

# Putting Microsoft's cloud services to work in your business



*Cutting costs, improving customer service, keeping things simple and improving teamwork. This is what business owners dream of. Now, Microsoft is delivering its most advanced technology through the internet to benefit growing businesses in the UK. Find out how you can use Microsoft cloud technology for your business today.*

## What do these entrepreneurs and business people have in common?

*"We probably saved around £2,000 in hardware costs and another £1,000 to £2,000 a year in licences and support costs and we get the latest and best tools,"* says James Nicholls, Director of Strategy and Business Development at consultancy firm Cornhill Consulting.

*"We slashed our [email] costs – it's a quarter of the cost for a much better service,"* says Adrian Le Mans, Managing Director of marketing firm Envy Create.

*"It saves a load of pointless emails and it saves me a load of phone costs and time,"* says Nick Brown,

Finance Director at record company Mighty Village.

The answer is Microsoft's cloud offerings, such as Microsoft Office 365, Microsoft Dynamics CRM Online and Windows Intune.

All three are using Microsoft technology 'in the cloud'. This means that they don't need on-premise servers and software, just their laptop or desktop PCs and an internet connection. Microsoft does everything else over the internet from the company's own data centres.

<b>Business requirement</b>	<b>Microsoft solution</b>
Small-scale file sharing and online working	<p>Microsoft offers a number of free online tools that can be a good introduction to basic cloud computing and which offer individuals and very small businesses useful capabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Office 365</a> lets you create a website with free online tools and use your own domain name (e.g. 'www.mycompany.co.uk') and email address (e.g. 'boss@mycompany.co.uk'). It's a step up from Hotmail and ideal for early-stage companies. It lets you send and receive email, track appointments in an online calendar and store contacts in a web-based address book.</li><li>• <a href="#">Windows Live SkyDrive</a> gives you free online storage for documents, pictures and other files. It's a great tool for sharing files between colleagues, especially when they aren't all in the same location.</li><li>• <a href="#">Office Web Apps</a> lets you read and edit Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote files stored on SkyDrive via a web browser – no software required. It's perfect for anytime, anyplace access to your important files.</li></ul>

Business requirement	Microsoft solution
Business class email, collaboration and communication tools	<p>When you need professional, business class tools, such as your own email server or collaboration tools, but you don't want to buy a capital-hungry, in-house server, <a href="#">Office 365</a> could be your shortcut to new technology. It includes three powerful components: Exchange Online, SharePoint Online and Lync Online. Designed to meet the needs of a diverse range of small businesses, these give the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Information sharing.</b> The ability to share calendars, tasks and contacts with colleagues</li> <li>• <b>Remote access.</b> Access to your email, diary etc. via Outlook on a PC, on a smartphone or via any computer with a web browser.</li> <li>• <b>File sharing.</b> Make sure that everyone has the latest version of important business documents, with full security, access control and change tracking.</li> <li>• <b>Document collaboration.</b> Let several people work on the same document simultaneously.</li> <li>• <b>Secure instant messaging.</b> Instead of waiting for a response to an email or disrupting a colleague with a phone call, send them an instant message.</li> <li>• <b>Turn the internet into your meeting room.</b> Set up virtual conferences and share your screen and individual application windows with colleagues, partners or customers.</li> <li>• <b>Cut travel costs.</b> Use internet conferencing to cut down on travel time and costs – just meet online.</li> <li>• <b>Increase productivity.</b> With more ways to communicate and better information sharing, people can get on with their job with fewer interruptions.</li> </ul> <p>Whether you have one user or hundreds, there's an Office 365 plan to suit you and prices start at £4 per user, per month, with no hardware or software to buy. It gives you and your staff access to big company technology for the price of a posh cup of coffee each month.</p>
Customer relationship management	<p><a href="#">Dynamics CRM Online</a> gives you access to the latest customer relationship management software without the expense and burden of buying and installing it on dedicated computers in your office. If you need to track customer relationships over time and across calls, meetings and correspondence, Dynamics CRM Online lets you do everything within the familiar interface of Outlook. It gives you powerful tools to increase sales productivity, analyse data and improve customer service. Prices start at £22.75 per user, per month<sup>1</sup>.</p>
PC security and management	<p>If you have more than a handful of PCs in your company, you already know that it can be a chore keeping them secure against viruses and ensuring that they have the latest software and updates. This is where <a href="#">Windows Intune</a> comes in. It provides cloud-hosted PC security and management. It helps you keep all your computers running smoothly and lets you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage updates</li> <li>• Protect PCs against malware</li> <li>• Monitor PCs for problems</li> <li>• Track hardware and software inventory</li> <li>• Give remote assistance if something goes wrong</li> <li>• Set consistent security policies for your PCs</li> </ul> <p>It is also very helpful if you work with an IT partner for technical support. You can give them access to Intune and they can use it to monitor your PCs and fix problems remotely, reducing the risk of downtime and cutting support costs (compared with an expensive call out). It also comes with a Windows Client Enterprise Licence, which allows you to upgrade from Windows 7 Business to Windows 7 Enterprise and gain access to additional security features such as disk encryption and enhanced search capabilities. Prices start at £7.25 per PC, per month, which compares favourably with the price of a conventional but standalone anti-virus program.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Promotional pricing expires on 30 June 2011

## Ten benefits of cloud computing

- 1. A professional face for your business.** Using professional services like Office 365 tells potential customers that you're serious about business. For example, you can impress your prospects by inviting them to a collaborative online meeting where you can review your latest proposal. With these easy-to-use collaboration, mail, and messaging services, you can set yourself apart from organisations that use free or ad-supported services. A custom domain name further enhances your branding, and Office 365 includes design tools to create a professional, public-facing website in minutes.
- 2. Improve teamwork.** Use Office 365 to set up a company intranet site. This will make sure that everyone has access to the very latest versions of key documents such as price lists, product specifications or company policies. Set up Office 365 to report presence information, letting everyone see when people are free for calls or instant messages. Use it to share calendars to make it easier to plan and book meetings (you can even add calendars for meeting rooms and resources like projectors). Add Dynamics CRM Online to make sure that everyone in sales and customer support gets a joined-up view of customer information.
- 3. Support mobile and flexible working.** Office 365 frees you to work where and when you choose. Access your files, email and diary information from virtually any internet-connected PC. You can even view and edit Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents on a Windows Phone 7 smartphone. Cloud computing also works very well when you have multiple locations such as a number of shops or offices.
- 4. Enhance communications.** Most companies rely on email and telephones but there are other options that work better in some circumstances. For example, Office 365 lets you use instant messaging (a sort of real-time online chat) to fire off quick questions or have online conversations. You can also set up web meetings and share presentations and other applications over the

## Are you ready for cloud services?

Look for the signs that cloud computing might work for your business:

- Are you frustrated with the limitations of your existing IT systems?
- Would you like to cut the cost of buying and maintaining your IT systems?
- Do you already have an email server or CRM system that is coming to the end of its service life and you're looking to upgrade?
- Do you need new technology to gain a competitive advantage; for example, by implementing a CRM system or improving the way you and your colleagues communicate?
- Do you need flexibility to support growth or other changes in your business (such as acquisitions, branch offices or shops, remote working etc.)?
- Do you have staff who regularly work away from the office, e.g. at home, at client sites or on the road?
- Would it be helpful to get your email, diary and files on your laptop or smartphone?
- Do you worry about protection against malware, not having a proper backup or what would happen if your critical business systems were stolen?

These are all strong indicators that Microsoft cloud services might be right for you.

internet. You can even use webcams for online video conferencing and internet telephony.

- 5. Increase security.** Microsoft puts nine layers of security around your information in its data centres. With data stored in multiple data centres, your information is much more secure than it would be on a single PC or server in your office. If your computer is damaged or stolen, you can carry on working on another machine or from a home PC or internet café without interruption because all your files are safe on Microsoft's infrastructure. Add Windows Intune for increased

levels of security and protection on your laptops and desktop PCs.

- 6. Familiarity.** Work with applications you already know. There's no need for staff training and you don't have to give up capabilities that you already rely on. Office 365 has a similar interface to other Microsoft programs and so you'll find it familiar and easy to use.
- 7. Reduce IT downtime.** Microsoft offers a 99.9% uptime guarantee. This means less than eight hours downtime a year, at most. When people rely on IT to get their job done, this kind of service level agreement ensures that IT isn't going to get in the way. Not only that, but Microsoft also takes care of all the updates, maintenance, management and administration, so you don't have to.
- 8. Improve customer relations.** Every business would like to get closer to its customers and make sure that no problems or requests fall through the cracks. Dynamics CRM Online gives companies a tool to manage customer relationships in a joined-up and efficient way. For example, a salesman can see a client's whole history on the screen before they make a call. And when the call is finished, they can leave a note for other people to see what they said and what was agreed. Because you can access Office 365 from a smart phone or web browser, you can respond to urgent customer requests even when you aren't in the office.
- 9. Cut IT costs.** Microsoft cloud services don't require any hardware in your office or any additional software on your PC. Everything runs out of Microsoft's data centres and all you need is a computer with an internet connection to access it. This means that there is less technology to buy and less technology to manage. Replacing on-premise servers with cloud services can cut support costs and admin costs dramatically. Instead of paying upfront fees for new hardware and software, with cloud services you pay a simple per-user, per-month fee. This moves much of your IT budget from capital expenditure into operational expenditure. It also means that you pay for the

IT you use now rather than the IT you *might* use in the future.

- 10. It's Microsoft.** Microsoft is fully committed to cloud computing. Our online services package utilises our latest technology that has already been proven in millions of businesses. We offer a choice between using our online services, hosted services using our technology but provided by other partners or installing the systems on your own hardware. You can move from one approach to another – we don't lock you in or tie you down.

## For more information

- See our guide to evaluating cloud services: [Ten questions every business must ask about cloud computing](#)
- [Microsoft Office 365](#)
- [Microsoft Dynamics CRM Online](#)
- [Windows Intune](#)