



Your pocket book guide to a successful Microsoft 365 deployment

With more and more businesses committing to a digital future, the need for robust enterprise software is greater than ever. However, **the quality of these tools and how you deploy them** can vary.

If you're considering deploying Microsoft 365 (M365) in your business, it pays to know the best ways to integrate it into your existing workplace. To take advantage of everything the Microsoft cloud has to offer, you need to have an end goal in sight.

Do these problems sounds familiar?

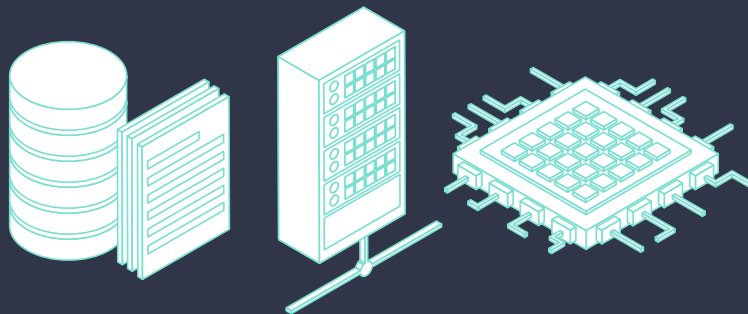
- Increasingly diverse and global teams
- Growing security threats
- A widening skills gap
- Difficulty scaling software and systems

Deploying M365 and **moving to the cloud is the answer** to these challenges. And with so many businesses choosing to migrate to platforms such as Azure, it's no wonder that Forrester predicts more than **50 percent** of enterprises will use the technology to drive growth this year.

So, how exactly do you ensure your move to Microsoft 365 is a happy one?

Fortunately, deployment is **not as hard as you might think**. With the right planning, execution, and support you can build your own modern workplace, without experiencing common teething issues.

Let's take a look at how it's done.



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Stage 1: Understanding the benefits of Microsoft 365

For businesses new to M365, here's a quick reminder of what the software bundle includes:

- Office 365
- Enterprise Mobility + Security (EMS)
- Microsoft Windows 10 Pro

Combining these tools as a turnkey solution creates a **productive, secure, and collaborative** working environment for mobile devices and traditional desktop workstations.

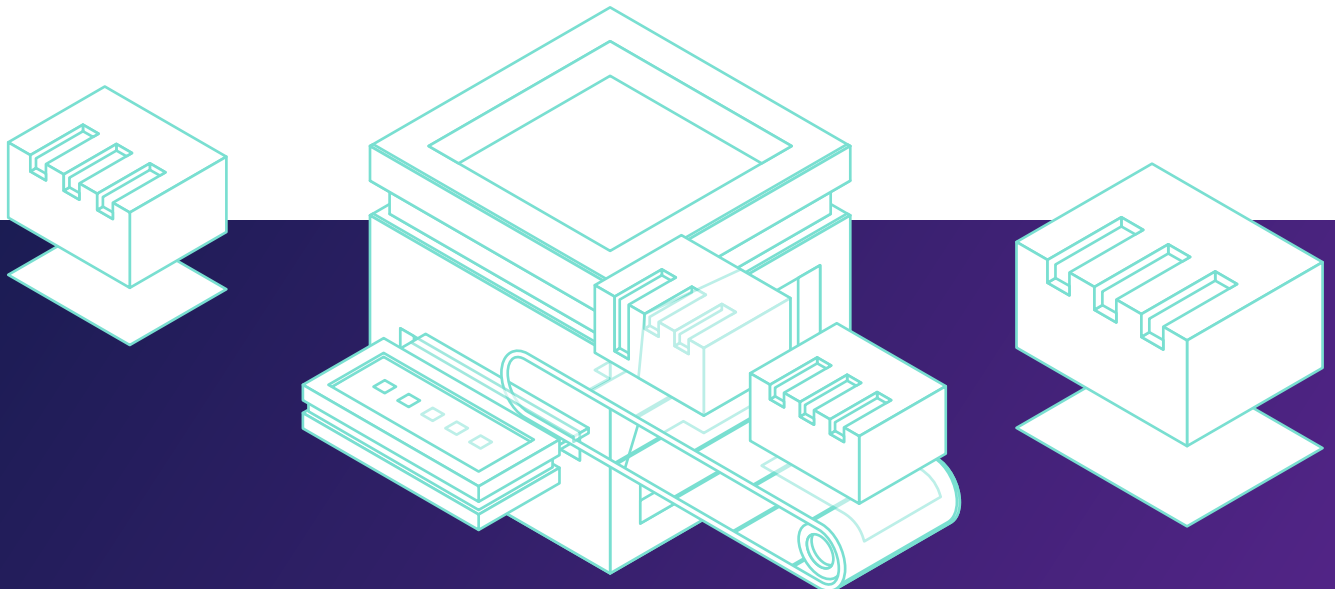
Office 365 alone has changed the productivity landscape, with **90 percent** of enterprises now enrolling 100+ users. And when you combine the power of Office 365 with EMS and Windows 10, you get a fully integrated set of tools that allow your employees to do their best work at all times.

Of course, you also get the advantages of a complete cloud solution, with one study revealing that the cloud gave **77 percent** of businesses a competitive edge. Game-changing benefits, such as ‘access from anywhere’, enable distributed workforces to maximise productivity, while in-built security fortify companies against the ever-growing list of IT security threats.

These benefits have become **mission-critical**, with tools like M365 built to offer the best possible experience.

Fort Knox security

The average cost of a security breach to a business is **£3 billion**. Fortunately, M365 has you covered, securing your workspace at every level:



- **Azure Active Directory, Microsoft Intune, and Windows Information protection.** This provides data, device, app and identity protection.
- **Office 365 and Windows Defender Advanced Threat Protection Detection.** This detects malicious applications and possible threats.
- **Advanced eDiscovery.** This provides data archiving, governance and data discovery.

With Enterprise Mobility and Security, the unification of users, devices, apps and services helps protect data and intellectual property no matter where it resides.

Seamless Scalability

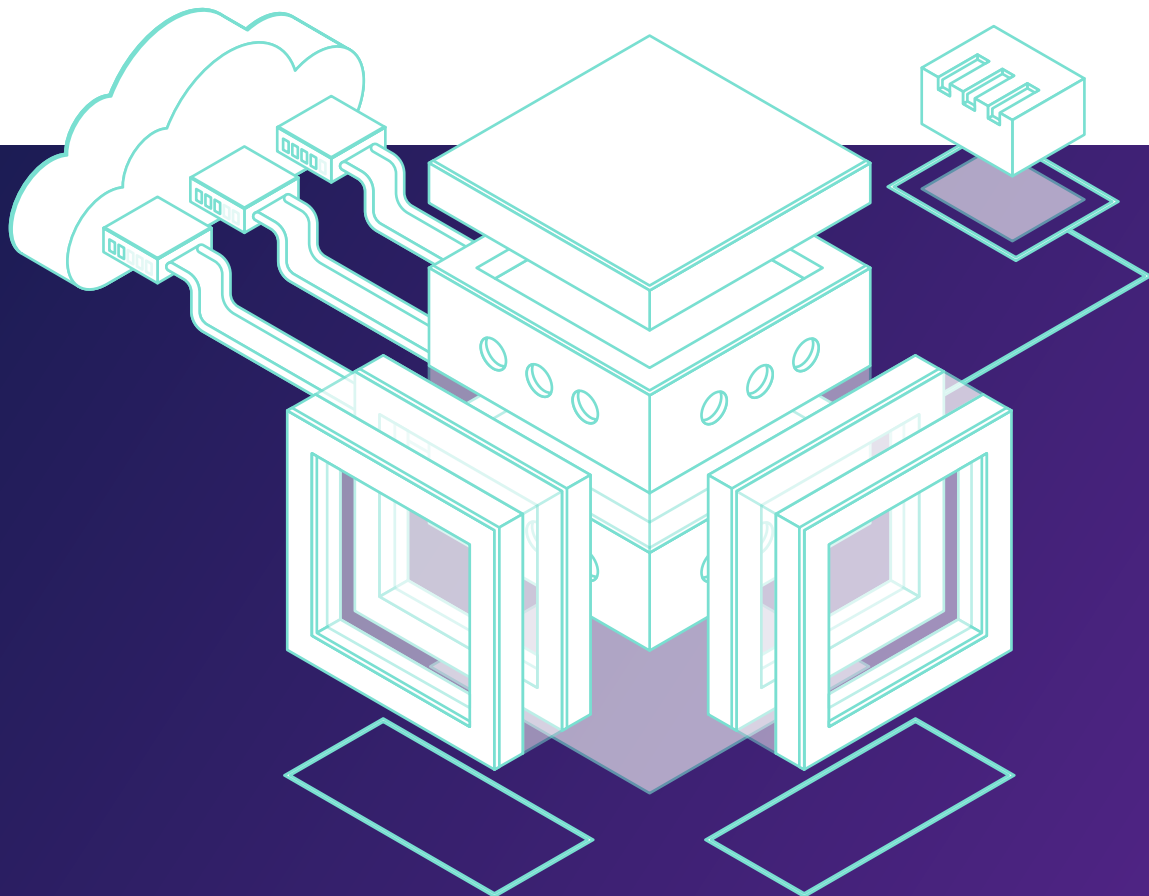
When your business lives in M365, **growth is easier.** Because it's cloud-based, M365 scales with your business, employee by employee, application by application. This means you only pay for the resources you need at any given time and can expand capacity on-demand.

While new servers are expensive and installing software takes time, M365 offers a flexible solution to businesses productivity issues. Once you've set up your subscription, **there is no need to invest more time or money.**

Access from anywhere

Universal access to resources and tasks ensures your business is flexible, responsive and able to enjoy multi-device communication. It's a **key pillar of the modern workplace**, enabling:

- **Dynamic security** – turn access on and off as employees leave or move between roles, limiting unauthorised access.
- **Wider talent pool** – the modern workforce enjoys working from home. And with a growing **skills gap**, it's important to do what you can to attract top-talent.
- **Global business growth** – wherever there's an internet connection, your business can now operate. This means you can instantly and effortlessly integrate new team-members and offices anywhere in the world.



- **Increased productivity** – 77 percent of employees believe flexible working boosts productivity. Make life easier for your employees by empowering them to work the way they want to work.

While there are similarities between the cloud and on-premise options, Microsoft Azure gives you **greater control and flexibility**, so you only pay for the resources you need at any given time.

Is M365 a good fit for your business?

For those looking for a subscription-based service, and the benefits that go with it, M365 is the perfect choice. It **helps cash-flow** because there are no big, unexpected charges. And if at any point you need to switch plans, that's easy too. You can discover the different plans [here](#).

However, to help you make the best decision and decide if M365 is right for you:

- **Talk** to stakeholders about macro business and IT goals
- **Create** a pros and cons list for M365 and the alternatives
- **Discuss** the opportunities for M365 by talking with current users and specialist IT providers



Stage 2: Preparing for deployment

Don't sabotage your deployment before it's even begun. To ensure a seamless migration, you need to understand the process, establish your environment and needs, and then build a plan. With the right preparation, **deploying M365 is pain-free.**

Clarify your needs and understand your environment

A deployment that isn't well matched to a business' needs can create problems. For example, miscounting the users that will need access to an application will lead to productivity loss.

To effectively tailor your deployment, first **understand what your current environment looks like**. For starters, answer the following questions:

- What is the current email environment? E.g., Outlook, Gmail etc.
- What experience does your workforce have with M365?
- How many users are you looking to add?
- What software tools do your employees need?
- What are the current versions of Microsoft Office applications in use?

Through better understanding of your environment and needs, you can deploy M365 more effectively and **pre-empt potential problems**.

Build internal support

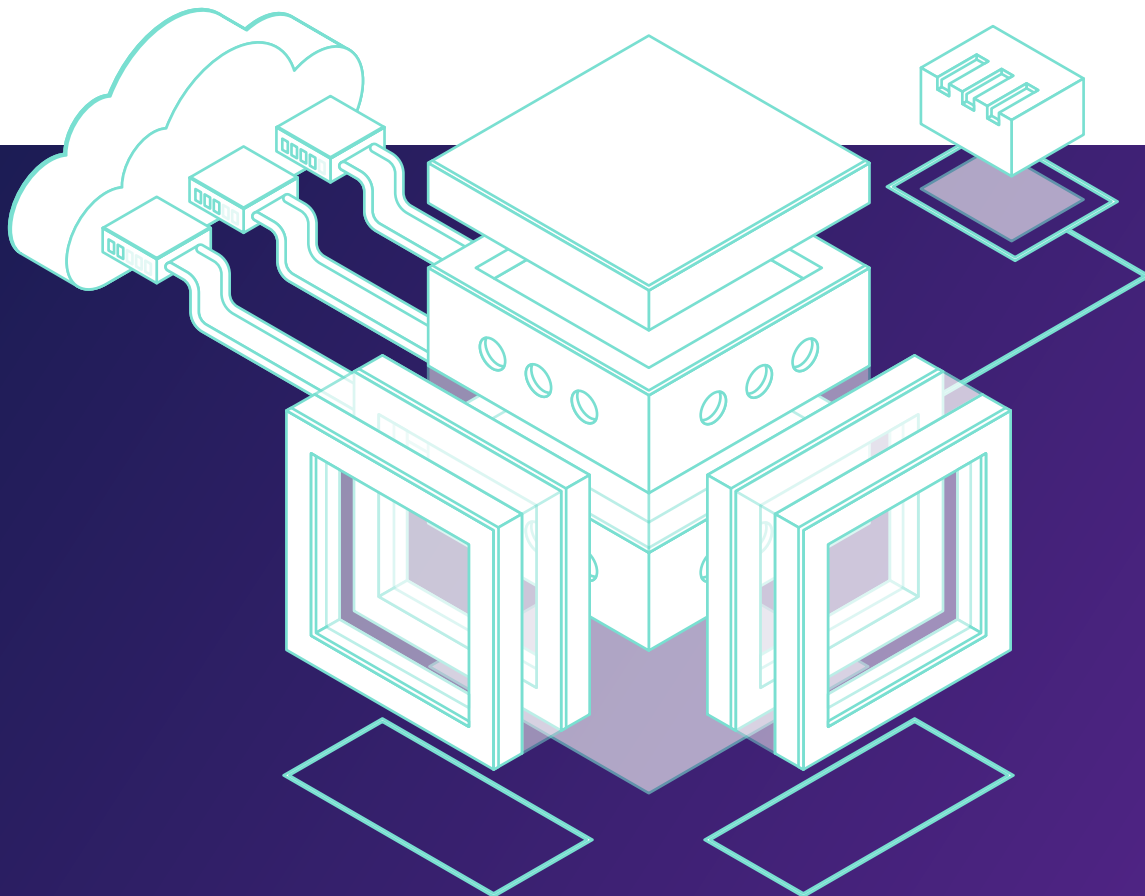
There's no 'I' in team, and when it comes to deploying software, it's essential to **build strong internal connections**. Project management thought leader, [Michelle Symonds](#), says that a 'lack of effective communication at all levels' is a key cause of project failure.

It's also important to **sell the benefits** to everyone internally. In one study, [55 percent](#) of those involved in cloud migration said that failure to define the business case hampered the migration.

So how do you build the right bridges?

The following checklist will help you get key players on board:

- **Secure** the support of heads of department and stakeholders. They have the most power to de-rail progress, so start building support here first.
- **Train** the employees who will be helping execute the deployment. Also, process-ize the roll-out and trial it on a small scale first.
- **Build** company-wide belief in the deployment by evangelizing the benefits via meetings and video training.



Schedule milestones and stick to them

Projects derail quickly when there is no set timeline for deployment. Milestones create the clarity needed to **ensure the process doesn't become protracted**. As [Mckinsey](#) states:

“We found that the longer the project schedule, the more likely it is that it will run over time and budget”.

Instead, build a plan with clear milestones so that your deployment always remains on track.



Stage 3: Overseeing a successful M365 deployment

Once you've prepared for deployment, and all your ducks are in a row, it's time to begin the roll-out of M365. And with a Microsoft partner by your side, **M365 deployment is seamless.**

With the right tools and support, you can round off your deployment with an error-free data migration and comprehensive user training. the budget with your finance team.

Deployment with an M365 Partner

Rapid deployment is assured when you work with an **M365 partner**. It's a low-stress way to deploy your new game-changing software and can be done at a pace that suits you.

- **Reduced risk of data migration errors.** Let specialists implement proven processes.
- **Simpler, low-stress deployment.** Why learn complex deployment protocols when you don't have to?
- **Increased productivity.** You focus on business growth, while the IT specialists focus on deployment.

Why not test things out yourself?

Microsoft understands the power of jumping in and getting your hands dirty, which is why they created the [Test Labs Guides](#) (TLGs). These **step-by-step guides** take you through the **configuration of your infrastructure** and allow you to try out specific features of M365.

According to [Microsoft](#), the goal of TLGs is to empower the user to:

“Self-learn, demonstrate, customise, or build a proof of concept of a complex configuration, workload, or end-to-end scenario.”

Data migration done right

Deploying M365 will mean migrating data from legacy software. [Data errors](#) are a nightmare that you'll want to avoid in order to execute a seamless transition. To prevent these errors creeping into your M365 deployment, make sure you do the following:

- **Assign** responsibility for those performing data migration. If it's unclear who is responsible, people will pass-the-buck.

- **Establish** processes and set in stone necessary actions. Use software such as [process street](#) to disseminate the same effective processes company-wide.
- **Automate** migration wherever possible by using [software tools](#) and bulk uploads. These minimise errors and ensure data accuracy.

User training

Formalised training has a **significant positive impact on business** success, with participating companies enjoying [218 percent](#) higher income per employee than those who don't.

While the Microsoft Office suite has become **synonymous with modern work**, it's still important to ensure your employees are getting the most out of it. Your business will experience a drop in productivity if the correct training isn't in place.

“A scalable end-user training strategy will make your new software deployment both a more cost effective and a happier experience for everyone involved”, says Deb Shinder at [Tech Republic](#).

When training your staff to use M365, remember to do the following:

- **Adapt** your training to double-down on training styles that have worked well in the. Tailor instructor-led and on-the-job training to staff preferences and previous learning successes.
- **Split** the training into modules. This prevents information overwhelm and helps make learning easier to roll-out. For example, employee A, who has less time than employee B, can learn the first module, but delay completing the second until they have the time.
- **Empower** staff to train themselves. Create written and video guides explaining how to get the most out of M365. This enables people to work at their own speed and saves time when onboarding new-hires who you can refer to existing training materials.



Create a seamless workplace experience

With more than **1 billion** users worldwide, Office 365 is already a much-loved tool in every industry. However, with Microsoft 365, you can take things one step further, combining the power of your Office 365 suite with Windows 10 and EMS to deliver game-changing business benefits.

Of course, it can be costly when software deployment and data migration go wrong. And with more than **80 percent** of data migrations ending in failure, it's important to **invest in the right deployment strategy**. When integrated properly, M365 can remove the handbrake to business and IT growth, helping you create a **seamless workplace experience** that both empowers employees and drives fantastic ROI.

Often, all it takes is the right support and expertise to get your latest IT project off the ground. For a **free Microsoft 365 consultation**, get in touch with our team today and take your first steps towards the modern workplace.