

Microsoft Partner



THE **ULTIMATE** GUIDE TO **MICROSOFT** 365

*Equipping a modern workforce with
advanced technology built for productivity*



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It's easy to fall behind on your organization's technology, and the marketplace usually isn't very forgiving

While your hardware ages, the technology you need to support your customers and maintain a productive workforce keeps advancing. Ultimately, you end up with computers and tech that can't meet the demands of the newest applications, limiting your efficiency and potentially leading to unhappy customers.



To solve this problem, many businesses are turning to Microsoft 365

Finding a powerful, robust solution that doesn't disrupt your business's current workflow is a challenge, but for many organizations, Microsoft's offering fits the bill.



Microsoft 365 can help your business:

- Enhance communication
- Easily manage remote work
- Get immediate access to the latest versions of Microsoft programs
- Protect your organization's information
- Cut costs

In this guide, we'll take a deep look at what you can expect to get out of a Microsoft 365 subscription, how it can help you grow your business, and the next steps you should take if you're interested in making the switch.



What Exactly is Microsoft 365?



Microsoft 365 is a cloud-based suite of popular applications like Word, Excel, and PowerPoint combined with Microsoft's existing online services (such as OneDrive and SharePoint) and security tools — all within a single subscription.

Microsoft applications are incredibly useful, but they can take a toll on your computers and IT team. Many small businesses can't afford to consistently update their hardware to meet the demands of the desktop versions of these apps, which can bring work to a crawl due to their size. That's where Microsoft's subscription based solution comes in to play!



Microsoft 365 is the one-stop shop for Productivity, Security, and Windows

Microsoft 365 comes with the full suite of applications. Under the hood are portals designed for easy administration inclusive of security, compliance, and more.



Your get access to:

- **Exchange Online:** reliable and accessible email loaded with the good stuff (encryption, archiving, large mailboxes) and fewer headaches (downtime, in-house servers, upgrades)
- **Microsoft Teams:** communication tool for 1:1 or group meetings leveraging voice, video, chat, file-sharing, recording, and other modern features.
- **SharePoint Online:** document repositories with ability to share, maintain versions, access anywhere, etc.
- **Microsoft Office Suite:** includes desktop and web-based versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access, and more on up to 5 devices.
- **OneDrive:** 1TB of storage for users to store and share personal work products accessible from any device, anywhere.
- **Built-in Security:** including anti-malware, anti-spam, data protection, multi-factor authentication, etc.
- **24/7 Support:** so you can work anywhere, anytime



Your Office is Always Up to Date

No longer will you wait a few years to update your software until your organization's operating system is no longer compatible

Suddenly having to jump forward several generations of software can be difficult for your employees and cause you to make drastic adjustments to the way you do business, leading to a drop in productivity and potentially costly downtime.

One of the top benefits of a Microsoft 365 account is that you have immediate access to the newest versions of Word, PowerPoint, and more set to auto-update. Providing your workforce with these updated tools will allow them to take advantage of the latest features, security, and reliability updates. All without slowing down your hardware.

Having a forward-facing organization like this offers benefits that extend far beyond each app's immediate returns as well.



Remote Work & Collaboration

Does your company recognize the benefits of remote workers?

More and more businesses are increasingly seeing the benefits of remote work, and Microsoft 365 is here to make remote work as simple as possible.

Advances in networking and mobile technologies have enabled employees to do work outside the confines of the office. Companies are embracing this trend, with one study finding up to 71% of organizations allow remote work to some capacity.



Remote Work Statistics to Know:

- 98% of employees prefer to have the option to work from home
- 93% of remote workers prioritize having work-life boundaries in place
- 70% of remote employees report it's easier to achieve focused work
- 48% of remote workers report feeling more energized

Source: [Buffer](#)



Collaboration from Anywhere

Even if you don't offer full remote work, being able to access your work from any device can be extremely beneficial

Working on an important PowerPoint presentation for a potential client, only to realize the night before that you need to make last-minute changes — and you left your laptop at the office? With Microsoft 365, you'll be able to log into your company's secure portal, access that presentation, and make edits easily.

Microsoft 365 also comes with tools that allow teams or departments to coordinate and monitor work, increasing efficiency and production.

For example, a centralized planner can track all your team's work, while team members will be able to leave comments on Word docs simultaneously.

Since all your work will be in the cloud, you won't have to worry about dealing with costly downtime or suffering an on-sight data loss.



Built-in Security

Sending your sensitive data to the cloud, seemingly out of your control, can be a nerve-wracking decision. Who hasn't heard stories about major data breaches or employees improperly storing information on their personal devices?

Businesses are often too lax about cybersecurity, but Microsoft provides tools that help you and your IT team create and manage a strong culture of cybersecurity.

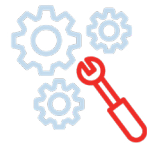
Microsoft takes a defense-in-depth approach to security, which means they provide physical, logical, and data layers of security features and operational best practices.

Your Microsoft 365 subscription comes with built-in security functions, including:



Message Encryption

Flexible out-of-the-box encryption policies like "Encrypt Only" and "Do Not Forward", allow you to protect sensitive information.



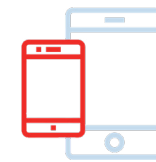
Secure Documents

Restrict and track access to documents across the organization, preventing unauthorized viewing or editing — even if they are sent outside the organization.



Multi-Factor Authentication

With an enhanced login process (which at higher levels of Microsoft 365 subscriptions can be customized to your organization), you'll be able to increase your security drastically.



Mobile Device Management

Control the level of access individual devices have to your account and information, allowing you to fix this issue easily.



Microsoft 365 is primarily a cloud-based service

You have to be able to trust your provider's dedication to security

Here's Microsoft's Commitment to YOUR Data:

- **You Own Your Data:** Microsoft will only use your customer data to provide the services agreed upon. It is not used or shared for advertising purposes.
- **It's Your Data if You Leave:** Microsoft has strict standards and removes all cloud customer data from the systems under their control.
- **You Choose Where Your Data Resides:** with data centers around the world, you are able to determine where you want to store your data.
- **Your Data is Secure at Rest and in Transit:** Microsoft utilizes advanced encryptions with multiple layers to create barriers against unauthorized access and safeguards against compromise.
- **Microsoft Defends Your Data:** you benefit from clearly defined and well-established data protection and compliance policies built into the contract.

Microsoft maintains an environment that meets an ever-growing number of compliance objectives in the name of keeping your data safe. While you can't rely on only your software provider to keep your organization safe, it's clear that Microsoft takes your data protection and security extremely seriously.

To learn more, read their [Data Privacy](#) and [Data Management](#) Policies



Expected Cost Savings

To fully understand just how much you'll be saving with Microsoft 365, let's take a look at the costs associated with the traditional model of owning your software and related hardware

When you own the IT infrastructure supporting your applications, you're going to run into many costs. The costs for owning an Exchange server alone can be staggering and include:

- **Hardware:** Exchange server and disks (including replication 2X on-site and 1X off-site), warranties, and contracts
- **Data Center costs:** licensing, cooling, electricity, rack, etc.
- **Backup:** the infrastructure, licensing, and overhead with reliable retention of data
- **Proactive Maintenance:** patching, upgrades of applications and operating systems, configuration, and enhancements
- **Reactive Support:** resources for troubleshooting and restoring services

And that's all just for one application.



Return on Investment

What are the cost benefits of Microsoft 365?

With your license, the server and security concerns are left to Microsoft, and the risk of downtime is significantly reduced. If your internet goes down, you won't have access to the cloud services — but even without Microsoft 365, you'd have the same problem.

Don't just take our word for it! A [study conducted by Forrester Consulting](#) into the potential return on investment (ROI) for organizations deploying Microsoft 365 E3 licenses aimed to understand the benefits, costs, and risks finding that **on average these businesses experienced:**



- **60% drop** in per user licensing spend, which averaged out to \$55 per user per month
- **25% saved** on travel and meeting expenses
- **205 %** Return on Investment

Altogether, these figures result in a net overall ROI of 154%.



Expected Cost

Your expected cost works out to:

\$22 per user per month for the Business Premium subscription.

Which includes full access to:

- Office applications
- Public cloud storage
- Collaboration services
- Microsoft business applications
- Device management
- Data protection across devices
- Malware, viruses, and spyware security
- and many more security features

Big difference, right?



Next Steps

Does Microsoft 365 fit your needs?

If it sounds like Microsoft 365 might be right for your business, then your next step should be finding a partner who can ensure that your move to Microsoft 365 is properly executed.

Without sufficient planning, your business runs the risk of suffering data loss or costly downtime during the move.

As a Microsoft Solutions Partner with a Modern Workplace designation, we here at Ascend Technologies have overseen many successful Microsoft 365 migrations. We'll be able to help you:

- Pick the Microsoft 365 subscription that is right for your business
- Oversee your migration
- Secure your network
- Be on call for any needs you might have

And if we think Microsoft 365 isn't the right fit for you, then we'll find the solution **best tailored** to your organization's needs.



Partner with Ascend Technologies

Get a fully operational contact center built for remote agents



Expertise You Can Trust

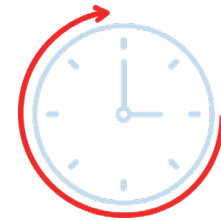
From guiding you to select the right subscription for your needs to overseeing migration and deployment, our expert technicians can ensure your business is up and ready to run with your Microsoft 365 package from day one.



Modern Work

Microsoft Partners

Our Microsoft Solution Partner designation means that we've proven ourselves in successfully helping organization implement the newest Microsoft 365 enhancements — allowing them to reach new levels of productivity and collaboration.



On-time Solutions

Our team is here to help you maximize your investment in Microsoft 365. Reach out to us at any time for assistance with tools, further integrations, or subscription changes if needed.



LEARN MORE ABOUT MIGRATING TO **MICROSOFT 365**

LEARN MORE ABOUT [M365 Migrations](#) OR



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