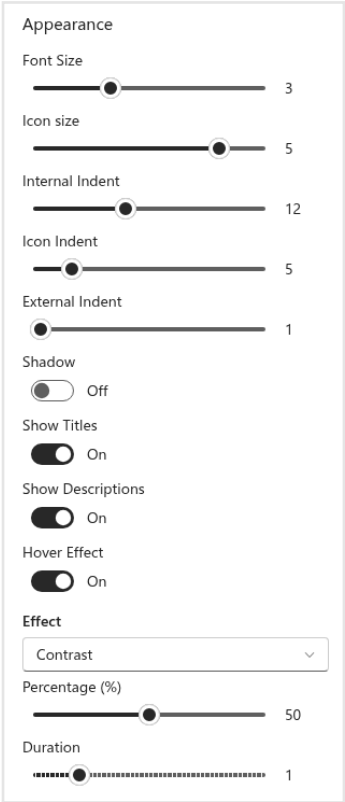


The context menu of a tile in edit mode

Settings that shape the whole panel

The property pane of the web part holds the settings that apply to every tile at once:

- **Font Size** and **Icon size** - seven and six steps respectively;
- **Internal Indent**, **Icon Indent** and **External Indent** - the space inside a tile, under the icon and between tiles;
- **Shadow** - a soft drop shadow under the icons;
- **Show Titles** and **Show Descriptions** - the texts on the tiles;
- **Hover Effect** - one of nine visual effects, such as brightness, blur or grayscale, applied when the pointer rests on a tile or the tile receives keyboard focus, with an adjustable strength and duration.



The Appearance settings of the web part

Editing on the page

All editing happens in the edit mode of the page, directly on the tiles:

- **Add Tile** adds a new tile at the end of the panel;
- the context menu of a tile opens its properties, changes its size, colors and icon, or removes it;
- tiles are reordered by dragging them;
- **Export** saves the tiles to a **JSON** file and **Import** loads them on another page or site, replacing the existing tiles or adding to them.

The web part stores the tiles in the properties of the page itself. No lists are created on the site, and nothing leaves the tenant: the tiles are published together with the page and follow its versions and approval flow.

Tip

A navigation panel built once can be reused on every department site: export the tiles, open the Smart Tiles web part on the other site and import the file.

Visitors

A visitor sees a lightweight panel. The editing tools are loaded only in edit mode, so a published page downloads only what is needed to show the tiles. Tiles are announced as links by screen readers, can be reached and activated with the keyboard, and the hover effect respects the "reduce motion" setting of the operating system. Links that open in a new tab are isolated from the page that opened them.

Warning

Audience targeting hides a tile from users outside the selected groups; it does not restrict access to the linked content. Permissions on the destination page, library or application remain the only protection of that content.

Licensing

Smart Tiles is installed with a trial period. The **About** group of the property pane shows the status of the license, the version of the web part, the start date of the subscription and the tenant it is assigned to. When the trial ends, the web part shows a notice in place of the tiles until a subscription is activated.

Tip

To deploy the web part in your tenant, see KB10035. How to Install a Vitextra Product in SharePoint Online. The first steps on a page are described in KB10042. How to Add and Configure the Smart Tiles Web Part.

Learn more about the product: *https://vitextra.com/en/products/smart-tiles*

Terms

App Catalog
The App Catalog is a special SharePoint site that stores apps for SharePoint, Teams, and other Microsoft 365 services. Global or SharePoint administrators can upload and manage applications from the AppSource marketplace, custom-developed apps, or third-party apps for the organization's internal use. There can be only one tenant-level App Catalog in a tenant; site collection app catalogs can be added for individual site collections.

App Page
An app page in SharePoint Online is a specialized type of page designed to host a single web part or app. It provides a focused, full-page experience dedicated to a specific functionality, allowing the app to use the entire page space without other distractions. This layout is ideal for scenarios requiring a large amount of data display or complex interactions, such as dashboards, data entry forms, or detailed reports.

Document Library
A special type of list that stores files, folders, and information about them. Like a list, a document library can contain personal or shared views, item-level permissions, and so on.

Full-Width Section
A full-width section in SharePoint Online is a layout option that allows content to span the entire width of the page, providing a more immersive and visually impactful presentation for elements such as images and videos.

JSON
JSON (JavaScript Object Notation) is a lightweight, text-based data-interchange format that is easy for people to read and write and easy for software to parse and generate. It is widely used by REST APIs, configuration files, and web applications to exchange structured data.

Microsoft 365
Microsoft 365 is a cloud-based subscription service that combines productivity apps such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook with cloud services such as SharePoint, OneDrive, Teams, and Exchange Online, together with advanced security and device management.

Terms

Microsoft Entra ID
Microsoft Entra ID (formerly Azure Active Directory) is a cloud-based identity and access management service offered by Microsoft. It allows organizations to efficiently manage and secure their users' identities and access to a variety of resources, both internal and external. These resources include Microsoft 365, the Azure platform, and thousands of other software-as-a-service (SaaS) applications.

Microsoft Teams
Microsoft Teams is a chat-based collaboration platform for business communications with features for online meetings, live events, and document sharing.

News Post
A news post is a site page of the News Post type that is used to share announcements, status updates, and stories with other people in an organization. News posts appear in the News web part and on the SharePoint start page.

SharePoint
SharePoint is a web-based collaboration platform that provides content management, document management, workflow applications, search, and other tools that empower employees and teams to work together. SharePoint is also a secure place to store, organize, and access shared information.

SharePoint Online
The cloud version of SharePoint, a web-based collaboration platform within Microsoft 365 that provides an extensive range of capabilities to store, share, and manage the digital information, content, and knowledge of an organization.

Site
A SharePoint site is a container for information within the SharePoint platform. Sites typically offer features such as document libraries, lists, calendars, discussion boards, and workflows, facilitating collaboration, communication, and document management within teams or across departments. Sites can be customized and configured to suit the specific needs and workflows of an organization.

Terms

Site Page
A site page is a modern SharePoint page that is built from sections, columns, and web parts, and is stored in the Site Pages library of a site. Site pages are used to share information, news, and other content.

Tenant
A Microsoft 365 tenant is a dedicated instance of Microsoft 365 services. The tenant holds the organization's information, such as users and domains (Microsoft Entra ID), configurations, subscriptions, and services. An organization receives a tenant by signing up for Microsoft 365 services.

Web Part
A web part is a primary building block of functionality or content placed on a SharePoint page. Some web parts support customization, such as configuring the web part or changing its appearance.