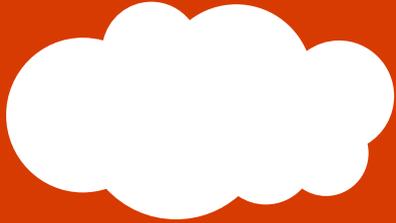Office 365

Myths About Moving to the Cloud

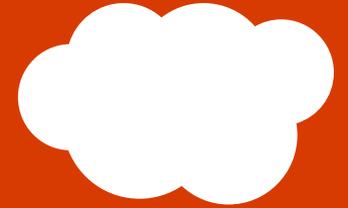What small and medium-sized businesses really need to know about moving to Microsoft Office 365

Most companies have decided they need the business agility and want the cost savings that come when moving to the cloud. But with the bewildering amount of contradictory information floating around on the Internet, not many really understand exactly what that means or what it entails.

Companies considering Microsoft Office 365 as their first step in moving applications to hosted solutions face similar inconsistencies, making it difficult to separate fact from fiction. For example, some businesses incorrectly believe Office 365 is simply a version of Office accessed by a browser.

That's just one of the misconceptions about Office 365 we want to correct, which is why we created this myth-busting guide to help you.

When considering Office 365 to power your organization, you need to know the facts. Your business depends on it. Ready to learn which of the top nine Office 365 business cloud myths you may have thought were true—but aren't? Read on.
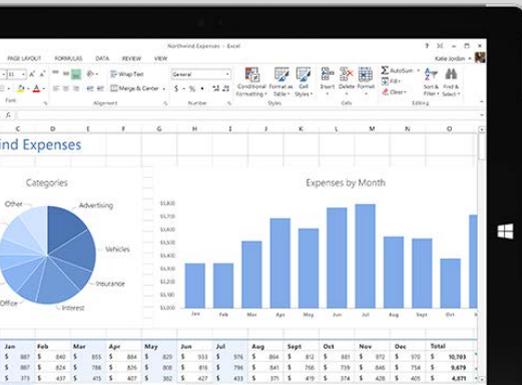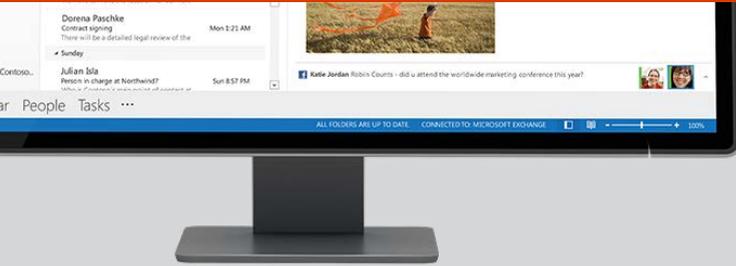
Myths About Moving to the Cloud

MYTH 1   Office 365 is just Office tools in the cloud, and I can only use it online.

MYTH 2   If our data moves to the cloud, our business will no longer have control over our technology.

MYTH 3   Keeping data on-premises is safer than in the cloud.

MYTH 4   I have to move everything to the cloud; it is an all-or-nothing scenario.

MYTH 5   Cloud migration is too much for my business to handle.

MYTH 6   Corporate spies, cyberthieves, and governments will have access to my data if it is in the cloud.

MYTH 7   Skype and Skype for Business are one and the same.

MYTH 8   Email isn't any simpler in the cloud.

MYTH 9   Continuously updating Office 365 will break my critical business applications.

MYTH 1

Office 365 is just Office tools in the cloud, and I can only use it online.

FACT

Office 365 is a suite of cloud-based productivity services, which can include:

- Office 365 ProPlus or Office 365 Business—the Office desktop client you already know and use, including Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and OneNote, with the added benefit of being licensed, deployed, and updated as a service. These applications are installed on your device, so they're available even when you are offline. And you have the option to store data in the cloud.

- Exchange Online for email & calendaring.
- SharePoint Online and OneDrive for Business for collaboration, websites, workflows, and enterprise file sync and share.
- Skype for Business for voice, IM, meetings, and presence.
- Yammer for social collaboration.

MYTH 2

If our data moves to the cloud, our business will no longer have control over our technology.

FACT

When you move to the cloud, headaches and time spent maintaining hardware and upgrading software are significantly reduced. Now you and your team can focus on the business rather than being a repair service. You have more time to spend improving business operations and launching agile initiatives.

Instead of spending ever-larger portions of your capital budget on servers for email storage and workloads, you can think strategically and support business managers in a much more agile fashion, responding to their needs quickly.

MYTH 3

Keeping data on-premises is safer than in the cloud.

FACT

It's becoming increasingly clear that your on-premises systems aren't inherently more secure than they'd be in the cloud, says Mark Anderson, founder of the INVNT/IP Global Consortium, a group of governments and security experts solving the growing cybertheft problem. Many companies are routinely hacked and don't know it, says Anderson, a tech visionary and founder of Strategic News Service.

Security has grown into a full-time job, one requiring a team of experts, and the few experts available require hefty salaries. Microsoft hires the best and brightest when it comes to thwarting security breaches, and we have the scale most companies can only dream about.

To keep Office 365 security at the pinnacle of industry standards, our dedicated security team uses processes such as the Security Development Lifecycle; traffic throttling; and preventing, detecting, and mitigating breaches that many companies don't have the resources to ensure. And, Microsoft Office 365 has a 99.9 percent financially backed uptime guarantee.

Additionally, we staff industry-leading regulatory compliance experts. We know and keep up to date with the latest regulations and rules: HIPAA and Sarbanes-Oxley, Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), ISO 27001, European Union (EU) Model Clauses, U.S.–EU Safe Harbor framework, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Canadian Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA), just to name a few.

To learn more about Office 365 security and compliance, visit Office 365 Trust Center.

MYTH 4

I have to move everything to the cloud; it is an all-or-nothing scenario.

FACT

While early cloud supporters proclaimed the cloud as the Holy Grail, no one really advocated fork-lifting your entire enterprise to the cloud over the weekend. Most implementations start with a hybrid approach, moving a single application, like email, and growing from there.

The hybrid cloud creates a consistent platform that spans data centers and the cloud, simplifying IT and delivering apps and data to users on virtually any device, anywhere. It gives you control to deliver the computing power and capabilities that business demands, and to scale up or down as needed without wasting your onsite technology investments.

Many companies are moving productivity workloads to the cloud; the path for each is different, and the time it takes for those migrations varies. We can help you move workloads such as file sync and share (OneDrive for Business) or email (Exchange) first, and then help you figure out the right long-term plan for more difficult or larger projects.

MYTH 5

Cloud migration is too much
for my business to handle.

FACT

When you start considering how to move petabytes of data to the cloud, it's easy to see why some people think "going cloud" is too big a challenge. We're not going to tell you it's as easy as pie. But you can be up quickly for agile initiatives and calculated data migrations.
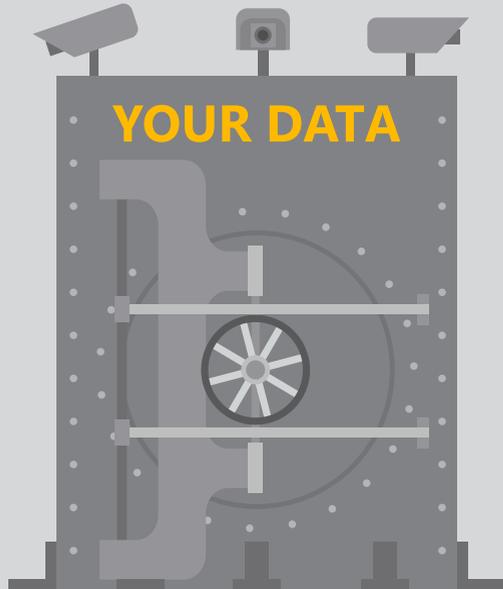
We'll help you every step of the way with information and tips on firewall configurations, reverse proxy requirements, identity options, migration possibilities, and a phased approach for hybrid setups. We've created several paths you can follow, and in most cases, you can use your existing tools and processes.

We provide an array of online tools to help you too. The best place to start is with our video guide to getting started with Office 365.

We also have information on how to set up Office 365, where you can learn more about each application as well as find tips on how to get your teams excited to use Office 365 in our Adoption Center.

MYTH 6

Corporate spies, cyberthieves, and governments will have access to my data if it is in the cloud.

YOUR DATA

FACT

This is a top fear many businesses have about the cloud. But it's unfounded. Your IT team manages access, sets up rights and restrictions, and provides smartphone access and options. Your company remains the sole owner: You retain the rights, title, and interest in the data stored in Office 365.

We operate under several key principles when it comes to safeguarding your data:

- We do not mine your data for advertising or for any purpose other than providing you services that you have paid for.
- If you ever choose to leave the service, you take your data with you.
- Privacy controls allow you to configure who in your organization has access and what they can access.
- Extensive auditing and supervision prevent admins from unauthorized access to your data.

Strict controls and design elements prevent mingling of your data with that of other organizations. Our data center staff does not have access to your data. Additionally, we offer 99.9% uptime via a financially backed service level agreement. If a customer experiences monthly uptime that is less than 99.9%, we compensate that customer through service credits.

Microsoft is the first major cloud provider to adopt the world's first international standard for cloud privacy. The standard establishes a uniform, international approach to protecting privacy for personal data stored in the cloud. It reinforces that:

- You are in control of your data.
- You know what's happening with your data.
- We provide strong security protection for your data.
- Your data won't be used for advertising.
- Microsoft encourages government inquiry to be made directly to you unless legally prohibited and will challenge attempts to prohibit disclosure in court.

MYTH 7

Skype and Skype for Business are one and the same.

FACT

Skype that you use at home is great for a small number of users and is free to use, unless you want to buy credit to make calls to landlines and mobiles.

Skype for Business lets you add up to 250 people to online meetings, gives you enterprise-grade security, allows you to manage employee accounts, and is integrated into your Office apps.

Skype for Business integrates with Office 365, boosting productivity by letting people connect on their terms. Employees can make and receive calls, give presentations, and attend meetings from one application—from anywhere—as long as they have an Internet connection. For example, employees can:
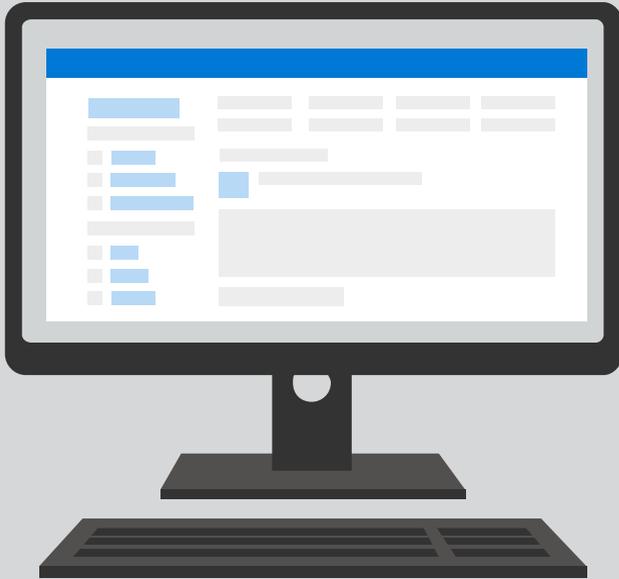
- Instantly see when someone is busy or available.
- Start an instant messaging session by double-clicking a contact name.
- Share a desktop during a meeting.

- Invite outside partners to join a meeting via a full-feature web conferencing experience.
- Integrate video through a webcam for a call or a conference.

With Skype for Business, you don't need to have a dedicated administrator to run servers or invest in additional infrastructure. We take care of all of it for you. As a part of Office 365, Skype for Business offers users new features, upgrades, and patches as soon as they are ready. Skype for Business and the consumer version of Skype can also be federated so that communication is possible between platforms. Skype for Business service is supported around the clock. Of course, your IT team will have to manage settings, access, and security, but we handle the rest.

MYTH 8

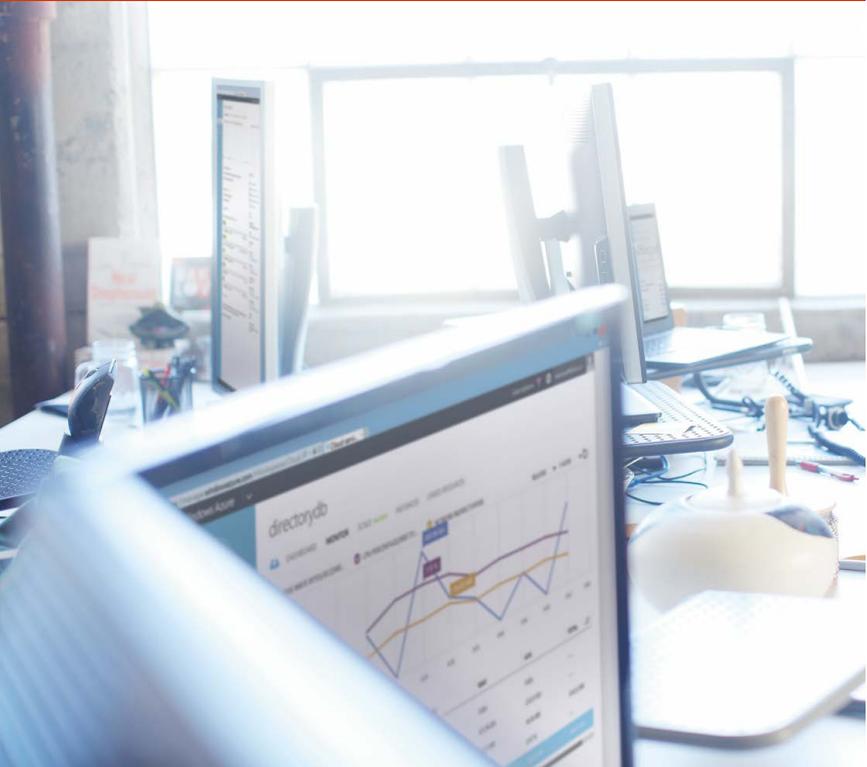Email isn't any simpler in the Cloud.

FACT

By moving your business email to the cloud, you can rest easy knowing that the experts who created the software are taking care of the tricky maintenance, while your team keeps control of your company's capabilities and of how your employees use features. You can spend more time on the core operations that build business value rather than keeping up with persistent hardware maintenance.

Software updates and fixes are delivered automatically as soon as they are released, and Exchange Online is always first in line for updates. Although the management and updates are fully automated, you are still in control when it needs to be with the Exchange Admin Center.

With Office 365, you have many options, so we created a plan comparison chart where you can explore which option, including Exchange Online options, might be best for your company.

MYTH 9

Continuously updating
Office 365 will break my
critical business applications.

FACT

We know that a lot rides on your employees being able to use business-critical apps and add-ins with Office. We are committed to compatibility with the tools you use every day with Office 365. We do that by:

- Offering the same worldwide standard of desktop applications with the familiar tools you know and love, including Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.
- Working hard to ensure that even as we update Office on a regular basis in the cloud, we ensure our updates do not impact areas that would impact other software applications. For example, for the past 24 months, monthly releases of Office 365 have not resulted in object model or API changes. If your business-critical solutions work with Office 2010 or Office 2013 today, chances are they will work with Office 365.

- Collaborating closely with leading software vendors, and providing them tools and early access to ensure that their solutions that work with Office continue to work with Office 365.
- Helping you avoid compatibility issues with guidance and best practices for update management and development.
- Enabling side-by-side installs of Office 365 ProPlus and your older versions of Office, which gives you the time needed to remediate any issues.

Conclusion

When you are busy managing disconnected systems, applications, and data with inflexible and slow systems, and taking flak from employees demanding access to the corporate network and to new tools, it's hard to squeeze in even a few minutes to keep up with new products and evaluate everything you hear. But now you have a better understanding of the productivity and collaboration that Office 365 provides.

Feel free to share this with colleagues who need help separating fact from fiction when it comes to Office 365. It's good to be on the same page, and you'll save time by not having to argue about these myths.

Interested in Learning More About Office 365?

Schedule a consultation with an Office 365 expert

Explore benefits of Office 365 for your business

Pick the right O365 plan for your business