



Microsoft®  
**Exchange Online**

WHITEPAPER

# How Microsoft® Exchange Online Helps Solve IT Challenges

Exchange Online is designed to help organizations such as yours meet common IT and operational challenges, while still offering the flexibility to meet a wide variety of needs.

Challenge	Exchange Online ...
Reducing IT costs: Especially in challenging economic times, organizations need to cut costs wherever possible—but without reducing capabilities.	... can provide a full-featured enterprise messaging platform at lower total cost of ownership than on-premises systems.
Increasing predictability of IT costs: Replacing or upgrading on-premises IT systems can require significant one-time capital expenditures.	... is a subscription-based service with predictable monthly costs.
Increasing user productivity: Users face growing volumes of email, and need tools to help them manage it more efficiently.	... delivers anywhere access across PC, phone, and browser so users can keep up with email.
Enhancing collaboration: Increasingly mobile and distributed workers need technology that helps them work together wherever they are.	... delivers collaboration and calendaring features that help users connect whether they are working remotely, or in the same location.
Reducing IT administration burden: IT can be stretched thin and spend too much time managing hardware, updates, and upgrades.	... eliminates server maintenance while providing rich web-based tools for customizing Exchange Online features and settings.
Increasing reliability and availability of email: Email is a business-critical application, and many organizations face challenges keeping it running—especially with shrinking IT budgets.	... is hosted in geo-redundant data centers employing the latest technology and operational excellence processes, along with extensive third-party testing and certification.
Staying up-to-date with the latest technology: To stay competitive and recruit the next generation of talent, businesses need to have the latest functionality. But, upgrading on-premises software can be a significant undertaking.	... provides new features and capabilities without the need to physically upgrade on-premises infrastructure.

## Benefits of Cloud-Based Email

Exchange Online was designed for organizations that want to get the benefits of cloud-based email with the robust capabilities of an on-premises Exchange deployment. The service provides the core features of Microsoft Exchange Server, so you and your users get the same familiar and powerful Exchange features that millions of users rely on in their on-premises email systems today.

### Cost

Because it includes hardware, software, support, and upgrades, using Exchange in the cloud can provide enterprise messaging at a lower total cost of ownership than on-premises systems. Because it is a subscription service, Exchange Online turns large, acute capital expenditures into predictable monthly costs.

### Agility

In a fast-paced global economy, you need to be able to adapt quickly to changing business conditions. Because it can scale up quickly, Exchange Online provides the tools to respond effectively to changes in workforce size, mergers and acquisitions, and the need to extend email to new parts of your workforce.

### Simplicity

Deploying, managing, and upgrading on-premises email infrastructure can be time consuming and complex. With Exchange Online, there is often little or nothing to deploy—you simply “turn it on.” Server maintenance, security, and upgrades are included in the service, greatly reducing the burden on IT administrators. At the same time, you maintain control over most of the policies, services, and features that impact your business.

### Quality

Especially with shrinking IT budgets, you may be facing challenges in maintaining the degree of email reliability and availability you need to stay competitive. Exchange Online is built for high availability and data redundancy. Advanced Microsoft data centers meet or exceed a wide range of recognized industry standards. Exchange Online provides a financially-backed, 99.9% uptime Service Level Agreement that compensates customers if uptime falls below the guaranteed level.

“By going off-premises, we saved the purchase of additional hardware. And it’s not just that, there’s also the ongoing upkeep, maintenance, and upgrades. That’s all out of our hands now, and I don’t have to worry about it. We also save money by consolidating and standardizing all the different systems we used to manage.” - Tony DeGregorio, Global Chief Information Officer, [Tyco Flow Control](#)

“Microsoft Online Services has allowed us to be fluid in our aggressive growth strategy. There’s no way we could maintain this pace of growth without a cloud-based messaging service.” - Marcos Barrera, Director of IT, [DeployHR](#)

## Benefits of Exchange Online

### Anywhere Access

Today's workers are increasingly distributed and mobile, working from more locations and using more platforms than ever before. To stay productive, they need full-featured access to email wherever they go. Today's mobile workforce is well-served by Exchange Online. It delivers anywhere access, enabling users to connect to mailboxes with a consistent experience across PC, phone, and browser. Large 25GB mailboxes means your users do not have to waste time cleaning out their mailboxes to make space, or moving email to offline PST files that cannot be accessed remotely. All of their email data is available to them, wherever they go.

### The three-screen experience

- PC: Exchange Online provides a full-featured Microsoft Outlook® client experience without the need for a VPN connection, including a robust offline experience so your users can be productive even when Internet access isn't available.
- Phone: Mobile access is available from a wide range of devices that connect directly to Exchange via the ActiveSync® protocol. These include Windows Phone®, iPhone, Nokia devices, and many more. Support for Blackberry devices is also available as an add-on. With Exchange ActiveSync, you can enforce security policies, such as PIN lock, on the devices that connect to your Exchange Online environment. In the event that a mobile device is lost or stolen, users or administrators can remotely wipe the device back to its factory settings from Outlook Web Access.
- Browser: Outlook Web Access provides a premium online access experience that matches the look and feel of the full Outlook client.

"Users don't have to use VPNs [virtual private networks] to get to their email messages anymore. Many of our employees travel or work from home, and now they can get to their email from any web browser." - Pat Burnett, Vendor Manager in IT Outsourcing, [Scripps Networks Interactive](#)

### Enhanced collaboration

Mobile and distributed workers need robust collaboration tools to work together effectively across time and distance. Exchange Online provides access to the Global Address List (GAL) to make it easy for people to find and contact one another—even outside contractors or others who need to be in your company directory. Personal and shared distribution lists provide easy ways for people and teams to stay in touch. And, support for shared mailboxes and delegated mailbox access provides flexibility in sharing resources.

## **Powerful calendaring**

Effective shared calendaring is crucial to productivity. Exchange Online provides the same enterprise-class calendaring features as Exchange Server, with support for delegate access to mailboxes and calendars, which is essential for executive assistants and others who manage shared resources.

## **Protection and Compliance**

It is vital that you do not lose control of security and reliability as you move email to the cloud. Exchange Online provides rich and flexible compliance tools that help enable you to improve and streamline the compliance process.

Microsoft data centers use the latest hardware and software along with a minimum of “n+1” redundancy across disk drives, network connections, power sources and other components. Data are replicated across geo-redundant data centers, helping to protect against even the most serious local crises. Experts monitor systems around-the-clock and failover systems are tested regularly, with regular third-party certification. Finally, a defense-in-depth security strategy is followed using best-in-class operational processes.

If you have ever reflected on questions such as, “When’s the last time we tested our disaster recovery plan?” and “Are we confident we could do a mass restore of our email data from backup?” you may find that Exchange Online provides a higher-level of availability and security than you have today.

## **Anti-spam and anti-virus protection**

Microsoft Forefront® Online Protection for Exchange is included as part of the Exchange Online subscription, to help block malware from reaching your users’ inboxes. This is an enterprise-class anti-virus and anti-spam service that uses proprietary anti-spam technology to identify spam while letting legitimate messages through with a high degree of accuracy. Multiple and complementary anti-virus engines help catch email-borne viruses and other malicious code in incoming, outgoing, and internal email messages. This helps protect your organization from malicious content that originates from behind your firewall. All of this is built-in to Exchange Online with no configuration necessary to start or maintain the filtering technology.

## **Simplified Administration**

Managing corporate email can be complex. With Exchange Online, many of the most time-consuming tasks are taken care of by Microsoft, including the management of hardware, updates, and upgrades. Additionally, Exchange Online delivers a streamlined administration experience, making it easier for IT administrators to configure and manage email services in ways that benefit the business.

## Directory Synchronization

Your organization needs to keep a single, centralized directory for users, despite moving some services to the cloud. Exchange Online enables synchronization between cloud services and on-premises Active Directory® servers, eliminating the need to administer user identities in two places. The Active Directory Synchronization tool is a free download that you install on a server in your network. The tool synchs any changes made in Active Directory and pushes those changes to the Microsoft Online environment. This also means you have one, unified GAL across on-premises and cloud applications.

## Support and service level agreement

When you move your messaging services to the cloud, you will need a service provider that delivers the highest levels of support and stands behind its service level agreements. Exchange Online has a financially backed commitment of 99.9%+ availability. We can make this commitment because of built-in redundancy throughout the system, including at the data center level, and because of the investments we make in operational excellence. Additionally, support for your IT administrators is available around-the-clock, via phone, web, or email. Open issues are updated in a central location and a wide variety of help and support documentation is available 24/7.

## Administration Center

While moving email to the cloud removes some of the burden on your IT administrators, they must stay in control of the policies and features that support your business objectives. A web-based administration center gives your IT administrators the ability to:

- Manage subscriptions, billing, and trial accounts.
- Set up new users, and provision them with services.
- Reset user passwords, individually or in bulk.
- Manage shared contacts, distribution groups, anti-spam settings, conference rooms, and mailbox quotas.
- Open support requests.
- Follow up on the status of open issues.
- Check service health, and download tools.

“If someone leaves the company, I can use the synchronization tool to delete them from Active Directory and they can’t access their email anymore. And if I add somebody to the marketing distribution list, it’s updated automatically in Exchange Online and available companywide through the Global Address List.”

- Jake Harris, Director of IT, [Aisle7](#)

“Our employees are assured that their e-mail will always be there and perform well so that they can be responsive to one another and to customers. People expect e-mail to just be there, like the lights coming on when you flip the switch. Now it does. Using Microsoft Online Services also takes the pressure off my IT team. We no longer hear constant complaints.” - Bob Prezkop, Chief Information Officer and Vice President of Global Delivery, [Intertec Consulting](#)

## Deployment Flexibility

### Migration tools

You may view user migration as a major challenge in moving to the cloud, and Exchange Online provides robust mailbox migration tools to help minimize disruptions. For non-Exchange systems, IMAP-based tools enable you to move email directly to Exchange Online. If your organization is running Exchange on-premises, a more sophisticated tool can be used to migrate the entire contents of your Exchange mailboxes, including appointments, meeting requests, personal contacts, and tasks.

### Coexistence capabilities

In addition to a variety of migration tools, Exchange Online also supports coexistence for gradual migration to the cloud. You can use Exchange Online in combination with a local Exchange Server to allow some accounts to stay on-premises, while others are hosted. All users share the same email domain name and see the same global address list. Coexistence capabilities make it easy to test out the capabilities of Exchange Online with low risk.

### Deskless Worker subscription

Some of your employees may not have email, or use it infrequently. These are especially good candidates for cloud-based email. The Exchange Online Deskless Worker subscription provides basic mailbox access through Outlook Web Access, with a reduced storage quota. Users still get the same anti-spam and anti-virus capabilities, datacenter geo-redundancy, and service uptime guarantees as standard users. The Deskless Worker subscription is a great fit for factory workers, retail workers, and others who access email through shared computers or kiosks. You can provide the right level of capabilities to workers with different needs, and save money in the process.

## Conclusion

The benefits of moving email to the cloud are clear; including lower costs, increased agility, simpler management, and higher-quality services. Exchange Online meets these expectations by delivering a wide-range of features and capabilities that support anywhere access, protection and compliance, and simplified administration. With Exchange Online, you confidently achieve the benefits of cloud-based email while delighting your users and reducing the burden on your IT staff. To learn more about Exchange Online, sign up for free, 30-day trial at <http://www.microsoft.com/online/exchange-online.aspx>.