Steer.

How the PMO wins with cloud services

Discover opportunities for a more efficient Project Management Office by avoiding expensive dependencies on physical servers with Project Online, a service offered through Microsoft Office 365.

For over a decade, Microsoft has delivered flexible software for Project Portfolio Management (PPM) through editions of Microsoft Project Server and Microsoft Project Professional. Now the proven capabilities in Project Server are available as Project Online, a cloud service which offers increased agility and a smaller IT footprint. Project Online works with the SharePoint platform and enjoys the business benefits of Office 365, which modernizes productivity infrastructure without any compromise.

Like Project Server, Project Online syncs seamlessly with Project Professional, Microsoft's signature project management software embraced by project managers everywhere. When an organization's many individual projects are managed in Project Online, everything the PMO and business leaders need to manage project portfolios and make key decisions is available in one place, accessible from virtually anywhere on nearly any device.

The PMO can gain from the cloud by reducing unnecessary overhead costs, increasing agility to get projects to completion faster, and leveraging new collaboration technology to streamline communication and raise quality bars. Starting a pilot program is as easy as adding licenses to existing Office 365 accounts or creating a new account with a corporate credit card.

Project Online Cloud Benefits

- ☁ **No infrastructure costs**
- ☁ **Always up-to-date**
- ☁ **Flexible and scalable**
- ☁ **Enterprise-ready security**

■■ **Microsoft**

Trends in hardware virtualization delivered substantial cost reductions for companies across many industries in recent years. As virtualization technology becomes mature and standardized, the leading edge of cost control is moving to cloud services, in which workloads that are not mission critical can be accessed with more flexibility, lower costs, and without investments in unnecessary infrastructure. Many enterprises understand that sustained competitive advantage results from strategically directed operations more so than administration of server farms, and for many PMOs, scaling out to support more teams within the enterprise is simply not possible in an on-premises model.

Project Online addresses these realities and unlocks substantial opportunity for modern PMOs to boost autonomy and scale. While traditional implementations of Project Server take time and commitment to roll out, a new instance of Project Online is typically provisioned in about 10 minutes.

Furthermore, customers are spared inconvenient overhead costs associated with maintaining extra infrastructure, like applying updates, maintaining security, scaling capacity, and ensuring uptime and availability. Since Project Online is a service delivered through Office 365, it is always up-to-date, accessible from virtually anywhere, and can be trusted with sensitive data and mission-critical workloads[1].

> **Using a cloud-based solution is clearly an advantage compared to setting up a customized server environment. We don't have to worry about maintenance, upgrades, or compatibility issues. All the capabilities we need are there, and are easily customizable.**
>
> Dr. Christian Buddendick
> Head of Workplace Platform Services Hilti Corporation

All too often, the PMO finds itself struggling under rising costs associated with increasing infrastructure requirements as the use of server technologies is adopted across an enterprise. These growing pains can now be controlled, since Project Online provides the flexibility to scale up and out with ease. Costs of subscription services are straightforward and make budgeting easier, easing the long-borne pain of complicated expense accruals across businesses or departments. User licenses can be updated to reflect demand from an administration console in moments, so the PMO can pilot Project Online without worry and scale out with ease.

Cloud Tradeoffs

Despite the many advantages of accessing valuable workloads in the cloud with Project Online, there are certain conditions under which Project Server may still be a better fit. It would be folly to assume that the only universal business driver is support cost, which is why Microsoft believes that some customers are best served by continuing to use and support Project Server. Situations where Project Server might still be the best solution can typically be described as a need for physical control over data, complex integration with legacy on-premises systems, or a need to customize their solution beyond what is capable through standard features in Project Online.

Need for physical control over the hardware upon which sensitive data resides is easily appreciated and most evident with government and military customers. While Microsoft stands behind the security and reliability of Project Online, those customers who are restricted by policy to on-premises solutions can work with skilled solutions specialists and partners adept at crafting the right implementation to meet unique needs.

Integration with legacy systems can be a delicate process, and warrants quality time with solutions specialists and certified solution partners[2]. Since Project Server and Project Online are integrated into SharePoint, customers who wish to maintain on-premises versions of SharePoint will need to implement Project Server on premises, as well.

When deep customizations are a business requirement, there will be a need for diligence and a proof of concept pilot before taking all those old servers to the recycling center. Microsoft certified PPM solution partners bring the expertise needed for careful migrations.

Project Server is highly customizable, but to make it possible to consistently deploy updates to the cloud service, Project Online has a new extensibility model which limits some of the ways the environment can be customized. Customers who need capabilities beyond what can be done through platform customizations can use the new

When to stick with servers

- **Need for physical control**
- **Integration with legacy solutions**
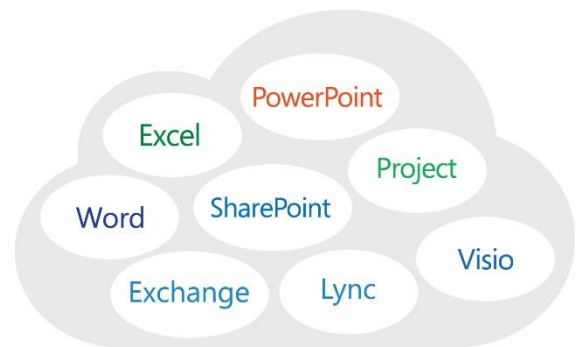- **Hybrid scenarios**
- **Dependent on deep customization**

Project

app store to plug in modules that have been developed in-house or licensed from third parties. With the app store, features specific to an industry, methodology, or individual company can be implemented as necessary, and controlled on a user-by-user basis.

Early Project Online customers actually indicate a preference for the slightly more restrictive online model, since it sets reasonable bounds on customization and prevents practitioners from spending too much time on low value-add and non-scalable work streams[3]. This is a more sustainable extensibility model for the future, but Microsoft remains committed to meeting a wide range of needs by making full customization available in Project Server.

Everything in one place

In addition to delivering core cloud services like Project Online and SharePoint through Office 365 subscriptions, customers can also subscribe to a version of Project Professional deployed as a streaming installation on up to five personal computers. This subscription is called Project Pro for Office 365 and, like Project Online, it adds valuable flexibility and scalability to our globally preferred project management software. The subscription offers an easy way to put an always up-to-date desktop client in front of project managers, giving them the conduit for syncing sophisticated project management into Project Online. It's like the PMO's elevator to the cloud.
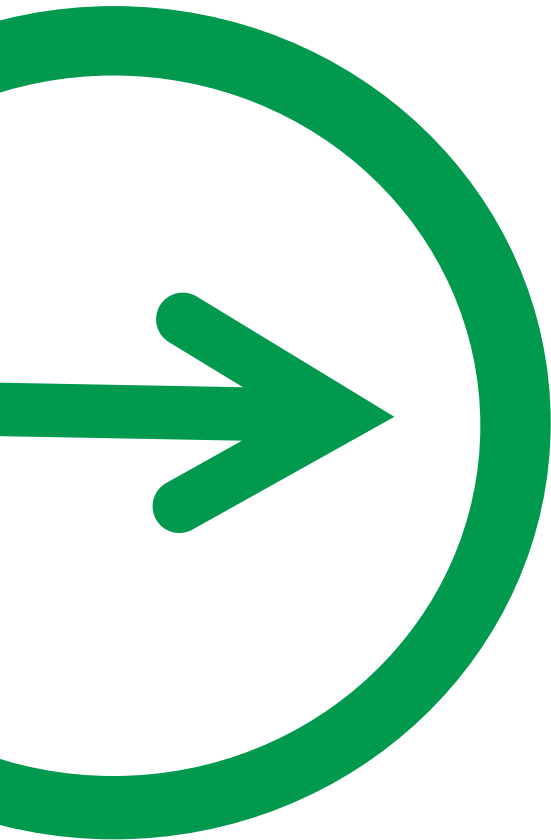
Office 365 leverages best practices and adds unique innovations to give users the power to mix and match the right set of tools to meet business needs. Project Online brings SharePoint Online capabilities with it, and the experience only gets better when licenses are added for Lync Online communication, Exchange Online email services, and streaming Office applications like Word, Excel, and PowerPoint to personal computers virtually anywhere. Visio Pro for Office 365 is also available as a subscription, enabling integration of business process modelling, zero-code workflow design for demand management, data-connected dashboards, and traditional diagramming.

Microsoft is uniquely positioned to provide a consistent platform capable of meeting the needs of customers in a wide variety of industry verticals, methodological horizontals, and degrees of complexity. Diverse business scenarios and technical maturities are often encountered across organizations within enterprises, making the need for a platform capable of being good at different workloads for different teams patently salient.

Project Online offers the flexibility needed to let PMOs be agile while synthesizing dynamic data from across the organization to deliver projects successfully. Now the PMO can get started quickly, respond to change without piling on costs, and deliver business results while offering valuable insights to management. No mountains of servers to climb, no armies of IT staff to feed. Business is better in the cloud.

Cloud Comparison		
	Project Server	Project Online
No servers required		✓
Fast set-up		✓
Fully customizable	✓	✓
Scales out quickly		✓
Physical control of data	✓	
Enterprise-ready security		✓
99.9% uptime reliability		✓
Always up-to-date		✓
24/7 support available		✓

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