Microsoft 365

Consolidate Apps to Improve Security and Savings

Six benefits of managing the explosion of digital tools

This information is for business and IT leaders who:

- ✓ Want to roll back the explosion of employee apps, lower costs, and reduce IT complexity.

- ✓ Need to help employees be efficient and productive from wherever they work.

- ✓ Must maintain a high standard of security regardless of the platform, app, or service being used by employees.

Estimated reading time:
8 minutes

Contents

Reduce costs, improve security, and increase productivity

IT leaders are still coming to grips with the explosion of digital tools companies adopted during the COVID-19 health crisis. Organizations and employees had to improvise quickly as they adapted to increased and sustained remote work. This led to individuals and teams deploying apps and solutions without consulting IT. Also known as "shadow IT," this trend grew sharply as people experimented with free apps and limited-access platforms for everything from videoconferencing to storage, all without IT authorization.

78%

78% of executives say that their organizations are using more digital tools now compared to pre-pandemic.[1]

[1] "Managing the Explosion of Digital Tools: Additional Employee Applications Can Cause Rather Than Solve Problems," Harvard Business Review, 2022.

That employee initiative was understandable in the moment. However, IT teams know that this kind of digital sprawl comes at a cost—not just financially, but in terms of security and productivity, too.

48%

48% of executives believe employee productivity is negatively impacted by the number and variety of apps and tools in use at their organization.[1]

Now it's time for IT leaders to reassess.
Is your business being held back by multiple, limited point solutions from different vendors that don't work together? Have shortcuts or quick fixes turned out to have hidden costs, such as inexpensive video conferencing apps that limit meeting length or won't let you whiteboard in virtual brainstorm sessions?

In this e-book, you'll learn how to approach app consolidation systematically, with the goal of reducing costs, improving security, and increasing productivity.
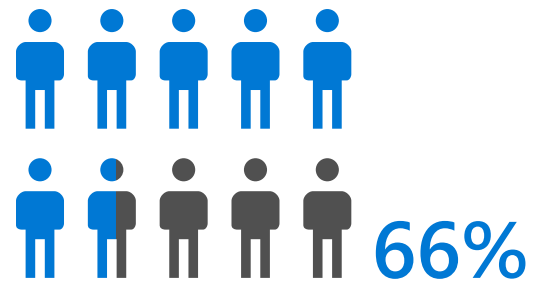
[1] "Managing the Explosion of Digital Tools: Additional Employee Applications Can Cause Rather Than Solve Problems," Harvard Business Review, 2022.

1

Simplify IT deployment and support

Consolidating apps into a single platform eliminates hours of work for IT departments. It can also improve deployment, management, and support tasks by helping to roll back shadow IT. More importantly, consolidation helps IT move beyond just policing rogue apps so they can get back to what's important: working with employees to provide the capabilities they really need and solutions that move the business forward.

 66%

66% of executives agree that getting a complete understanding of all the digital applications and tools being used by employees, and getting them under control, is a priority.[1]

[1] "Managing the Explosion of Digital Tools: Additional Employee Applications Can Cause Rather Than Solve Problems," Harvard Business Review, 2022.

How Microsoft 365 can help

Microsoft 365 offers customers a complete, integrated toolset that reduces costs and administration overhead. This single, scalable solution lets you manage your collaboration, productivity, and security tools more easily, all from a single administration center. And it's more cost-effective than individual technologies from separate vendors. Your business gets enterprise-grade reliability and value at a manageable price for your business.

Up to $54,000

in monthly license and support savings per 1,000 seats with Microsoft 365.[2]

[2] "The Total Economic Impact™ Of Microsoft 365 E3: Cost Savings And Business Benefits Enabled By Microsoft 365 E3," Forrester, 2020.

2

Close security loopholes

Security is top of mind as IT infrastructure has become more complex. Businesses have quickly rolled out new technologies, and IT has tried to accommodate hybrid workers, both remote and in-office, often on multiple devices. When employees download apps to make themselves more productive, their intentions are good—but often the outcome is not. Consolidating apps onto a single platform can help close these security loopholes.

Percentage of global IT decision makers who believe employees increase security breach risk by...

85%

Letting others use their work devices

88%
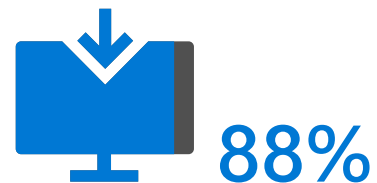
Downloading software to do their jobs that is not approved by IT

88%

Using personal devices for work[3]

[3]"Why the Hybrid Workplace Is a Cybersecurity Nightmare," WSJ, 2021.

How Microsoft 365 can help

Microsoft 365 provides a holistic approach to security, helping you to protect identities, data, applications, and devices across on-premises, cloud, and mobile environments. This approach addresses the four foundations of computer system security.

1 **Identity and access management:**
Securing identities as part of a Zero Trust strategy.

2 **Threat protection:**
Helping to stop damaging attacks with integrated and automated security.

3 **Information protection:**
Locating and classifying information anywhere it lives.

4 **Security management:**
Strengthening your security posture with insights and guidance.

3

Avoid paying for redundant capabilities

There's no shortage of technology to answer virtually every work-related need, but this disjointed landscape of apps from different vendors makes it too easy for business processes to become fragmented across platforms, and that can add up financially. Some costs of digital sprawl are hidden if they're related to employee experience, time, and productivity. But simply consolidating to a single all-in-one platform eliminates the possibility that you're paying for redundant capabilities or overlapping services.

25%
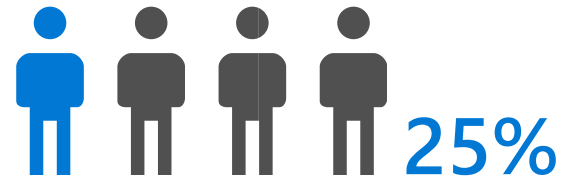
25% of executives say their digital ecosystem of individual digital applications and tools used by employees has a negative financial impact on their organization.[4]

43%
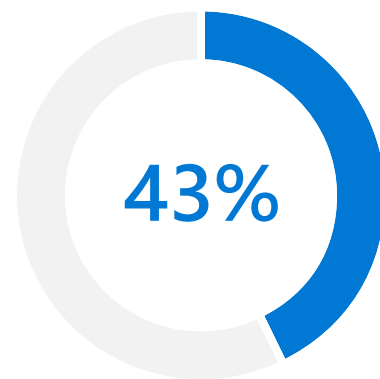
43% believe their organization won't understand the true cost of these individual applications and tools until they settle on a post-pandemic business process and workforce model.[4]

[4] "Managing the Explosion of Digital Tools: Additional Employee Applications Can Cause Rather Than Solve Problems," Harvard Business Review, 2022.

How Microsoft 365 can help

Microsoft 365 includes a complete suite of productivity apps, including Microsoft Teams for unlimited video conferencing, chat, project management, file sharing, collaboration, and scheduling. Microsoft 365 can help meet every work-related technology need that your employees have, with familiar apps like Word, Excel, and PowerPoint—including web versions—as well as collaboration and communication apps like Outlook, OneNote, OneDrive, and SharePoint. You can also save by consolidating point solutions and replacing third-party security and identity applications—including Microsoft Defender for Endpoint, email security, mobile device management, and remote access tools—with one solution.

connectFirst Credit Union

connectFirst Credit Union needed to consolidate four regional brands under one umbrella organization. It faced challenges from existing on-premises technologies, separate processes and procedures, and a fragmented communications infrastructure. Microsoft 365 has helped connectFirst simplify and consolidate, while supporting a full range of modern work practices that include hybrid work. According to Rob Seipert, Director of IT Operations for connectFirst, the Microsoft 365 environment has provided the infrastructure support he needed to enable services that meet the security and compliance mandates characteristic of the banking industry.

"

We were able to safely evolve our technology at a pace that matched the accelerated rate of change required by the pandemic. IT was then empowered to enable supporting features and functionality and introduce new solutions and new initiatives to the broader organization in ways that are both rapid and secure."

— **Rob Seipert**
Director of IT Operations
connectFirst Credit Union

4

Improve collaboration

When all apps are in one platform, coworkers can easily communicate with each other. Coworkers can see each other's feedback in shared documents in real time and immediately ask clarifying questions. They can simply tag a colleague in a document, without emailing an attachment and without version control issues. Multiple people can contribute to the same online whiteboard during a virtual brainstorm while projects, chats, meetings, and collaboration become seamless.

94%
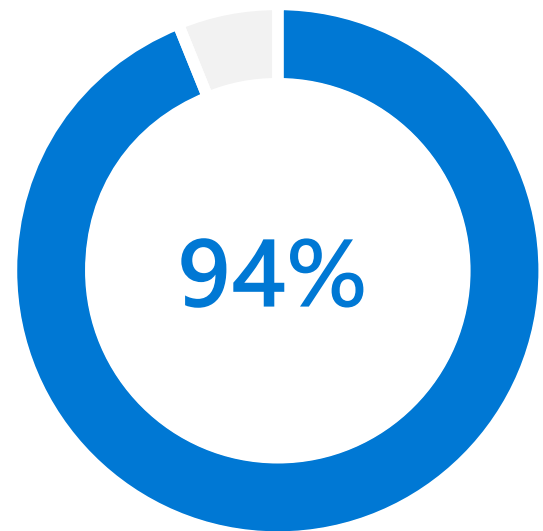
94% of executives agree that it's important that the digital applications and tools employees use seamlessly interact with one another.[5]

[5] "Managing the Explosion of Digital Tools: Additional Employee Applications Can Cause Rather Than Solve Problems," Harvard Business Review, 2022.

How Microsoft 365 can help

With Microsoft Teams and familiar Office apps, people can connect using one-on-one conversations and group chats, and they can easily access files, chats, and apps in one workspace. Workers can make decisions faster, too, with real-time sharing in meetings for instant feedback and collaboration, and they can share, edit, and co-author Word, Excel, and PowerPoint files.

1 hour

of improved business productivity per user per week from the integrated Microsoft suite of productivity and collaboration tools.[6]

[6] "The Total Economic Impact™ of Microsoft 365 For Business (Microsoft 365 Business Basic, Microsoft 365 Business Standard, And Microsoft 365 Business Premium)," commissioned by Microsoft, 2020.
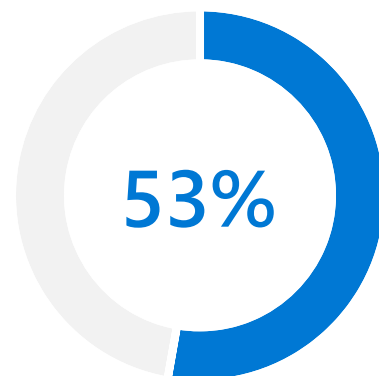
5

Optimize hybrid work tools

Hybrid work is here to stay, with 66 percent of executives saying that their workforces will be at least half remote for the foreseeable future.[7] This growing number of hybrid workers increasingly needs digital tools and applications that run in the cloud. Moving to a consolidated all-in-one platform frees workers to get work done from anywhere, with anyone, with easy access to the tools and information they need.

38%
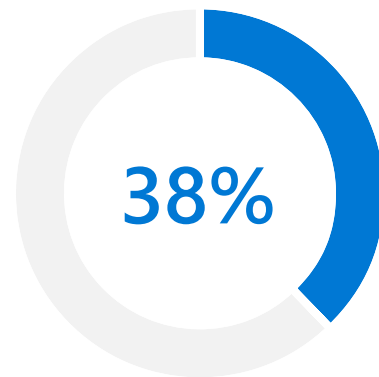
38% of employees have adopted hybrid work, with a mix of in-office and remote working.[5]

53%

53% are likely to consider a transition to hybrid work.[8]

[7] "Managing the Explosion of Digital Tools: Additional Employee Applications Can Cause Rather Than Solve Problems," Harvard Business Review, 2022.

[8] "Annual Work Trend Index Report: Great Expectations: Making Hybrid Work Work," Microsoft WorkLab, 2022.

How Microsoft 365 can help

Microsoft 365 provides organizations with the tools and flexibility they need to embrace hybrid work. Collaboration solutions such as Teams can enhance hybrid work by helping people access, edit, and seamlessly share content online or offline from any device.

6

Streamline file storage and sharing

Disparate apps aren't designed to streamline actions for daily work. For example, a chat app isn't built for easy access to file storage. A video conferencing app isn't built to make it easy to navigate to and open a file. Consolidating apps in one platform makes it possible for things like file access to be as easy from a calendar as it is from a chat or file storage window.

54%
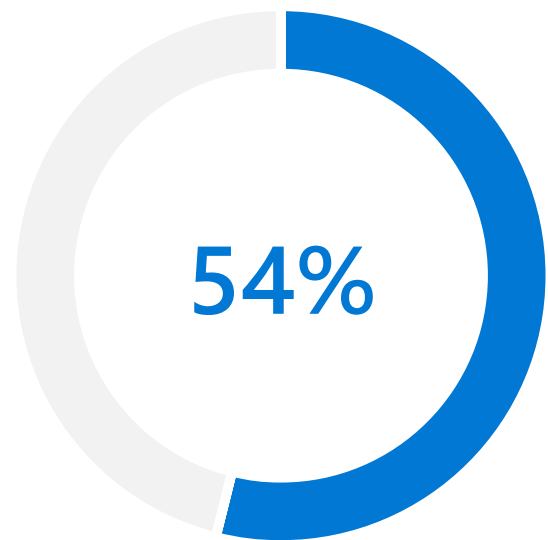
54% of US office professionals say they spend more time searching for documents and files they need than responding to emails and messages.[9]

[9] "More than 50% of office pros spend more time searching for files than on work," TechRepublic, 2021.

How Microsoft 365 can help

When you use Microsoft 365 and save your files to OneDrive or SharePoint, sharing your files is the same wherever or however you work. This makes it easier to find files and reduces the amount of time spent clicking, searching, or switching between apps. With Microsoft 365, you can also transform processes using workflows, dashboards, and AI, further increasing employee productivity.

Organizations further along in their Microsoft 365 journey were 50% more likely to feel that employee technology experiences help keep end users protected and data secure.[10]

[10] "Building a Resilient Organization through Integrated Cloud-based IT," Enterprise Strategy Group, 2020.

Expedia Group takes off with OneDrive and Microsoft 365

Seattle-based Expedia Group operates more than 20 travel-related businesses under its brand, employing people all over the world. By consolidating disparate file sharing and storage solutions in favor of Microsoft OneDrive and Microsoft SharePoint, the organization simplified IT and reduced licensing costs while improving collaboration, productivity, and security.

"Microsoft OneDrive is a really stable, robust tool for all environments," says Michelle Nelson, Senior Product Manager of Enterprise Collaboration Tools at Expedia Group. "And seeing where Microsoft is making investments in web and mobile for these core solutions has really helped me make the decision that OneDrive is the right place for all our employees." What's more, the company expects to save at least 20 percent on licensing costs by eliminating duplicate technology.

"

Distilling all those disparate systems into one collective tool with Microsoft solutions is a game-changer for security."

— **Marc Lawes**
Insider Threat Strategist, Insider Threat Operations DPI - Security Cyber Defense
Expedia Group

What's next?

As the way we work keeps changing, agility is more important than ever. It's time to rein in the explosion of digital tools by taking a closer look at productivity gaps, redundancies, and employee needs.

Consolidating apps under one comprehensive platform in the cloud can help, as you look for ways to reduce costs, improve security, and increase productivity. Get started today.

Discover how Microsoft 365 can help your organization reduce costs and improve security >

Save up to $54 per user

Organizations consolidating their productivity, security, and management solutions to just Microsoft 365 can save up to $54 per user/month in license and support costs.[11]

[11] "The Total Economic Impact™ Of Microsoft 365 E3: Cost Savings And Business Benefits Enabled By Microsoft 365 E3," Forrester, 2020.

Microsoft 365