



# Managed Office 365

The Benefits for Law Firms.

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## Table of contents.



What is Office 365?	3
How Office 365 Works	4
Bill more hours with Office 365	6
How Office 365 keeps your cloud, network, and data flexible and secure	7
How Office 365 takes data security to the next level	9
How MSPs ensure a hassle-free Office 365 migration	11

A woman with dark dreadlocks, wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt, is sitting at a wooden desk and typing on a silver laptop. She is looking down at the keyboard. In the background, there is a bookshelf with various books and a blue couch. The overall scene is a home office or study.

## What is Office 365?

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Law firms face a number of unique IT challenges. They have to stay current with the latest and most secure technology without blowing the budget. Unfortunately, most firms struggle to maintain that balance.

The modern workforce needs dependable productivity tools that let employees work and collaborate efficiently. And that's what [\*\*Microsoft Office 365\*\*](#) offers: a suite of applications ideally suited for the legal industry, in one subscription-based package. Its combination of email, word processor, spreadsheet, presentation application, and calendar programs has made it extremely popular with businesses of all sizes.

But beyond basic email and productivity capabilities, how can your firm benefit from Office 365?

From estate to employment and civil rights to criminal, every type of legal practice can reap the benefits of moving some or all IT-related functions off premises for a third party to manage.

As Office 365 continues to add more features and become more complex, working with a Managed Services Provider (MSP) to develop a productivity suite tailored to your firm lets you focus on things that matter most: keeping your staff productive and billing more hours. On top of the multiple benefits that Office 365 brings, there are quite a few ways that MSPs can add even more value to this industry-leading platform. Let's explore some of them.

## How Office 365 works.

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Simply put, Office 365 is Microsoft's cloud version of Office. It's powered by the cloud, which means users can access applications and files from any PC, Mac, tablet or mobile device with an Internet connection. So if a client sends you an important document that requires your input when you're on the move, it's never been easier to get things done.

### It offers anytime, anywhere access.

When working on your Office 365 files, you upload and synchronize files with Microsoft's cloud platform, Windows OneDrive, and then access them from different locations or devices that don't have Office or store them locally.

Most clients are familiar with the desktop version of Office 365, but Office Web Apps are recent important additions. As a free and limited internet version of the original Office, Office Web Apps is integrated with OneDrive, which lets you use Web Apps to view and edit files on devices that don't have Office installed.

## How Office 365 works.

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### It's subscription-based.

Office 365 is offered as a subscription-based plan in the cloud. It's a hybrid between the desktop version and the free web apps. One of the best things about the service is its web-based application across multiple devices.

Based on your preferred subscription, you can get different apps and tool combinations. Most PC plans include Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access, OneNote, and Publisher, while the Mac business versions don't include Publisher or Access.

Most companies considering the cloud have security as a strong motivator. Office 365 offers the same user-level security options and Trust Center as the desktop version, and you get the assurance that your files are saved in highly secure, state-of-the-art data centers. This lets SMBs enjoy far better security migrating to Office 365 than they can afford on their own.

### It can be used offline.

Depending on your firm's needs, you can choose to run Office 365 offline. You will, however, need to connect to the internet every 30 days to maintain your subscription. Office 365 will let you know when it's time to connect.

At this point, the Office 365 market is rapidly expanding and there are several compelling reasons to consider partnering with an MSP for a subscription.

## Bill more hours with Office 365.

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According to a recent survey, maintaining existing equipment and infrastructure takes the lion's share of a company's IT budget at 37 percent, but adoption and development of new technologies and innovation is not far behind at 33 percent. To deal with the rising costs of IT, many firms are turning to "intelligent" technology as a smarter way to run their businesses.

By outsourcing your Office 365 needs, you get all the benefits of a comprehensive productivity suite at prices that don't break the bank. You also get to decide how much you're willing to pay for the office tools that will suit your needs. For law firms, this can be crucial, especially in the months after opening for business, when resources are limited.

However, a poorly planned Office 365 migration can result in inflated costs and wasted IT resources. To avoid this, determine what your needs are and discuss them with a trusted MSP that can recommend a suitable package for you.

## **How Office 365 keeps your cloud, network, and data flexible and secure.**

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In today's digital age, many firms find managed services more beneficial than ever before. This is because small and midsize firms can bundle Microsoft Office 365 with their managed services plan to have the licensing and administration controlled through a single provider.

Pairing managed services with Office 365 helps unlock even higher levels of productivity, which is especially evident in the legal profession. This is because Microsoft's product is extremely flexible, packed full of features, and can be deployed in a full cloud environment, whether on-premises only or in a hybrid environment. For example, we recommend that firms move some employees to the cloud but keep others on-premises for compliance or operational reasons.

Needless to say, Office 365 has become an invaluable tool for businesses. By partnering with a single Cloud Solution Provider, you can enjoy a single point of contact and lower operational costs with one monthly bill for all your Microsoft cloud solutions.

## **How Office 365 keeps your cloud, network, and data flexible and secure.**

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An experienced cloud managed services provider can also make the latest technology and services available to your firm without any hassle. In Office 365, you won't have to worry about keeping up with patches and upgrades since everything is taken care of by a cloud managed services provider. This empowers you to focus on more important tasks and future-proof your firm.

As such, a monthly subscription for the Microsoft Office 365 cloud-based service offers substantial cost savings. A managed cloud network allows the provider to manage all applications and servers in a central data center, which offers even better control over service levels, performance, and maintenance. This increased network availability also raises employee productivity. An experienced cloud managed service provider will be able to reduce downtime and improve performance through enterprise-level infrastructures and monitoring.

## How Office 365 takes data security to the next level.

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It's no secret that your data, the lifeline of your practice, is crucial for business continuity. But there are so many things that can go wrong. Natural disasters can damage your servers and take you offline for weeks, even months, potentially costing you hundreds of thousands of dollars in damages. Humans make mistakes and delete files; applications and emails get hacked and infected with malware and viruses. How many of these risks can you afford to take?

Office 365 does more than simply give you more control over your data security and compliance; it offers advanced built-in privacy, transparency, and more refined user controls.

Partnering with an MSP offers better control over service levels, performance and maintenance. This keeps data secure across all cloud services and applications, ensuring rapid data recovery and an actionable business continuity plan. As such, your business operations can continue with minimal downtime even if a disaster does strike. As you build a working relationship with a cloud managed services provider over time, you get the added peace of mind that someone knowledgeable and familiar with your systems is in charge of your network, leading to faster response times.

## How Office 365 takes data security to the next level.

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In addition to the collaboration benefits, firms relying on managed services with Office 365 get the added benefit of being able to meet various data protection requirements. Managed services will help eliminate the need to own and maintain redundant physical infrastructure for data backup and disaster recovery while still keeping your infrastructure fully protected. What's more, all of Microsoft's Office 365 solutions are hosted in Microsoft's secure data centers, which means that onboarded companies are insured with multiple layers of security and service continuity.

This increased network availability also raises employee productivity and promotes even more cost savings. Remote network users can access centralized data within the same network, which includes virtual services, and you can build storage and backup into a centralized network.

Office 365's advanced tools paired with a managed services provide the peace of mind needed to work with confidence.

## How MSPs ensure a hassle-free Office 365 migration.

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Trying to quantify the number of items you need to migrate to Office 365 can seem overwhelming, especially for a team that has not experienced a migration. This is where working with an experienced MSP comes in handy. They can launch your project in the right direction from start to finish.

Partnering with the right MSP provides the dedicated attention necessary to properly execute your project by laying out plans and scheduling all milestones.

### **Some of the questions an MSP can help you answer include:**

- Will your firm be 100% cloud, or a hybrid of cloud and on-premises solutions?
- What are your security requirements? What DNS changes will be required?
- Who will provision the Office 365 environment?
- What changes will need to happen to SPAM filtering?
- What are your compliance requirements?
- Who will be answering all those phone calls and emails?
- How do end-users connect on their mobile devices?
- Can your network bandwidth support this?
- Is integration with other applications supported?

## How MSPs ensure a hassle-free Office 365 migration.

After the migration, an ongoing support agreement with an MSP also provides your internal IT team with a high level of support for this new environment they know little about. As your personnel focus on what they know and do best, an MSP can offer 24x7 support to help deliver a seamless end-user experience.

An MSP that specializes in the provisioning of Microsoft cloud-based solutions can get you through the onboarding process as fast and painlessly as possible. To learn more, check out our Cloud Managed Services offering or give us a call to get started.



# Managed IT. Managed Better.



**Are you ready to realize long-term value  
from Office 365?**

**Call us today to talk with one  
of our seasoned consultants.**

We're happy to answer your questions, provide recommendations,  
and audit your current IT network.

Request your initial consultation today!  
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