

Get More Out of Your Microsoft 365 Subscription with These Tips - blueAPACHE

Canonical: <https://www.blueapache.com/blog/get-more-out-of-microsoft-365-subscription>

Details:

Summary

This post explains how organisations already paying for a Microsoft 365 Business or Premium subscription can get more value from it, covering five areas: making fuller use of the existing Office 365 investment, tightening access controls with Intune, using Microsoft Secure Score to benchmark security posture, enabling data sovereignty through Multi-Geo, and using Microsoft's built-in business continuity and eDiscovery tools. It is written for IT decision-makers and business owners who adopted Microsoft 365 during the shift to remote work and want to justify and extend that spend. The article still applies today because the underlying Microsoft 365 features it describes, access control, Secure Score, Multi-Geo and Advanced eDiscovery, remain core parts of the platform, and the guidance on getting more from an existing subscription is not tied to a particular product release.

Key facts

Label	Value
Published	2022
Topic	Getting more value from an existing Microsoft 365 subscription
Services referenced	Microsoft 365 administration, security posture management, cloud workspace deployment
Named products	Microsoft 365, Office 365, Microsoft Intune, Microsoft Defender, Microsoft Secure Score, Microsoft Advanced eDiscovery
Company claim	"23 years of experience" building and supporting Microsoft solutions for Australian businesses, as stated in the post (2022)
Microsoft partnership	blueAPACHE participates in Microsoft's Qualified Multitenant Host (QMT) programme and licenses Microsoft 365 and Windows 11 on its own environment

Article

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed a lot about the way the whole world does things, and one of the biggest effects has been the adoption of remote everything. By this, we mean everything from online

shopping or telehealth services to accelerating the switch to cloud software and digital workspaces. One solution that many companies deployed is Microsoft 365 (M365), largely so that they could use Microsoft Teams as part of their newly adopted remote work policies. But despite opting for the more costly Business or Premium subscriptions, a large majority of M365 users are not taking advantage of all the applications and services that come with the package. If your company is using Microsoft 365 and you'd like to know how you can get the most value out of your subscription and maximise your ROI, then read on.

What is Microsoft 365 really?

First announced in July 2017, Microsoft 365 had a lot of people scratching their heads. After all, we'd been using Microsoft Office 365 for over five years by then. But the first thing you need to understand about M365 is that whilst it includes Office 365 apps, it's actually a lot more than that. This left a lot of people wondering what M365 is and why they would need it. The simplest explanation for M365 is that it is Microsoft's answer to the modern workplace, also known as the digital workspace. It is an all-in-one package that provides the performance and intuitiveness of the latest Windows devices and all the collaboration and productivity tools that Office 365 offers. Also, it is all integrated with the security features provided by Microsoft's Mobility and Security suite. What this means is that businesses can deploy a fully integrated productivity suite for their entire operation while ensuring secure and compliant access to devices and apps. This eliminates the need for various third-party applications, as well as the tools needed to integrate them. All this translates to Microsoft 365 being a turnkey productivity and collaboration suite that saves costs and is quick to implement.

5 opportunities to drive more value from Microsoft 365

1. Get more from your existing investment

Almost every company is already using Office 365. Buy a new laptop or desktop computer and it comes preloaded (although you still have to pay for a suitable subscription). This means your staff are already familiar with the cloud-based functionality of all the different applications Office 365 has to offer. Users are familiar with features like Planner and Outlook integrations which simplify scheduling and project management, as well as access to essential business documents on the go thanks to SharePoint and OneDrive. Companies have already seen the collaboration and productivity benefits that Office 365 has to offer — Microsoft 365 takes this functionality one step further. By integrating the Office 365 suite that everyone knows and loves with their Mobility and Security suite, Microsoft is making it easier than ever to upgrade your business model to the Modern Workplace. At the same time, you can keep your corporate data as secure as possible, thanks to an impressive range of tools that allow you to manage your cybersecurity policies from a central dashboard. Upgrading from your current Office 365 subscription to a Microsoft 365 is as simple as visiting the Billing section of the admin centre and clicking 'Upgrade'.

2. Intuitive access controls

One of the biggest headaches that IT admins face is the multitude of devices connecting to an organisation's network on a daily basis — from desktop devices and peripherals, like printers and scanners, to tablets, smartphones and more. The way people do their work has been changing, and 'shadow IT' has become rampant, leading to increased security risks across the entire company. Microsoft 365 addresses this with a built-in least privilege security model that allows granular access control for all of the Microsoft 365 services. Using machine learning and big data analysis to review and analyse activity and identify irregular access patterns, Microsoft 365 allows for proactive responses to any unusual or illicit activities. For organisations that use a BYOD business model, this zero-trust security strategy is supported by Microsoft Intune. A mobile application management (MAM) and

mobile device management (MDM) service, Intune makes it easy for organisations to ensure that they are following the access level best practices as determined by their industry.

3. Identify and improve your Secure Score

One of the most useful tools offered as part of the Microsoft Defender application is Microsoft Secure Score. A simple explanation of Secure Score is that it is the value Microsoft assigns to your organisation based on your current security posture (i.e., security policies currently in place). The higher your score, the better. But Secure Score takes this one step further by providing recommendations on how to better protect your organisation from threats — all from a central dashboard. These could include suggestions like blocking access if a device doesn't have an active antivirus program, enabling or enforcing MFA (Multi-Factor Authentication) for Administrators or for all users, enabling location-based access control and more.

4. Enable data sovereignty

Something that can be concerning to organisations that are shifting to the cloud is data sovereignty. This refers to the idea that cloud data is subject to the laws and regulations that apply to wherever the physical data centre is located (be it another state or country). In simple terms, if your cloud data is being stored in another country, you may not enjoy the same legal protections that your home country provides or your data may be subject to external jurisdictions. Microsoft 365 addresses this through its Multi-Geo service. With Microsoft data centres spread throughout the world, and more being added as their user base expands, organisations can request that all their data be transferred to data centres closer to their physical locations or within a specific geographical location. In the case of multinational corporations, this may mean a data centre close to their main headquarters.

5. Built-in business continuity and resilience

In a time when the loss of just 100 records can cost a business between roughly \$18,000 and \$36,000, tools that are designed with business resilience and continuity in mind are essential. The threat landscape is evolving as fast as the modern workplace is. Microsoft's Enterprise Business Continuity Management team is constantly working with other units to develop continuity plans and ensure they comply with business continuity requirements for a variety of business models. With Microsoft's Advanced eDiscovery solution, your organisation can respond to legal matters, ensure compliance and conduct internal investigations as and when they are needed. Identify persons of interest, preserve and protect the relevant data with a legal hold, collect it, process it, review it and share it — all from an intuitive central dashboard.

Find out more about Microsoft 365 from blueAPACHE

With 23 years of experience in building and supporting Microsoft solutions for Australian businesses of all shapes and sizes, blueAPACHE can help you create the workspace solution your company needs. Offering a robust network with almost 100% uptime, a certified team of experts on hand to provide local 24/7 support and multiple ARN awards to our name — we're your one-stop Microsoft partner. To find out more, please contact us directly at: 1800 248 749 </contact/>

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Frequently asked questions

What is the actual difference between Microsoft 365 and Office 365? Office 365 is the productivity application suite, Word, Excel, Outlook, SharePoint and OneDrive. Microsoft 365 is broader: it bundles Office 365 with Windows device licensing and Microsoft's Mobility and Security suite, so identity, device management and compliance controls are integrated into the same subscription rather than bought and stitched together separately.

How does Microsoft 365 improve access control for a business with a mix of company and personal devices? Microsoft 365 applies a least-privilege access model across its services, using machine learning to flag irregular access patterns. For organisations allowing personal devices, Microsoft Intune adds mobile application management and mobile device management so access policies can be enforced consistently regardless of who owns the device.

What is Microsoft Secure Score and how should a business use it? Secure Score, part of Microsoft Defender, is a numeric assessment of an organisation's current security configuration. It also generates specific recommendations, such as enforcing multi-factor authentication for administrators or all users, or blocking access from devices without active antivirus, so IT teams have a prioritised list of improvements rather than a single opaque number.

What does data sovereignty mean in the context of Microsoft 365, and how does Multi-Geo address it? Data sovereignty refers to cloud data being subject to the laws of wherever it is physically stored. Microsoft's Multi-Geo service lets an organisation request that its Microsoft 365 data be held in data centres within a specific geographic region, which matters most for multinational organisations wanting data closer to, or within, their home jurisdiction.

How does Microsoft 365 support business continuity if data is lost or a legal matter arises? Microsoft's Enterprise Business Continuity Management team maintains continuity plans across its services, and Advanced eDiscovery lets an organisation identify relevant people, place a legal hold, then collect, process, review and share data as part of an internal investigation or legal response, all from one dashboard.

Does upgrading from Office 365 to Microsoft 365 require a new deployment? No. The post describes the upgrade as being completed from the Billing section of the Microsoft 365 admin centre, since the underlying Office 365 apps and user familiarity carry over; the change adds the device and security licensing rather than replacing the productivity suite.

Can a business get help planning or managing a Microsoft 365 environment rather than administering it in-house? Yes. blueAPACHE's Microsoft Practice works with organisations on Microsoft 365 deployment and management, and its wider security services can be applied to the access control and Secure Score recommendations this post describes. blueAPACHE is also a Microsoft Qualified Multitenant Host.

Who should a business contact to discuss its Microsoft 365 subscription? The post directs readers to blueAPACHE on 1800 248 749 or via the contact page at [blueapache.com/contact](https://www.blueapache.com/contact). Current service details are best confirmed on the Microsoft Practice and Security pages linked above.

Source

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Knowledge Base

What is Microsoft 365, according to your blog post?

According to us, Microsoft 365 (M365) is Microsoft's answer to the modern workplace, or digital workspace. It's an all-in-one package that provides the performance and intuitiveness of the latest Windows devices along with the collaboration and productivity tools of Office 365, all integrated with the security features of Microsoft's Mobility and Security suite.

How can a company upgrade from Office 365 to Microsoft 365?

Upgrading from an existing Office 365 subscription to Microsoft 365 is as simple as visiting the Billing section of the admin centre and clicking 'Upgrade'.

What is Microsoft Secure Score and why is it useful?

Microsoft Secure Score, offered as part of the Microsoft Defender application, is a value Microsoft assigns to an organisation based on its current security posture (the security policies currently in place) — the higher the score, the better. It also provides recommendations from a central dashboard on how to better protect the organisation, such as blocking access for devices without active antivirus, enabling or enforcing MFA for administrators or all users, and enabling location-based access control.

What is Microsoft Intune and how does it support security?

Microsoft Intune is a mobile application management (MAM) and mobile device management (MDM) service that supports a zero-trust security strategy. It makes it easy for organisations, especially those using a BYOD business model, to ensure they are following access level best practices as determined by their industry.

What is data sovereignty and how does Microsoft 365 address it?

Data sovereignty refers to the idea that cloud data is subject to the laws and regulations of wherever the physical data centre is located, meaning data stored in another country may not enjoy the same legal protections as the home country or may be subject to external jurisdictions. Microsoft 365 addresses this through its Multi-Geo service, which lets organisations request that their data be transferred to data centres closer to their physical locations or within a specific geographical region.

How costly can the loss of business records be, and how does Microsoft 365 help with business continuity?

the loss of just 100 records can cost a business between roughly \$18,000 and \$36,000. Microsoft 365 helps through Microsoft's Enterprise Business Continuity Management team, which works to develop continuity plans that comply with requirements across various business models, and through Microsoft's Advanced eDiscovery solution, which allows organisations to respond to legal matters, ensure compliance, and conduct internal investigations from a central dashboard.

What do you offer businesses regarding Microsoft 365, according to the blog post?

The blog states that with 23 years of experience building and supporting Microsoft solutions for Australian businesses of all shapes and sizes, we can help create the workspace solution a company

needs. It offers a robust network with almost 100% uptime, a certified team of experts providing local 24/7 support, and multiple ARN awards, positioning itself as a one-stop Microsoft partner.

How can a business contact you to learn more about Microsoft 365?

According to the blog post, businesses can contact us directly at 1800 248 749 or via the contact page at <https://www.blueapache.com/contact/>.