

MANAGED OFFICE 365

THE BENEFITS TO SMALL- AND
MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESSES



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What is Office 365?

As a small- or medium-sized business (SMB), your life is full of challenges. You have to manage ballooning expenses while you grow your company with the latest technology. Staying competitive and productive can leave you feeling overwhelmed.

The modern workforce needs dependable productivity tools that let employees work and collaborate efficiently. And that's what **Microsoft Office 365** offers: all the essential tools every business needs to get work done, in one subscription-based package. Its combination of email, word processor, spreadsheet, presentation application, and calendar has made it extremely popular with businesses of all sizes.

But how can your small-business benefit from Office 365?

Regardless of the size of your business or the industry you're operating in, you can reap many benefits from moving some or all IT-related functions off premises for a third party to manage.

With more companies using Office 365, working with a Managed Services Provider (MSP) to develop a productivity suite tailored to your business lets you focus on things that matter most: keeping your staff productive and increasing your bottom line. On top of the multiple benefits that Office 365 brings, there are quite a few ways that MSPs can add even more value to this industry-leading platform. Let's explore some of them.



How Office 365 Works

Simply put, Office 365 is Microsoft's cloud version of Office. It's powered by the cloud, which means users can access applications and files from any PC, Mac, tablet or mobile device with an Internet connection. So if a client sends you an important document that requires your input when you're on the move, it's never been easier to get things done.

It offers anytime, anywhere access

When working on your Office 365 files, you upload and synchronize files with Microsoft's cloud platform, Windows OneDrive, and then access them from different locations or devices that don't have Office or store them locally.

Most clients are familiar with the desktop version of Office 365, but Office Web Apps are recent important additions. As a free and limited internet version of the original Office, Office Web Apps is integrated with OneDrive, which lets you use Web Apps to view and edit files on devices that don't have Office installed.

How Office 365 Works



It's subscription-based

Office 365 is offered as a subscription-based plan in the cloud. It's a hybrid between the desktop version and the free web apps. One of the best things about the service is its web-based application across multiple devices. That last part is what matters to businesses and clients.

Based on your preferred subscription, you can get different apps and tool combinations. Most PC plans include Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access, OneNote, and Publisher, while the Mac business versions don't include OneNote, Publisher, or Access.

Most companies considering the cloud have security as a strong motivator. Office 365 offers the same user-level security options and Trust Center as the desktop version, and you get the assurance that your files are saved in highly secure, state-of-the-art data centers. This lets SMBs enjoy far better security migrating to Office 365 than they can afford on their own.

It can be used offline

Depending on your business needs, you can choose to run Office 365 offline. You will, however, need to connect to the internet every 30 days to maintain your subscription. Office 365 will let you know when it's time to connect.

At this point, the Office 365 market is rapidly expanding and there are several compelling reasons to consider partnering with an MSP for a subscription.



Lower Business Costs With **Office 365**

According to a technology survey, maintaining existing equipment and infrastructure takes the lion's share of a company's IT budget at 37 percent, but adoption and development of new technologies and innovation is not far behind at 33 percent. To deal with the rising costs of IT, companies are turning to intelligent technology as a smarter way to run their businesses.

By outsourcing your Office 365 needs, you get all the benefits of a comprehensive productivity suite at prices that don't break the bank. You also get to decide how much you're willing to pay for the office tools that will suit your needs. For SMBs, this can be crucial, especially in the first months after starting their business when they have limited resources and budget.

However, a poorly planned Office 365 migration can result in inflated costs and wasted IT resources. To avoid this, determine what your needs are and discuss them with a trusted MSP that can recommend a suitable package for you.



How **Office 365** keeps your cloud, network, and data flexible and secure

In today's digital age, many organizations find managed services more beneficial than ever before. This is because small and mid-sized businesses can integrate Microsoft Office 365 with their managed services bundles at no extra cost when they get it as a package from an IT provider.

Pairing managed services with Office 365 helps unlock even higher levels of productivity, which is evident across all verticals. This is because Microsoft's product is extremely flexible, packed full of features, and can be deployed in a full cloud environment, on-premises only, or in a hybrid environment. For example, we recommend that businesses move some employees to the cloud but keep others on-premises for compliance or operational reasons.

Needless to say, Office 365 has become an invaluable tool for businesses. By partnering with a single Cloud Solution Provider, you can enjoy a single point of contact and lower operational costs with one monthly bill for all your Microsoft cloud solutions.



How **Office 365** keeps your cloud, network, and data flexible and secure

Migrating to a cloud environment is the first step in future-proofing your data center with a robust network infrastructure. An experienced cloud managed services provider can make the latest technology and services available to your business without any hassle. With Office 365, you will no longer be stuck constantly buying or upgrading hardware, installing software, patching and migrating them, and then in a few years doing it all over again. Everything is taken care of by a cloud managed services provider, which allows you to eliminate the need for in-house IT staff altogether, or allows your existing IT staff to focus on more important tasks.

As such, a monthly subscription for the Microsoft Office 365 cloud-based service offers substantial savings. A managed cloud network allows the provider to manage all applications and servers in a central data center, which offers even better control over service levels, performance and maintenance. This increased network availability also raises employee productivity. Simply put, the longer you work with a cloud managed services provider, the more familiar they become with your network, leading to faster response times through enterprise-level monitoring and remote cloud services.



How **Office 365** takes data security to the next level

It's no secret that your data, the lifeline of your enterprise, is crucial for business continuity. But there are so many things that can go wrong. Natural disasters can damage your servers and take you offline for weeks, even months, potentially costing you hundreds of thousands of dollars in damages. Employees make mistakes and delete files; applications and emails get hacked and infected with malware and viruses. How many of these risks can you afford to take?

Office 365 does more than simply give you more control over your data security and compliance; it offers advanced built-in privacy, transparency, and more refined user controls.

Partnering with an MSP offers better control over service levels, performance and maintenance. This keeps data secure across all cloud services and applications, ensuring rapid data recovery and an actionable business continuity plan. As such, your business operations can continue with minimal downtime even if a disaster does strike. As you build a working relationship with a cloud managed services provider over time, you get the added peace of mind that someone knowledgeable and familiar with your systems is in charge of your network, leading to faster response times.

How Office 365 takes data security to the next level

In addition to the collaboration benefits, companies relying on managed services with Office 365 get the added benefit of being able to meet various data protection requirements. Managed services will help eliminate the need to own and maintain redundant physical infrastructure for data backup and disaster recovery while still keeping your infrastructure fully protected. What's more, all of Microsoft's Office 365 solutions are hosted in Microsoft's secure data centers, which means that onboarded companies are insured with multiple layers of security and service continuity.

This increased network availability also raises employee productivity and promotes even more cost savings. Remote network users can access centralized data within the same network, which includes virtual services, and you can build storage and backup into a centralized network. Office 365's advanced tools paired with a managed services provides the peace of mind needed to work with confidence.



How MSPs can ensure a hassle-free **Office 365** migration

Trying to quantify the number of items you need to migrate to Office 365 can seem overwhelming, especially for a team that has not experienced a migration. This is where working with an experienced MSP comes in. They can launch your project in the right direction from start to finish.

Partnering with the right MSP provides the dedicated attention necessary to properly execute your project by laying out plans and scheduling all milestones.

Some of the questions an MSP can help you answer include:

- Will your environment be 100% cloud or a hybrid of cloud and on-premises solutions?
- What are your security requirements?
- What DNS changes will be required?
- Who will provision the Office 365 environment?
- What changes will need to happen to SPAM filtering?
- What are your compliance requirements?
- Who will be answering all those phone calls and emails?
- How do end users connect on their mobile devices?
- Can your network bandwidth support this?
- Is integration with other applications supported?

How MSPs can ensure a hassle-free **Office 365** migration

After the migration, an ongoing support agreement with an MSP also provides your internal IT team with a high level of support for this new environment they know little about. As your personnel focuses on what they know and do best, an MSP can offer ongoing, proactive support to help deliver a seamless end-user experience.

An MSP that specializes in the provision of Microsoft cloud-based solutions can get you through the onboarding process as fast and painless as possible. To learn more, check out our Cloud Managed Services offering or give us a call to get started.



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Are you ready to realize long-term value from **Office 365**?

Call us today to talk with one of our seasoned consultants.
We're happy to answer your questions, provide recommendations,
and your current IT.

Request your free consultation today!

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