

SharePoint & Office 365

vs.

Out-of-the-box intranet software providers

Some out-of-the box intranet software providers are often quick to pick holes in the perceived limited features and functionality of SharePoint. A big flaw in these claims is that mostly they do not specify the SharePoint edition they are describing so it is harder to refute such claims.

To respond to this, ClearPeople have evaluated both SharePoint Online and Office 365 (using E3 licensing) against the same criteria as some well-known out-of-the-box intranet software providers describe.

Many of the out-of-the-box products are more comparable to SharePoint Online than SharePoint On-Premises hence choosing this comparison.

	Out-of-the-box intranet software provider's claims		ClearPeople's knowledge	
	SharePoint (edition not specified)	OOTB	SharePoint Online (Plan 2)	Office 365 with E3 licenses
Powerful collaboration on documents	✓	✓	✓	✓
Version editing and collaboration on Microsoft documents	✓		✓	✓
Integrated social network and document management system	✗	✓		✓ Yammer/SharePoint Online
Peer-to-peer recognition & awards system	✗			✓ Yammer
Business intelligence and KPIs	✓	✓	✓ Excel Services	✓ Excel Services PowerBI uses separate licences.

	Out-of-the-box intranet software provider's claims		ClearPeople's knowledge	
	SharePoint (edition not specified)	OOTB	SharePoint Online (Plan 2)	Office 365 with E3 licenses
Easy to manage homepages, designed to be managed by communicators and not IT	✗	✓	Claiming that SharePoint does not feature "easy to manage homepages" is nonsensical – "easy to manage" is a completely subjective concept and as the majority of business users are familiar with Microsoft products we have to refute this claim.	
Team homepages that display news and content beyond only documents	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intelligent software that learns from your searches and behaviour, then brings / suggests helpful content	✗	✓		✓ Delve provides document suggestions based on activity and connections
Ability to search for people based on their skills or expertise, putting all your organization's knowledge at your fingertips	✗	✓	User Profiles do exactly this and have done so since SharePoint 2010. This claim by OOTB providers is entirely false.	
Responsive design	✓ Requires JavaScript	✓	This claim is correct – responsive design requires additional coding.	
No coding skills required, easy to use even without help from IT	✗	✓	Another nonsensical claim - coding skills are only required if you need to meet specific requirements not met by the system. This is exactly the same with every system. If anything this is a positive thing - SharePoint can be extended through code.	
Fast deployment	✗	✓	We assume this claim is based on the provisioning of an On-Premises farm, since provisioning an Office 365 tenant does not take very long at all.	
At least 3 major updates each year	✗	✓	This is false for all editions of SharePoint; On-Premises farms usually get a Cumulative Update every month or two, while Office 365 is literally updated every few weeks.	
Strategists and Customer Success Managers who provide support through deployment of your intranet and beyond		✓	This is not a relevant claim. If you purchase Office 365 without a vendor or partner, then obviously you don't get access to specific resources like this. If you work with a partner then you will absolutely get someone who works with you as a customer to ensure success.	