

Modernize Your Workplace with Microsoft 365

A Buyer's Guide

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By 2024, 81% of workers are expected to be hybrid. Today's businesses must transform digitally to adapt to a modern workforce that is increasingly mobile and location independent. Employees expect to be productive across devices and locations. But delivering always-on access and connectivity—while maintaining a strong security posture across an increasing number of digital endpoints—is a challenge for businesses of all sizes.

That's where Microsoft 365 comes in.

Microsoft 365 is a productivity cloud with a suite of applications designed to help businesses streamline communication, automate processes, and drive seamless collaboration across teams and offices, no matter where they're located.
Microsoft 365 ensures anytime, anywhere access to the applications your teams need with scalable endpoint security.

Use this guide to learn about Microsoft 365's robust suite of features and capabilities, and how US Signal can partner with you to unlock Microsoft 365's full potential.

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Chapter 1:
What Is Microsoft 365?

With Microsoft 365 You Can:

- Be productive anywhere.
- Access files from any device, anytime.
- Enable digital transformation with intelligent security.
- Collaborate effortlessly from a central hub for meetings, chat and more.

What is Microsoft 365

Microsoft 365 is a cloud-based subscription service that delivers a suite of productivity and collaboration apps, combined with world-class security for an unparalleled hybrid experience.

Formerly known as Office 365, Microsoft 365 includes all the applications you know and love—such as Office, PowerPoint, Excel, and Outlook—plus much more. With Microsoft 365, users can work seamlessly between locations and devices without sacrificing security or access.

Chapter 2:
Productivity

Microsoft Word

Microsoft Word is a word processing software application used to create documents, such as forms, letters, resumes, and reports

Key features:

- Transforms documents into web pages
- Translates documents into other languages
- Reviews writing using Learning Tools that help users fix mistakes and improve comprehension
- Enables article reading in the task pane, so users can perform research without leaving the document
- Offers intelligent suggestions from Microsoft Editor to improve writing in real time

Microsoft PowerPoint

Microsoft PowerPoint is a powerful presentation program that helps users create professionalquality slideshows and pitch decks. Create presentations either from scratch or from a library

Key features:

- Converts handwritten notes to text.Allows users to practice presentations and get tips on pacing and word choice with Presenter Coach.
- Tracks changes made by others to keep everyone on the same page

Microsoft Excel

Microsoft Excel is the industry-leading spreadsheet software program. Use it for data visualization, analysis, entry, and storage. Perform automatic calculations, create robust budgeting sheets, and execute administrative tasks. With enhanced features and capabilities such as real-time collaboration, Excel helps teams do better work, faster.

Microsoft Outlook

Microsoft Outlook is a personal information manager software system that includes email, calendaring, note-taking, contact managing, task managing, web browsing, and journal logging. Designed with accessibility in mind, it offers intuitive, voice-controlled navigation plus support for multiple assistive devices so you can easily manage your accounts.

Microsoft Exchange

Microsoft Exchange is a cloud-based email server that works with Outlook to provide an integrated system to store and manage emails, contacts, messages, tasks, and calendars in a centralized database. Exchange offers additional robust features, such as an intelligent inbox with powerful customizations and advanced calendaring that automatically captures events from email.

Microsoft Publisher

Microsoft Publisher is a desktop publishing app focused on layout and design. Use Publisher to create professional business cards, labels, newsletters, calendars, marketing materials, and more.

Microsoft OneNote

Microsoft OneNote is a cross-functional, digital notebook built for free-form note-taking and multi-user collaboration. Stay organized with rich search functions, highlighting and ink notations, and easily sortable notebooks, sections, and pages. Clip and save interesting information from the web, record audio notes, and share notebooks with coworkers.

Chapter 3: Collaboration

Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams is a workplace messaging and collaboration tool. Enjoy built-in meetings, file and app sharing, and real-time chats and calls

Key features:

- Manages conversations all in one place.
- Provides instant access to SharePoint,
- OneNote, Planner, and Power BI.
- Allows users to create and edit documents in the app.
- Streamlines employee onboarding with persistent conversations and a single source of truth.

With Teams Meetings, business get:

- Audio conferencing in 90+ countries.
- High-quality meetings that scale up to 10,000 attendees.
- Consistent experience synced across PC, mobile, web, and meeting rooms.
- Enterprise-grade security.

With Teams Calling, business can:

- Manage calls easily using functions such as do not disturb, reverse number lookup, voicemail, and delegation.
- Start calls faster and get clear, reliable audio every time.
- Provision users, assign numbers, and port existing numbers from the admin console for centralized management

Chapter 4: Management

Windows Virtual Desktop

Microsoft Teams is a workplace messaging and collaboration tool. Enjoy built-in meetings, file and app sharing, and real-time chats and calls

Key features:

- Enables users to access desktop and applications from virtually anywhere.
- Simplifies deployment and management of infrastructure.
- Scales quickly based on business needs.
- Reduces costs because users pay only for what they need.

Windows Autopilot

Windows Autopilot is a desktop provisioning tool that simplifies the way devices are deployed, reset, and repurposed with a zero-touch experience for IT. There’s no need to re-image or manually set up new devices before distributing them to users. Hardware vendors can ship them, ready to use, directly to employees something happens.

Microsoft Endpoint Manager

Microsoft Endpoint Manager helps businesses deliver a modern hybrid workplace, securely. Empower employee productivity from anywhere on any device, while maintaining a strong security posture across all endpoints with Zero Trust technology, centralized control, and automated software updates.

With Endpoint Manager, businesses can:

- Securely manage diverse IT ecosystems, including iOS, Android, Windows, and macOS devices.
- Automate deployment provisioning, policy management, app delivery, and updates.
- Protect data, even when employees use devices the company doesn’t manage.
- Define comprehensive policies and achieve granular controls to ensure the right people access the right data.

Chapter 5:
Workflow Automation and Analytics

Microsoft Power Platform

Power Platform is a set of extensible, low-code tools for building apps, workflows, AI bots, and data analytics that comes with a Microsoft 365 subscription. It includes four main products:

Power Apps:
Enables businesses to build professional-grade web and mobile applications that run on any device.

Power Automate:
Creates automated workflows between applications and services to streamline repetitive processes, such as communications and decision approvals.

Power BI (Business Intelligence):
A powerful business intelligence platform and visualization tool that uncovers key insights and helps users make data-driven decisions.

Power Virtual Agents:
Creates powerful, AI-driven chatbots to deliver personalized service and resolve customer issues quickly

Chapter 6:
File Storage

Windows Autopilot

Microsoft OneDrive is a cloud-based service that stores and connects users to their files. Easily store, backup, and share files from any device for seamless collaboration.

Windows Autopilot

Microsoft SharePoint is a cloud-based service for creating websites. Use it as a secure place to store, organize, share, and access information from any device for enhanced collaboration.

Chapter 7: Zero Trust Security

The modern workplace is increasingly hybrid and remote. With employees working from home, at the office, and on the go, securing business data and resources is more complex. That's why Microsoft 365 provides Zero Trust Security.

Zero Trust relies on the principle of "never trust, always verify." Microsoft 365 authenticates, authorizes, and encrypts every access request before granting access. Strengthen your security posture across all endpoints, identities, apps, data, infrastructures, and networks.

Microsoft 365 Defender

Microsoft 365 Defender is a unified enterprise defense suite that natively coordinates detection, prevention, investigation, and response across all endpoints, identities, emails, and applications. With the integrated Microsoft 365 Defender solution, businesses can automatically stop attacks before they happen and contextualize threat signals across all products to determine their full scope and impact.

Unlock the Benefits of Zero Trust with Microsoft 365

The Total Economic Impact™ study conducted by Forrester Consulting and commissioned by Microsoft reports significant cost savings and business benefits enabled by Microsoft 365's Zero Trust solutions, including:

92%
Return on Investment

50%
increase in the efficiency of security teams

50%
reduced risk of a data breach

Chapter 8: Plan Your Migration to Microsoft 365: A Checklist

Moving your organization to Microsoft 365 will take time and careful planning. Follow these steps to ensure a smooth transition.

1 Assess the current infrastructure.
Take inventory of infrastructure and review current systems and tools to uncover areas for improvement, automation, and updates.

2 Determine deployment goals.
Evaluate business needs and work with stakeholders to outline the scope and timeline for implementation and measures of success. Collect information about the current environment, such as the number of user accounts, network setting details, file storage locations, and the online meeting or messaging systems to be migrated.

3 Resolve any deployment blockers.
Prepare systems for migration to ensure a seamless transition. Clean up Active Directory accounts to prepare for synchronization, analyze and clean up data for frictionless conversion, and update any client software versions to eliminate bugs.

4 Configure Microsoft 365 services for the organization.
Because Microsoft 365 is designed to be tailored, businesses can configure their subscription specifically for their organization, including verifying domains, configuring application settings, and preparing for single sign-on.

5 Onboard users.
Communicate with team members in advance about the migration. Then roll out the solution: add users and assign licenses; migrate data, such as emails and files; and validate functionality.

6 Consider managed services.
Migrating infrastructure can be costly and complex. Businesses can get the most out of their investment with a managed services partner like US Signal. US Signal's Microsoft cloud services include hands-on consulting and technical support to help organizations optimize performance and reduce costs across a hybrid environment

us signal

Digital Infrastructure Solutions Built for Your Business



US Signal, established in 2001, is a premier national digital infrastructure company that operates a fully owned fiber network to deliver a wide range of advanced digital solutions. Our offerings include robust cloud services, secure colocation facilities, high-performance connectivity, comprehensive hardware resale, and managed IT services, empowering businesses to enhance their operational efficiency through tailored network, data center, data protection, and cybersecurity solutions.