10 myths about moving to the cloud

What not-for-profits really need to know about moving to Microsoft 365.

professional advantage

Is your not-for-profit organisation considering Microsoft 365 as its first step in moving applications to hosted solutions? However, are you finding inconsistencies in your research?

For example, a common misconception about Microsoft 365 is that it is simply a version of Office accessed through a browser.

Let us help you migrate to Microsoft 365 with confidence. Separate facts from fiction with this myth-busting guide for all things Microsoft 365.

Myths

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

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

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

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

5. Cloud migration is too much for my organisation to handle.

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

7. I have to learn all new tools to manage SharePoint Online.

8. Skype and Teams are one and the same.

9. Email isn't any simpler in the cloud.

10. Continuously updating Microsoft 365 will break my critical organisation applications.

Myth #1

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

> **FACT:** Microsoft 365 is the Office you already know, plus productivity tools and security that will help you work more efficiently and safely.
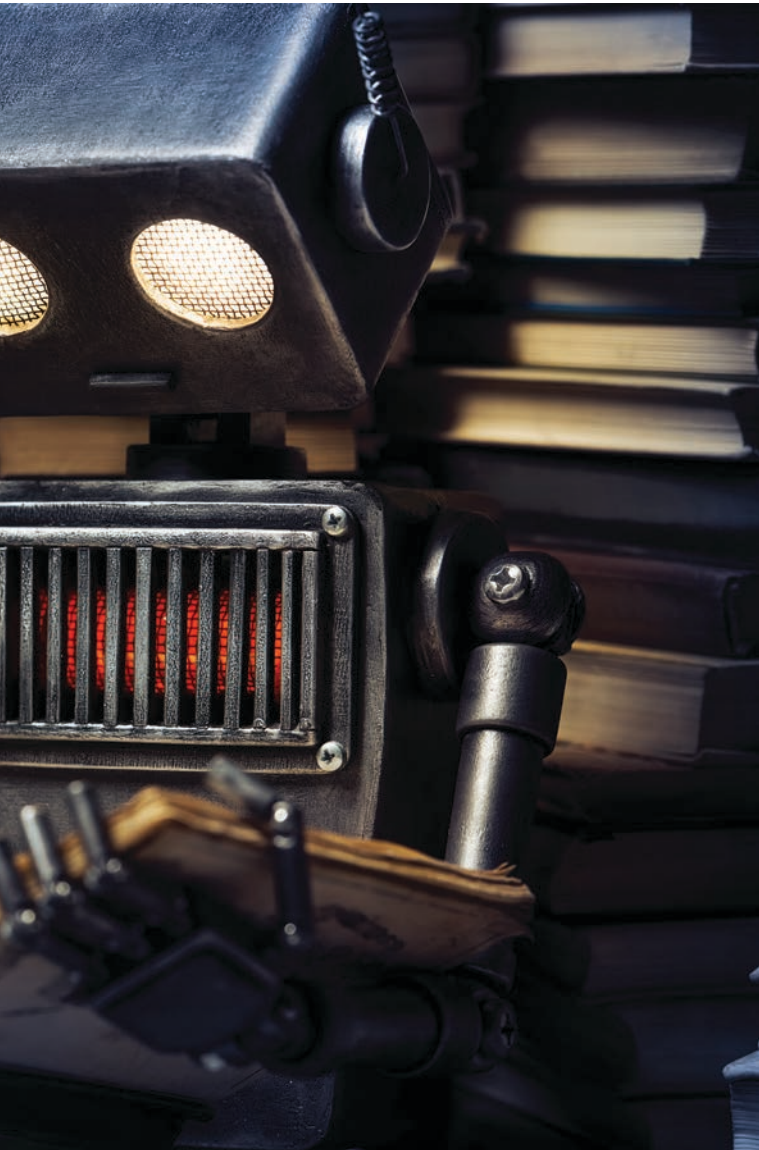
Whether at your desk or on the go, you have the tools to focus on the work that matters to your mission. And, since Microsoft 365 lives in the cloud, these tools stay up to date, are simple to use and manage, and are ready to work when you are.

These tools include:

- SharePoint Online and OneDrive for Business for collaboration, websites, workflows, and enterprise file sync and share (available across all plans).
- Teams for voice, chat, meetings, and presence (available with all business and enterprise plans).
- Yammer for social collaboration (available with all business and enterprise plans).
- Public Switched Telephony Network (PSTN) conferencing to dial into Teams meetings from anywhere (available with Enterprise E5 plan).
- Advanced analytics, with Power BI (available with all enterprise plans).
- Advanced security, with Intune, Advanced Threat Protection, and Customer Lockbox (available with Business Premium and Enterprise E5 plan).

Plus, with many Microsoft 365 plans, you can install the latest full set of Office applications on all your devices, so you can work either offline or online in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.

Myth #2

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

FACT: You still have total control over technology, but your IT department won't have to worry about constant updates.

When you move to the cloud, time spent maintaining hardware and upgrading software is significantly reduced—eliminating headaches with it. Now your IT team can focus on advancing your not-for-profit organisation's technological adoption, rather than being a repair service. Plus, you will have more time to spend improving your operations, launching agile initiatives, and achieving your not-for-profit's mission.

Instead of spending more and more of your IT budget on servers for email storage and workloads, you can think strategically and support organisational managers in a much more agile fashion, quickly responding to their needs.

Myth #3

Keeping data on-premise is safer than storing it in the cloud.

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FACT: Security and uptime come as standard with Microsoft 365 in the cloud.

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"It's becoming increasingly clear that your on-premises systems are not inherently more secure than they'd be in the cloud" says Mark Anderson, founder of the INVNT/IP Global Consortium, a group of government and security experts solving the growing cyber theft problem. "Many organisations are routinely hacked and don't know it" says Anderson.

Even if your organisation has a growing security team, they can rarely assemble a team large enough to uncover and protect against the hundreds of possible alerts that come through each day. When you switch to Microsoft 365, Microsoft we act as an extension of your security team. Microsoft data centres are built with scale in mind.

To keep Microsoft 365 security at the pinnacle of industry standards, our dedicated security team uses a wide range of processes including the Security Development Lifecycle; traffic throttling; and preventing, detecting, and mitigating breaches at an enterprise level. And, Microsoft 365 has a 99.9% financially backed uptime guarantee.

To protect against external threats, Microsoft 365 gives you the option to use Advanced Threat Protection to secure mailboxes against sophisticated attacks in real time. Every email attachment or link is automatically evaluated for suspicious activity, and malicious content is neutralised before the chance of a risk.

Additionally, we staff industry-leading regulatory compliance experts. We know and keep up-to-date with the latest regulations and rules, such as 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), to name just a few.

Professional Advantage can help you to uncover the security benefits available in your Microsoft 365 subscription if you are not familiar with it. They can help you maximise these security features to keep your corporate data protected against cyber threats.

Myth #4

**I have to move everything to the cloud.
It is an all-or-nothing scenario.**

FACT: You can move to the cloud at your own pace, or use a hybrid approach.

While some early cloud supporters advocated for moving your entire organisation to the cloud all at once, this isn't a process that needs to happen overnight. Most implementations start with a hybrid approach: move a single workload, like email, and grow from there.

The hybrid cloud creates a consistent platform that spans data centres 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 your not-for-profit organisation demands, and to scale up or down as needed without wasting your grants, donations, and onsite technology investments.

As many organisations move their productivity workloads to the cloud, the path for each workload is different, and the time it takes for those migrations vary. Professional Advantage can help you move workloads such as file sync-and-share or email 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 not-for-profit organisation to handle.

FACT: We're here to help every step of the way.

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 of a challenge for IT departments and staff alike. We're not going to tell you it's simple, but you really can get Microsoft 365 up and running quickly.

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 throughout the migration, so day to day work won't be disrupted.

Microsoft Gold Partners such as Professional Advantage can also help you to successfully **move to the cloud**, offering services from cloud migration, data security, user adoption, and more. They provide implementation and development services that will help you to further maximise the apps included in your subscription.

Myth #6

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

FACT: It's your data, no-one else's.

This is a top fear about the cloud among many not-for-profit organisations, but it is unfounded. Your IT team manages access, sets up rights and restrictions, and provides smartphone access and options. Furthermore, your not-for-profit organisation remains the sole owner. You retain the rights, title, and interest in the data stored in Microsoft 365.

When safeguarding your data, we operate under several key principles:

- We do not mine your data for advertising or for any purpose other than providing you with 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 organisation has access and what they can access.
- Extensive auditing and supervision prevent admins from unauthorised access to your data.
- Customer Lockbox for Microsoft 365 leaves customers with explicit control in the rare instance a Microsoft engineer may need to access customer content to resolve an IT issue.
- Strict controls and design elements prevent your data from mingling with that of other organisations, and our data centre staff never has unprivileged access to your data.
- 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 inquiries to be made directly to you unless legally prohibited, and will challenge attempts to prohibit disclosure in court.

Myth #7

We have to learn all new tools to manage SharePoint Online.

> **FACT:** SharePoint Online abstracts maintains the infrastructure, without changing anything else.

All of your hard work learning how to manage SharePoint is not lost!

SharePoint Online has the same familiar administration and management tools, whether your deployment is in the cloud, on location, or in a hybrid of the two. Although your customisations aren't populated to the cloud, all the administrative controls remain the same.

When moving to SharePoint Online, you no longer need to bother with controlling the workload implementation—instead, your IT team can focus on controlling its configuration. With the convenient, one-time, expert-led implementation that SharePoint Online handles, your IT team can reallocate time they used to spend on implementation and instead concentrate on building strong, strategic tools for the organisation. SharePoint Online simply abstracts the infrastructure, enabling you to focus on the solution.

Need further information or technical guidance about SharePoint Online? Professional Advantage has a long history helping not-for-profit clients deploy, configure, customise, manage change, and support a SharePoint implementation. They can help you provide the information that you need to help you transition to SharePoint's cloud-based version.

Myth #8

Skype and Teams are one and the same.

FACT: Microsoft Teams is your hub for hosting productive meetings and more, not just phone calls.

The version of Skype you use at home is great for a small number of users; it is mostly recommended for personal use rather than in a business setting.

Microsoft Teams, on the other hand, is a hub for teamwork, providing your users with a go-to application for real-time communication and collaboration. It lets you add up to 300 people to online meetings, gives you enterprise-grade security, allows you to manage employee accounts, and is integrated into your Office apps. With the use of Teams Live Events, you can host virtual meetings connecting up to 10,000 participants, with breakout rooms for dedicated discussions for specific groups of people.

Teams is seamlessly integrated with Microsoft 365, boosting productivity by letting people connect on their terms. Staff can make and receive calls, give presentations, and attend meetings within one application.

With Teams, your 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 conference.

With Teams, you don't need to have a dedicated administrator to be able to run servers or invest in additional infrastructure. We take care of it all for you. As a part of Microsoft 365, Teams offers users new features, upgrades, and patches as soon as they are ready.

Teams' service is supported around the clock. Of course, your IT team is empowered to manage settings, access, and security, but we handle everything in the backend. If you want to see how it works or how it can transform your team communication and collaboration, contact Professional Advantage. Their deep experience in deploying and configuring Microsoft Teams has been invaluable in helping not-for-profit organisations to modernise their workplace.

Myth #10

Continuously updating Microsoft 365 will break my critical business applications.

FACT: Microsoft 365 updates won't negatively impact your existing applications.

We know that a lot rides on your staff and volunteers' ability to use mission-critical apps and add-ins with Office. We are committed to Microsoft 365's compatibility with the tools you use every day. Here's how we do that:

- Offer the same worldwide standard of desktop applications with the familiar tools you know and love, including Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.

- Work hard to ensure that even as we update Office on a regular basis in the cloud, the updates do not impact other software applications. For example, for the past 24 months, monthly Microsoft 365 releases have not resulted in object model or API changes. If your organisation-critical solutions work with Office 2010 or Office 2016 today, it is likely they will work with Microsoft 365.

- Collaborate closely with leading software vendors and provide them tools and early access to ensure that their Office-compatible solutions continue to work with Microsoft 365. Professional Advantage can provide you with guidance and best practices for management of updates and development to help you avoid compatibility issues.

Your IT team is busy managing disconnected systems, applications, and data with inflexible and slow systems. They take flak from employees and partners demanding access to the corporate network, as well as new tools. It's hard to squeeze in even a few minutes to keep up with new products and evaluate everything you hear.

Now that you have a better understanding of the productivity and collaboration that Microsoft 365 provides, let us help you streamline the process. Feel free to share this with colleagues who need help separating fact from fiction when it comes to Microsoft 365 in the cloud. It's good to be on the same page.

Myth #9

Email isn't any simpler in the cloud.

FACT: With automatic updates, you don't have to worry about email downtime.

When you move your organisation email to the cloud, you can rest easy knowing that the experts who created the software are taking care of the maintenance and updates. Your IT team no longer needs to worry about installing updates, and can instead focus on bigger IT needs.

Software updates and fixes are delivered automatically as soon as they are released. However, your IT team can always pause these updates or control when they happen through the Exchange Admin Center.

Let's Talk.

Interested in learning more about Microsoft 365?

Explore the benefits of Microsoft 365 for your not-for-profit organisation.
Professional Advantage can help you pick the right plan.
Get in touch with us to learn more. »

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About Professional Advantage

Professional Advantage is an international IT consulting and solutions company,
with 30 years of experience in helping organisations achieve more by improving
their business systems through industry leading software solutions. Originating
in Australia, it is one of the country's most awarded solution providers.
Our 250-strong global team covers three continents, and has successfully
worked with over 1000 organisations.

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