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Microsoft Exchange vs Microsoft 365

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MARCH 2021

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This is a comparison between full Microsoft Exchange vs Microsoft 365. This is comparing the products/services rather than where Exchange is located.

You can choose Exchange Server on-premises/Privately Hosted or Microsoft 365 as both platforms are from Microsoft. But, before making your selection, you need to understand the requirements of your business.

Understand the requirements of your business

Several factors can give you the answer to which type of Exchange Server will be better for your business:

- **What is the total cost for managing the on-site resources?**
  - Consider the overall IT staffing and external support costs.
- **What type of business does your organization run?**
  - Are you a single site business, do you have remote workers or many offices, this means communications may be involved.
- **What is the total expenditure on hardware and software resources?**
  - Consider the cost of hardware, maintaining it and supporting it, both parts and labour.
  - Look at the overall cost of Software and the licenses, be mindful of upgrade costs.

- **What kind of benefits Exchange Server on-premises or Online will give?**
  - Consider the benefits of both solutions, what suits your business better, base this on the information provided in this paper.
- **Is integration a requirement?**
  - If you are integrating email with other applications such as CRM, consider if this can be achieved, using your chosen method.
- **Exchange Server (on-premise / Private Hosting) is available for purchase along with client access licenses. You only need to deploy sufficient hardware and install Exchange and clients as per your needs.**
  - With On premise 'Owned' solution, consider growth, is your current hardware and licensing structure sufficient / future proof ?
  - Look at levels of growth, such as what would 25% growth cost me?

Exchange

What is Microsoft Exchange?

Microsoft Exchange is usually setup in one of two ways, either as part of an on-premise configuration, or privately hosted in a Data Centre of some sort. It can be accessed by purchasing client access licenses. For this type of setup, you need sufficient hardware to install and run Exchange on, or your private cloud provider will have to have hardware available.

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Advantages of Exchange

- It offers you full authority over the setup and configuration and the environment, the Administrator user can configure the specifications or settings & can easily manage the mailboxes and other things as per the initial requirement.
- Easily add multiple email addresses / Domains to one mailbox for sending & receiving
- Server updates, re-starts, backups and shutdowns can all be controlled and conducted according to convenience and the business functions can be taken into consideration.

- Exchange Data is in your full control and you know where it is stored at all times, this is up to you.
- The Security of data is a big aspect behind this whole scenario, with Exchange, users get surety of data security as the data is stored where they set it up and remains in their control.
- The organization has total authority over the hardware and software of the Exchange. You can easily configure the specifications or settings and manage the mailboxes and mail flow.

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- You have total control over system updates, backup, and restore of the data. The on-premises environment enhances the quality of data management.
- You can integrate many other business applications with the Exchange Server.
- You can archive the emails at the desired location and use advanced search facilities.
- You can easily upgrade your security plans.
- Due to the proximity of Server, the throughput and access time for the mailbox is quite high. Any bad network connection can be easily fixed.
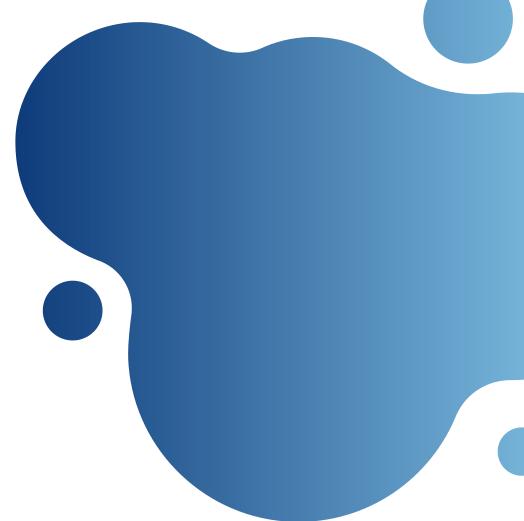
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Disadvantages of Exchange

Whether Exchange is located on premise or in a private cloud, at the initial stage of installation, an investment is required, in implementation, hardware and licensing.

- There is a need for technical expertise for handling the DNS Services, Firewalls, and Active directory for an Exchange Server.
- An On-site Exchange Administrator or a support contract is a must to be responsible for the management of the environment, security and monitoring as well as other administration functions.

- Maintenance and upgrading of the hardware and software is time consuming and expensive.
- Should a malfunction or disaster affect Exchange, the business will usually be fully responsible for that.

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Microsoft 365

What is Microsoft 365?

Microsoft 365 is a cloud-based Software as a Service (SaaS) that runs within a subscription model. Users can subscribe to the plan as per their requirements. Different Microsoft 365 plans are available like Microsoft 365 Home, Microsoft 365 Personal and Microsoft 365 Education.
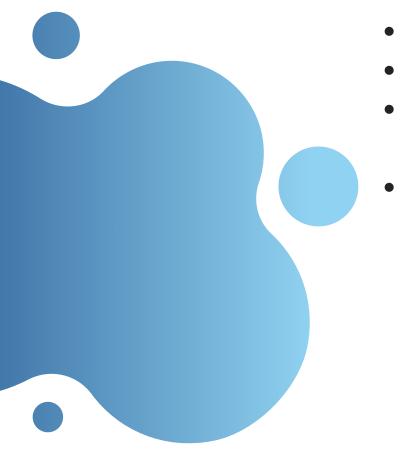
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Advantages of Microsoft 365

- Users will always get the latest versions, no need to worry about updates and no need to pay for any updates.
- No investment in hardware and the subsequent installation at the outset.
- Microsoft 365 services are accessible from everywhere as long as there is an internet connection.
- Microsoft 365 can be cost-efficient as there is no need to maintain anything.
- You can get many essential services like Exchange Server, Teams, OneDrive for Business, SharePoint, etc.

- All the facilities are available instantly.
- You do not need to pay for any updates.
- Microsoft does all the hardware and software updates at their end, and it does not affect the business functioning.
- Cloud platform reduces your on-site expenditures which you can invest in other resources.

Disadvantages of Microsoft 365

- Microsoft has data centres located in different places across the globe meaning businesses and users are not aware of the location of their data.
- Using multiple domains / email addresses from one mailbox can be tricky, at times causing multiple subscriptions for a single user to facilitate
- Archiving mailboxes is an issue with Microsoft 365.
- While Microsoft is generally secure for data and email storage there is still some chance of unauthorised access and concern around the integrity of data hence large enterprises often hesitate around using Microsoft 365.

- Data migration requires third-party assistance.
- Manual data migration requires third-party assistance and is quite time-consuming.
- Integration with the on-premises applications is difficult.
- There are no proper archiving abilities in Microsoft 365.

Benefits: Exchange Online

99% Uptime Guarantee
Low Up-Front Costs
Predictable Costs
Operational Expense
Availability

Challenges: Exchange Online

Lack of Control
Ongoing Expenses
Security/Compliance
Support

Exchange

Benefits: Exchange On-Prem

Total Control
Speed of Operation
Functionality
Customisation

Challenges: Exchange On-Prem

Potential Downtime
Unknown Expenses
Expertise

Microsoft 365

Next Steps

Get in touch with our friendly team for your free assessment.

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