

MIGRATING SHAREPOINT ON-PREMISE TO Office 365

Best practices and solutions for your successful migration





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INTRODUCTION

Best practices for a successful Office 365 migration

Regardless of the approach you choose, there is much to consider when making the decision to move to Office 365. Read on as we examine the benefits of moving to Office 365, along with the migration planning, and how to manage your journey from On-premise to the Office 365.



Reinventing the Modern Business Ecosystem

Cloud computing has evolved into one of the major paradigm shifts in the digital age since its inception. Instead of upfront capital investment of millions of dollars and a year of time to plan for a data center, it is now possible to accomplish the same in the blink of an eye with a credit card.

In this cloud era, any size organization right from a single individual to a global, multibillion-dollar business can virtually access to the required computing capacity on demand.

Digital transformation is reshaping the way we do business across every industry in every region and most of the digital transformation occurring these days has some form of cloud computing at its core.

Needless to say, digital business requires speed and agility that cloud computing provides through the use of cloud services. The cloud undoubtedly promises to provide scale-free access to a variety of platforms, services, and infrastructures.

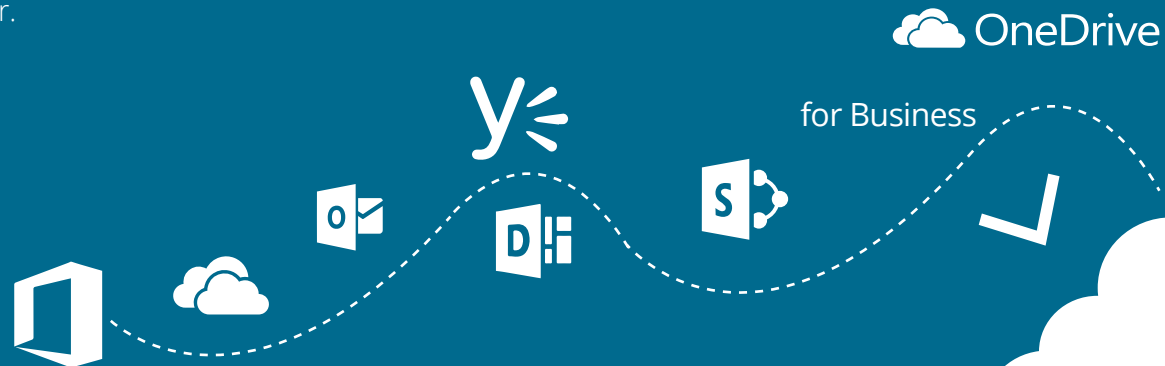
In fact, according to a recent research by the Gartner Group, the total public cloud market in 2016 was \$209.2 billion. This value is further expected to shoot up by 18% and will reach \$246.8 billion this year.

Interestingly, according to a recent survey by Forrester Research, 38% of enterprise decision-makers stated that they are building private clouds with 32 percent procuring public cloud services and the rest are planning to implement some form of cloud technology soon this year.

Furthermore, in the survey conducted by KPMG, when CIOs were asked about their top reasons for adopting cloud computing in, saving money only came in third. This suggests that rather than looking for immediate cost savings, organizations are considering a long-term strategic perspective.

Cloud adoption is undeniably ticking upward at an ever-increasing rate, and organizations are not shying away to take advantage of the benefits that data and applications in off-premises environments storage provide.

It is evident that most enterprises are steadily shifting towards the cloud-based frameworks. However, taking a decision to migrate from on-premise to the cloud is not a frivolous task and the organizations must understand the challenges that are driving them to make this move.



Current environment, challenges

1 Abandon on-premise SharePoint: But Why?

You would surely have heard the phrase, “if it’s not broken, don’t fix it.” While this could be a good advice in some instances - however, confidential data storage is not one of them. Waiting to watch the on- premise servers “break” should not be the impetus to secure your data and it is crucial to make a move at the right time.

2 Limitations of On-Premise SharePoint Servers

On-Premise SharePoint servers require a huge capital investment to set up physical hardware and run costs on electricity, licensing, and support. Moreover, On-Premise SharePoint servers typically lack the availability and load balancing capabilities that Office365 Online provides for the same cost.

Furthermore, On-Premise SharePoint requires your IT team to be responsible for the maintenance of the SharePoint farm. Additionally, by using Office365, your business only needs to pay for the number of users it currently supports – no more – no less.

Therefore, today more and more businesses are moving to a cloud-based storage solution, such as Office365.

3 Migrating to a new version of SharePoint isn’t always an easy task

Organizations sometimes consider migration as a simple process and feel that they can easily perform on their own but later realize that they cannot fix issues such as URL redirect, UI refactoring (from table based layout to div based layout).

Always remember, some of the things you worked hard to create in previous versions might not behave properly once you've made the switch to O365.

O365 installs some of the files belonging to previous versions, which means that most of your customizations will still work.

However, there are some reports of Workflows no longer working on Office 365, because Microsoft upgraded their platform to SharePoint 2013, and left the existing tenants in 2010 mode.

Nevertheless, it works for most, but with some reported lost functionalities.

And this is Office 365 - meaning there are only very limited customizations. It will be a different story for those On-Premises.

So, should you worry about it?

Yes, you should consider the fact that you have the compatibility mode now, but you should know that it will not solve all your problems. So how should you plan for a smooth migration?

Planning a Smooth Journey to the Cloud

Migration is a journey and like all journeys, how smoothly you transit defines your success. For many enterprises, implementing cloud computing and deriving value from it are not necessarily synonymous. Diverse legacy estates, technical debt, burgeoning cloud services, and delivery options (public, private, hybrid) create a high level of ambiguity and complexity in decision-making.

Migrating to the cloud is a big endeavor and brings lots of positive changes to the way an organization collaborates. Choosing the right way to get there is probably the most critical step, so it's important to do extensive research on which method best suits your needs.

Apparently, determining which aspects of a business to place in the cloud and which would be better remaining on-premise is one of the first decisions a company must make. In addition to this, there are choices about whether to opt for private or public options, or even a combination of the two as part of a hybrid package.



Moving from SharePoint On-Premise to the Cloud (Office 365) – Points to consider

Every organization is different and their journey to the cloud always has some unique saga to tell. Nevertheless, the migration approach should be planned carefully to make sure a smooth transition to the cloud.

Organization faces constant pressure to do more with less. While technology is often key to operating more effectively and efficiently, cost and complexity have often prevented organizations from taking maximum advantage of the potential benefits. The growth of SaaS (software as a service) has lowered barriers – no need to deploy servers or to install and configure complex software systems. Just sign up and go.

The result? People in departments from sales to marketing, from operations to finance now have the power to select and adopt tools to improve their own processes. And they're not slowing down to ask for permission.



Why should you migrate from SharePoint on-premise to O365?

1. Give Power to People

We know that every business problem can be solved with off-the-shelf solutions. But developing custom solutions has traditionally been too costly and time consuming for many of the needs teams and departments face—especially those projects that integrate across multiple data sources or require delivery across multiple devices from desktop to mobile. As a result, too many technology needs end up unsolved or under-optimized.

Microsoft smartly pieces together spreadsheets, email chains, and manual processes to fill in the gaps with **Office 365. Office 365 is designed for the unique workstyle of every group and includes purpose-built, integrated applications, including:**

- Outlook for enterprise-grade email, now with groups functionality
- SharePoint for sites and portals, intelligent content services, business process automation and enterprise search
- Yammer for driving company-wide connections
- Skype for Business as the backbone for enterprise voice and video
- And now, Microsoft Teams, the new chat-based workspace in Office 365

PowerApps and Microsoft Flow are both aimed squarely at these gaps.

They give people who best understand their needs and challenges the power to quickly meet them, without the time, complexity and cost of custom software development.

PowerApps and Microsoft Flow are enabled automatically for most Office 365 commercial plans since November 2016.

2. UI Redesign

Your UI/UX design is one of the most important key metric in determining your user retention rate. User retention cannot happen if the user finds your user interface (UI) to be too usual or lethargic.

Getting your UI and UX right is important if you want to make a great first impression with new customers. Look at how your UI design is laid out to see if the actionable items are transparent and that their functionality is obvious to users. Using relevant icons, concise content and easy-to-use navigation will help build the right flow.

The key is to leverage responsive web design as a foundational element for multi-channel UX and augment with device-specific experiences to make users feel truly at home on each channel. Organizations can simplify, modernize, and adopt a mobile-friendly design with O365 platform and redesign the look and feel with better mobile browser experience.

3. How do Azure and Office 365 Fit Together

Another myth is SharePoint Online / Office 365 cannot have customizations like they used to have in on-premises. However, Azure is Microsoft's cloud platform and is really an extension of Office 365. The added benefit of Azure is that it allows you to run customized business applications on cloud and to develop custom web applications that can easily integrate with SharePoint online. Azure and Office 365 go hand in hand to meet your specific needs.

A typical migration process from SharePoint On-premise to the cloud-based O365 is divided into **Five** simple stages.

1. Pre-migration check in the source environment

Before deciding your migration strategy, it is vital that you perform an analysis of your current environment. The discovery and assessment element of the content in your environment is the base for your migration and the crucial first step of the project. This phase provides you the opportunity to figure out your mission-critical content data in the source environment that needs to be migrated over to the new system. There are various discovery tools available that can help you get familiar with the customization, workflows, InfoPath forms, information architecture, and the amount of data within your source environment. This information is extremely valuable to have a complete picture of your source environment. The data that you gather help you in properly planning your SharePoint co-existence strategy, information architecture, mappings, and content filtering necessary during the next phase.

2. Building a successful migration strategy

Once you finish taking an inventory of the existing content and have a clear understanding of what you need to migrate, you can switch to the planning of the project. During this phase of your Office 365 migration project plan, you can take the information collected during your discovery assessment and begin to plan your company's future in the cloud.

The first thing, an organization must do is to determine how they will adopt the cloud-based Office 365. Choosing the right approach is not an easy task. The decision is influenced by many variables like the size of your organization, the impact on your users and IT department or the bandwidth of your connection.

Should I go all in or should I go for a hybrid deployment?

This specific answer is key to deciding what stays on the premises and what goes to the cloud. Some enterprises may choose to leave the mission-critical content in the on-premises farm while migrating collaboration workspaces and personal OneDrive containers to the cloud. Since office 365 has a plenty of tools and immense OneDrive storage, you can seek advantage of these features to **empower your employees and enhance internal/external collaboration while lowering your storage costs.**

While, on the other hand, some businesses choose to take the plunge and completely adopt Office 365 across the organization – leaving nothing on premises.

With low-cost subscriptions, easy-to-manage, the ability to work anywhere on any device and last but not the least, handling of all the heavy lifting for updates, patches, and upgrades by Microsoft, migrating to Office 365 is undeniably worth a try.

This stage also includes the process of analyzing all customizations in source environment as well as integration with any external system.

Eventually, you need to figure out your Office 365 migration project plan and strategy.

Migration methods available include:



Cutover migration

Choose this, if you're running Exchange 2003, Exchange 2007, Exchange 2010, or Exchange 2013, & if there are fewer than 2000 mailboxes



Staged migration

Choose this, if you're running Exchange 2003 or Exchange 2007 & there are more than 2,000 mailboxes



Hybrid configuration

Choose this, if you're running Exchange 2003 or Exchange 2007 & there are more than 2,000 mailboxes



IMAP migration

Choose this, if you're running Exchange 2003 or Exchange 2007 & there are more than 2,000 mailboxes



Third party migration tools

Choose this, if you're running Exchange 2003 or Exchange 2007 & there are more than 2,000 mailboxes

A few things in this step that you should determine-

- Are you planning to restructure any of your existing architecture?
- What about Managed Metadata?

This step provides you an opportunity to get off on the right foot by preparing for content and business rules to be followed across the environment. You may also be adopting Managed Metadata in the destination to help with content organization and classification. In this case, you need to ensure you have mapped out your metadata terms and their purpose. This will come in handy when you set up your mappings in the next steps. Once you've finalized your strategy and information architecture, you can consider setting up your Office 365 migration project plan. This step consists of setting up the mappings and content filtering that you will use during the migration.

Once you are done with your strategic planning phase, you can further move on to "smoke testing."

3. Smoke Test- A Step Towards the Right Direction

This phase of your Office 365 migration project plan will give you the opportunity to:

01

Migrate a meager portion of your content and validate the results

02

Consider making any modifications based on your pilot migration output

03

Perform some quick testing of the plans and mapping created during the Planning and Assessment phase

Additionally, this will give you a fair idea of what type of performance to anticipate throughout the migration and make the adjustments required for optimal migration.

4. Migrate- Getting to the Cloud Faster

Now you have arrived at the migration phase and the traditional heavy lifting can finally begin. Execute your Office 365 migration project plan in batches so that you can adjust each batch if required.

However, in case you missed to plan ahead of time, adjustments to the migration may result in significant delays to the overall project timeline.

5. Assessment- Validation, Remediation & Modifications

As you heave a sigh of relief with the completion of migration, it's time for you to review the final phase of the Office 365 migration project plan. Consider addressing any items modified or adjusted during the migration process as well as wrap up the destination content based on your information governance plan. Now, it's also the right time to address the sustainability items including how to deal with the old environment as well as how to assess and handle the content growth in the future.

Advantages of Migrating from SharePoint On-Premise to Cloud-based O365 from IT and Developer's perspective

Below image illustrates the advantages of migrating from On-premise to the cloud

IT Pro



Developers



The Office 365 platform is scalable and allows an agile and faster deployment for an IT professional, where the release process remains controlled by the client. Moreover, Developers can benefit from several new Open APIs and can realize applications where responsive UI is critically important, accessible cross-device, with social networking elements and have a secure platform.

“Enterprises across the globe are very rapidly adopting Microsoft’s Office 365 suite and it is apparent that Microsoft has placed cloud-based applications at the forefront of their strategy. Microsoft reported a 35% increase in Office 365 adoption last years and globally the system now has 85 million monthly active users. The increasing adoption of O365 comes at the time of a wider move in the way organizations manage their IT systems from a conventional segmented approach to a more modern cloud-based approach. This more modern approach helps the organization in embracing digital transformation. Overall the significant rise of Office 365 adoption is part of the encompassing digital transformation in the way enterprises approach their IT systems. There is a shift towards a more unified cloud-based approach that facilitates a streamlined experience and empowers users across the organization”.

Business Benefits of Moving to Office 365

Reduced Infrastructure cost

In case you are looking to modernize your server-side solutions, the expense of upgrading your existing infrastructure could be excessively exorbitant. Migrating to the cloud rules out concern and cuts down the operational cost. Microsoft takes care of the hardware and storage and you can 'Pay as you Grow' for easy scalability.

Streamlined operations with no hassles of upgrades or fixes

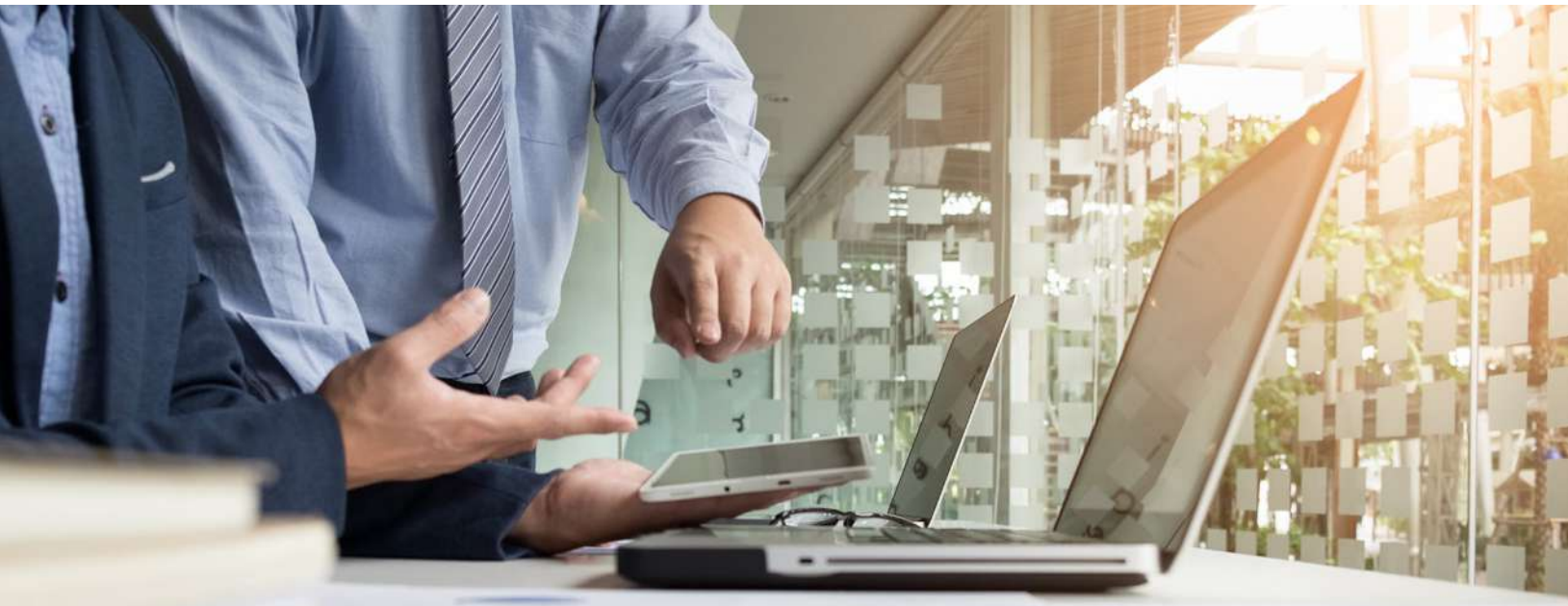
No more hassles of handling fixes and upgrades for solutions and ensure they are patched properly and as secure as possible. With Office 365, this is all taken care for you.

Increased productivity due to Unlimited Availability

Microsoft provides a 99.9% SLA for availability. On the other hand, in the on-premise option, you have redundant servers on-site and additional servers in an off-site location to provide the similar level of availability. But with O365, Microsoft makes it easy and has it all in place from day one to ensure your users have consistent access to their email and other services.

Improved efficiency due to amazing services

Office 365 is an amalgamation of different services. It's quite amazing when you consider all the different tools provided. You can seamlessly access the services through traditional means (Outlook connected to Exchange Online) or through browser-based connectivity (Yammer or SharePoint Online through your browser). When you log into your portal, you are offered a variety of tools to choose from and the list is constantly growing. OneDrive, Sites, Delve, Video, Office Online (Word/Excel/Point/OneNote) offer a fascinating price and features.





Mail



Calendar



People



Yammer



OneDrive



SharePoint



Planner



Tasks



Power BI



Delve



Video



Word



Excel



PowerPoint



OneNote



Sway



PowerApps



Forms



Flow



Teams



Dynamics 365



Store



Admin

Looking Forward

Readiness Matters- Act early for long-term success

With such a wide range of benefits available in the Cloud – and the technology now reaching a high level of maturity – organizations across all sectors and of all sizes should find positives from migrating operations to these services. However, that does not mean that organizations should assume that simply moving to the cloud will instantly solve all their problems. The key for organizations lies in understanding and connecting where solutions, platforms, and applications stand to gain the most from moving to the cloud, and at the same time, monitoring the deployment of these solutions closely. With the right approach and a clear plan, organizations can find it relatively quick and easy to deploy solutions in the cloud, thus paving the way for digital transformation.

How WinWire can make your journey smooth from On-Premise SharePoint to Office365?

WinWire's SharePoint Developers have a sound experience in migrating On-Premise servers to Office365 in various enterprise environments. WinWire's expertise and methodology help you avoid common pitfalls and challenges typically associated with upgrades and migration, including the disintegration of data and content.

WinWire has implemented a wide variety of SharePoint solutions for small teams as well as global firms covering different versions of SharePoint including MOSS 2007, SharePoint 2010, SharePoint 2013, SharePoint 2016 and O365 across diverse industries and business functions for our clients across the globe. With the help of our SharePoint experts and cloud-ready SharePoint solution accelerators (Intranet, Innovation, Department, Knowledge Forum, service request or Migration Assistant), we help you in meeting your strategic objectives to drive better ROI.

Customer Success Story

A large manufacturer of Semiconductor Equipment Modernized collaboration portal to increase employee engagement with Office 365

A large manufacturer of semiconductor equipment wanted to retire their legacy SharePoint 2010 environment and wanted to migrate content from SharePoint 2010 to O365 online. WinWire proposed a well-defined migration framework for content migration from the existing SharePoint 2010 portal to the new Cloud-based Online platform and:



Designed a hybrid solution to interact with external systems



Adopted Responsive UI for seamless UX across multiple devices



Leveraged Azure website to house all HTML based manuals

This helped them to unleash the productivity of employees and cut down their infrastructure maintenance cost drastically.

Are you planning to migrate from SharePoint On-Premise to Office 365?

Contact us Salesteam@WinWire.com to find out how we can help you with your migration journey.

WinWire
Technologies

Microsoft
Partner

Gold Cloud Platform
Gold Cloud Productivity
Gold Data Analytics
Gold Data Platform
Gold Application Development
Gold Collaboration and Content

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