Building a Business Case for Office 365.

Making the case for providing your workers with increased accessibility to Office applications while significantly reducing IT costs.
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INTRODUCTION.

More office managers and key decision makers are looking to make the change from traditional Office applications and Outlook email to Office 365 Business. Why are so many organisations seeking to switch to Office 365?

Your business heavily relies on using Microsoft Office applications and Outlook email for daily productivity. But, what if you could provide your workers with increased accessibility to Office applications while significantly reducing IT costs?

Although this may sound too good to be true, the fact remains Office 365 for Business is helping many organisations both large and small to improve business operations and reliability while cutting costs. All of this has become possible along with reduced management and maintenance and an uptime guarantee of 99.9 percent.

Microsoft has gone to great lengths to simplify Office applications for both the end user and administrators. Office 365 offers the traditional application suite which includes Excel, PowerPoint, Word, and Outlook while adding more advanced productivity tools that facilitate better collaboration among workers and team members.

Additionally, Office 365 for Business provides your end users with improved access to documents and other files via anytime, anywhere access from any device. This functionality coupled with mobile productivity tools allow your staff to communicate and collaborate with one another regardless of where they are located. It also encourages your employees to function productively regardless if they are in the office, working remotely, or on the go.
10 GREAT REASONS TO MIGRATE TO OFFICE 365 BUSINESS.
The following specifics will help you to build a business case for Migration to Office 365 Business.

1. GET ACCESS TO FAMILIAR APPLICATIONS PLUS MORE, AT A REDUCED COST.
Microsoft offers a variety of plans when you subscribe to Office 365. To provide you with an idea of what is possible, the Premium subscription for Office 365 Business includes access to:

- Word
- OneNote
- Excel
- PowerPoint
- Exchange Online
- Outlook
- Business class email, calendar, and contacts with a 50GB (gigabyte) inbox per user
- Microsoft Publisher
- Skype for Business (VoIP)
- IM and HD videoconferencing with Skype for Business app
- OneDrive for Business with 1TB (terabyte) of file storage and sharing
- Unlimited online meetings
- Access to work management tools that help teams collaborate and multi-task
- Access to a social network to help employees collaborate across departments and locations
- Access to online versions of Office in the cloud including Excel, PowerPoint, and Word
- Access to fully installed Office applications on both PC and Mac devices.
- Professional digital storytelling tools to create interactive presentations, projects, reports, and more
- Access to Office apps on tablets and phones for the fully installed mobile Office experience on up to 5 tablets and 5 phones per user

That’s a lot of capabilities for an affordable subscription of £7.80 per user/per month for up to 300 users (at the time of writing) plus, businesses of all sizes have access to enterprise level productivity tools that help to level the playing field in a competitive marketplace.
Office 365 is available in three different plans which include small business, medium-sized organisations and larger organisations that require enterprise level tools and advanced compliance technologies.

2. ACCESS FROM ANYWHERE USING ANY TYPE OF DEVICE.
Office 365 Business is hosted and maintained by Microsoft which means there is no need to install and update software if you prefer not to. Instead, you have access to everything you need without having to install and maintain servers and networks. Set up is fast with immediate access and allows you to access Office applications with a single sign in using any device (tablet, PC, or smartphone) in any location. Single sign in runs in the system tray for each device to allow for easy login to Office 365.

By switching to Office 365, you can improve workflow efficiency which is critical to your organisation’s bottom line. Your organisation is unified with anytime, anywhere access and the IT maintenance is the responsibility of Microsoft data centers.

3. BETTER SECURITY AND PRIVACY.
Although Microsoft hosts cloud-based services, they acknowledge that files and documents belong to your organisation. As part of your subscription, they have the proper compliance and security technologies deployed along with an agreement not to scan your data for promotional purposes.

Security is a major reason why businesses have been reluctant to move to the cloud. However, this has changed as Microsoft’s services have become much more secure. The security technologies now include the following:

- 128-bit SSL/TSL encryption is used to prevent unauthorised interception of transmissions to applications, files, and shared documents
- Antivirus and anti-malware definitions are routinely updated along with security technologies that comply with the Trustworthy Computing Initiative implemented by Microsoft
- Email protection is provided using Forefront Online Protection for Exchange when accessing Exchange Online. Additionally, Microsoft deploys multiple virus engines in the antivirus program and anti-spam technologies to ensure secure email communications
In terms of overall security, Microsoft routinely undergoes security audits to ensure they remain in compliance. Additionally, they monitor datacenter networks for any unauthorized or suspicious activities. A Security Development Lifecycle is also deployed during development and maintenance of Microsoft’s online services.

4. COMPLIANCE.
Remaining in compliance with industry standards can often be costly and complex for many organisations. Office 365 and Microsoft datacenters are certified ISO 27001 compliant with continued successful completion of SAS70 Type I and Type II audits.

Microsoft has also added the necessary security deployments to help Office 365 users to remain in compliance with industry standards such as those for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. They have also successfully earned the EU Safe Harbor Seal for implementation of Privacy Shield Framework.

5. ACCESS TO THE LATEST UPDATES WHICH MEANS LOWER UPGRADE COSTS.
In the past, when you wanted to update to the latest version of Office, you were required to buy a license for every device in order to gain access. Since Office 365 is offered as SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) this provides your organisation with instant access to the latest version of the software without the added cost to upgrade. Automatic updates are included in your subscription and at no extra cost.

6. OFFICE 365 BUSINESS WEB APPS HELP TO EXTEND YOUR COMPANY’S REACH.
Workflow processes are available regardless of the location of team members. Office 365 Business web apps allow your employees to create, share, and edit documents online making them accessible to all team members around the clock 24/7.

Other ways Office 365 Business extends your organisation’s reach include:

- Easy access to shared calendars and email which unifies your business by keeping everyone in sync
- Complete access to a robust set of solutions including websites that establish your brand without hosting costs, voice and video conferencing, online portals, Web conferencing, instant messaging, voice mail, e-mail, and powerful collaboration tools
- Seamless integration and backwards compatibility with previous versions of Office and other Microsoft applications
Office on the go ensures your employees never miss a meeting regardless of where they are. Plus they can easily access and edit documents in Word, PowerPoint, and Excel using Windows Phones, Android Phones, or iPhones. Additionally, SharePoint Newsfeed, Lync Mobile (Skype for Business) and OneNote are readily available on mobile devices as well.

**GUARANTEED 99.9% UPTIME SLA IMPROVES RELIABILITY AND DISASTER RECOVERY.**

When you subscribe to Office 365, Microsoft provides a comprehensive Service Level Agreement (SLA) which guarantees an uptime of 99.9 percent. The SLA covers every part of Office 365 in addition to each user. You also have access to a Service Health Dashboard which provides service health visibility on a daily basis, giving you peace of mind and improved business continuity.

As part of the uptime guarantee, Microsoft utilizes geo-redundant datacenters which simplify disaster recovery. It also saves your organization time and money on the development of a disaster recovery strategy.

**8. SCALABILITY MEANS YOU ONLY PAY FOR THE RESOURCES YOU USE.**

Office 365 is scalable allowing you to add or subtract tools and applications as your business needs change. This is much more cost effective than having unused IT infrastructure sitting around in anticipation of business expansion. Instead, with Office 365 you can modify services at a moment’s notice.

**9. DEPENDABLE APPLICATION AND FEATURE MODIFICATIONS ENSURE THERE ARE NO SURPRISES.**

Many cloud service providers tend to change or discontinue applications at a moment’s notice which provides businesses with inconsistent delivery. When you subscribe to Office 365 Business, Microsoft provides you with advance notice to help you plan accordingly in the event of any changes.

You always receive the services to which you subscribed without any surprises or hidden fees. If Microsoft makes any big changes to the software, they always notify you at least one year in advance.
10. FLEXIBLE DEPLOYMENT ALLOWS YOUR BUSINESS TO CONFIGURE A TAILORED SOLUTION.

If your organisation is not ready to completely migrate to the cloud, it is possible to do it gradually using a single cloud platform, a solution on the premises, or both types of solutions combined.

When you combine the cloud with an on premise solution, this is known as a hybrid environment. This can help if you are a business that must meet specific compliance requirements. It also provides a way to have remote employees use a cloud solution while others work on the premises. If you choose a hybrid solution, the integration is seamless with access to the same productivity tools both in the cloud and on the premises.

SOME STATISTICS TO BACKUP YOUR BUSINESS CASE FOR OFFICE 365.

–According to research conducted by Okta, a U.S. cloud identity management company valued at $1.2 billion, “Office 365 has been coming up from behind to become the No. 1 deployed apps in enterprises. An infographic published in Business Insider showed Office 365 surpasses Salesforce as the most deployed app among Okta’s 2,000 enterprise customers.”

–A recent study by IDC (International Data Corporation) showed, “The cloud market will grow from $56.6 billion in 2014 to more than $127 billion in 2018. Most companies will only pay for the actual resources they use, like minutes of computing time, bytes of storage, usage of add-on apps and services, and so on. Customers love this and are ditching traditional software and computers at a rapid rate so they can rent their tech via cloud computing.”

–BitGlass, which also offers security services for Google Apps, Office 365 and Salesforce, recently conducted a survey of 81,000 users one year ago. “At the time, the company found that Google Apps was far more popular, accounting for 16% of user’s email, compared to Office 365 at not quite 8%.”

In a more recent survey during October 2016, “BitGlass revealed to Business Insider that “Office 365 has now overtaken Google Apps in terms of usage. Office 365 has surged ahead of Google in the enterprise and is dominating future enterprise deployment plans (29%) versus Google Apps (13%),” a spokesperson said.
FINAL THOUGHTS.
As you can see, migrating to Office 365 Business provides solid advantages in terms of risk management, cost reduction, and improved productivity. Additionally, you can reduce IT capital expenses by eliminating on premise servers.

Your organisation also can take advantage of the flexibility Office 365 Business has to offer by deciding which applications you wish to migrate to the cloud and others that you prefer to keep on the premises. Plus, you enjoy all of the security and reliability advantages with access to cutting edge technologies that keep your business moving forward.

These are just a handful of the ways your organisation can grow by using Office 365 Business. The specific applications and services will depend upon your choice of plans. Regardless, Office 365 Business will help you to run your organisation more efficiently while maintaining your brand and professional image.

ABOUT OUR IT DEPARTMENT.
Our IT Department is an award winning IT support Company that is based in the heart of London. As a Microsoft Gold Partner and Gold Small to Mid-market Cloud Solutions specialist, we provide Strategic Guidance and expert advice, in addition to deployment and migration services to organisations that wish to embrace the many benefits of Office 365 in a business environment. Click above to find out more about our Office 365 business Services.

Contact a member of our Business Development Team today on 020 8501 7676 and find out more about our Office 365 Business deployment, migration and consultancy services.