LEARN HOW IT WORKS

MICROSOFT 365

Behind the Scenes of Cloud Productivity

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

Bill Kimbler is a partner and Business Development Lead at CW Technology.

Being with the company for over 13 years now, his role is centered on discussing the dynamics of IT support on the managed services model. In such a way, Bill has impacted quite few thousand businesses over the years...

Bill's belief that the "CW Technology" way of mixing the IT support with management and business process needs of an organization is where the answer lies. This provides the complete solution for any SMB orgnization that relies on technology to meet its mission and objectives.

Outside of work, Bill is an avid runner and has competed in various half and full marathons, including the *Grandmas Marathon* in Duluth.

He also enjoys spending time with his wife Teresa and his two teen sons - Noah and Jonah.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last 10 years, application and services migration to the cloud has been significantly accelerating... What before required an on-premise server and infrastructure, is now available in a cloud format directly from the vendor. For organizations looking to expand services to their employees, the cloud provides a high level of scalability and generous cost savings.

On June 28, 2011, Microsoft launched a major initiative to provide core products to be offered in the cloud. Named Office 365, it provided the very popular Microsoft Office suite on a subscription basis (versus a one time purchase).

While it may seemed odd to pay on a monthly basis, with said subscription, Microsoft included additional services: cloud storage and file sharing through OneDrive, hosted Exchange email, along with Microsoft Teams - added on afterwards.

WHY IT MATTERS

One of the most significant advantages of this model was that, as these services were updated for security and additional features, end users immediately received access to these improvements, without having to manage a deployment of updates.

As with any new service, the platform went through several changes, became rebranded as Microsoft 365 on April 21, 2020. As of April 2021, Microsoft has reported to have over 50 million subscribers to this service. That's significant growth in 10 years, and it goes to show how Microsoft's move to the cloud was a positive step for the company and end users!

But the question remains: why have companies embraced this platform? More importantly, should your organization embrace it as well? Let's see dive in to see what Microsoft 365 is all about.
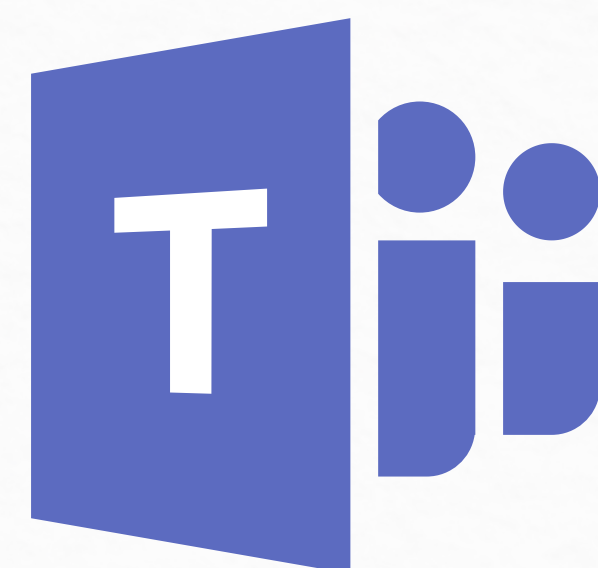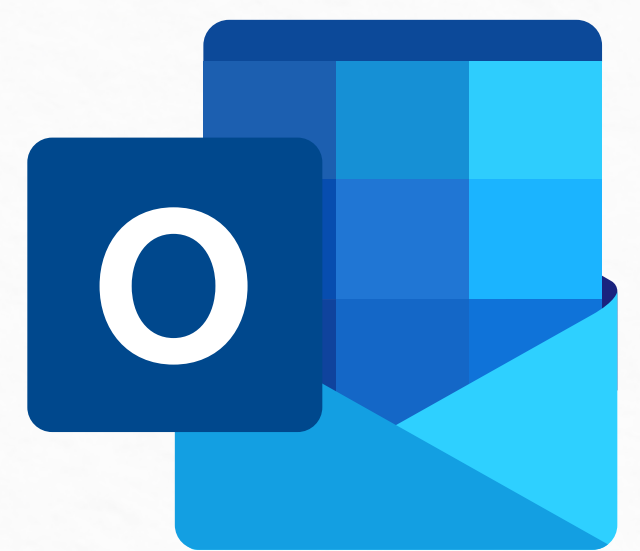
CHAPTER 1

MICROSOFT 365 FOR BUSINESS

While the designations of E1, E3, and E5 are geared more towards enterprise level plans, SMBs have an easier naming convention of Basic, Standard, and Premium.

Microsoft 365's main application is the hosted Exchange email platform. Said service is provided in all packages, giving the full Microsoft Exchange experience to any end user, without the investment and overhead of a Microsoft Exchange server.

Furthermore, it provides a full platform of services that work with Microsoft Outlook; keep in mind that Microsoft Exchange is the "post office," while Outlook is the individual mail box at your house.

In addition to email, Microsoft has included services for file storage and sharing, teamwork and collaboration via Teams, security and compliance including mail filter and password management, advanced security including remote wipe of lost devices, and email archiving.

CHAPTER 2

WHICH PLAN IS RIGHT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

The full suite of Office includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, Publisher, and Access. For the Basic plan, these applications are available as a browser based application while in Standard and Premium include the ability to install these applications on a local PC or Mac.

PRICING OF PACKAGES

BASIC - $5.00 PER USER PER MONTH
STANDARD - $12.50 PER USER PER MONTH
PREMIUM - $20.00 PER USER PER MONTH

For most SMBs (small to mid size businesses), the Basic and Standard plan fits most needs. For larger companies with a big and distributed workforce, the Premium plan may be more beneficial to handle the additional remote management and security services. Likewise, some Premium plan services may benefit an SMB if they have specific compliance needs they need to fulfill.

It's also important to keep in mind that Microsoft offers significantly discounted pricing on the platform for 501(c)3 non profits, among other services-based organizations.

It can be easy to overspend thinking you may need the services, or to underspend but loose some key benefits that make for an attractive ROI. The key is to work with a IT provider that has the experience in planning and deploying the service.

CW Technology has been planning and doing deployments of Microsoft 365 since it was first launched and 2011. Alongside our experience, we always ensure that you have the right mix of plans for your specific business needs. Furthermore, CW Technology has executed deployments and migrations from local Exchange servers, or other services, such as Gmail or POP3/IMAP services.

At **CW Technology,** we provide the necessary and extensive managed services, customized for your business IT needs.

For more information on CW Technology and our Microsoft 365 services, visit *www.cwtechnology.com/microsoft-365*.

If you're looking to gain greater value from your technology, then contact us today to discuss how we can implement the optimal managed services processes and tools for you!

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