

OFFICE 365 BACK-UP

SIX CRITICAL REASONS WHY
ORGANISATIONS NEED TO PROTECT THEIR
OFFICE 365 DATA







INTRODUCTION

Do you have control of your Office 365 data? Do you have access to all the items you need? The knee-jerk reaction is typically, “Of course I do,” or “Microsoft takes care of it all.”

But if you really think about it — are you sure?

It’s true that Microsoft takes care of quite a bit, providing a great service for customers. However, Microsoft’s primary focus is on managing the Office 365 infrastructure and maintaining uptime to your users.

They are empowering you with the responsibility of your data. The misconception that Microsoft fully backs-up your data on your behalf is quite common and, without a shift in mindset, could have damaging repercussions when this responsibility is left unattended.

Ultimately, you need to ensure that you have access to, and control over, your Exchange Online, SharePoint Online and OneDrive for Business data.

This best practice guide explores the hazards of not having an Office 365 back-up in your portfolio, and why back-up solutions for Microsoft Office 365 fill the gap of long-term retention and data protection.

THE BIG OFFICE 365 MISCONCEPTION

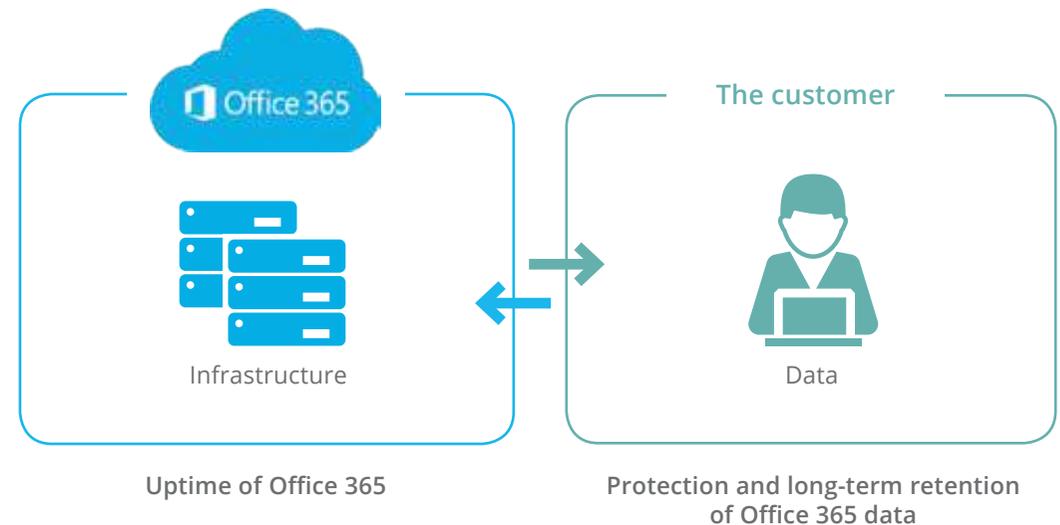
The misunderstanding falls between Microsoft's perceived responsibility and the user's actual responsibility of protection and long-term retention of their Office 365 data.

The back-up and recoverability that Microsoft provides, compared to what users assume they are getting, are often different. This means that, aside from the standard precautions Office 365 has in place, you may need to re-assess the level of control you have of your data and how much access you truly have to it.

Microsoft Office 365 offers geo redundancy, which is often mistaken for back-up. Back-up takes place when a historical copy of data is made and then stored in another location. However, it is even more important that you have direct access to and control over that back-up. This way if your data data is lost, accidentally deleted or maliciously attacked, you can quickly recover it.

Geo redundancy, on the other hand, protects against site or hardware failure, so if there is an infrastructure crash or outage, your users will remain productive and often oblivious to these underlying issues.

**Microsoft takes care of the infrastructure,
but the data remains the customer's responsibility**



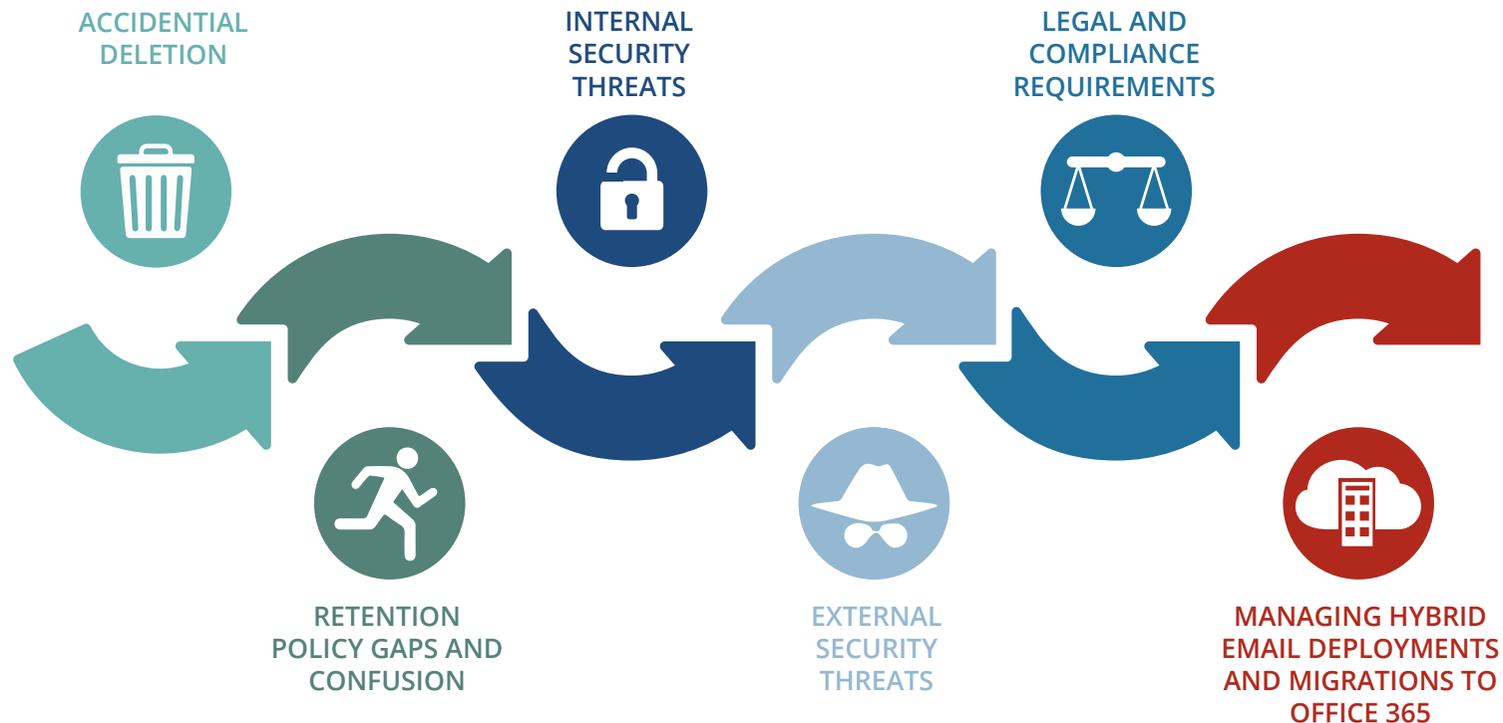
**“With Office 365, it’s your data. You own it. You control it.”
— The Office 365 Trust Center**

6 REASONS WHY BACKING-UP OFFICE 365 IS CRITICAL

As a robust and highly capable Software as a Service (SaaS) platform, Microsoft Office 365 fits the needs of many organisations perfectly. It provides application availability and uptime to ensure your users never skip a beat, but an Office 365 back-up can protect you against many other security threats.

You might be thinking that “the recycle bin is probably good enough”, but this is where many people get it wrong. The average length of time from data compromise to discovery is over 140 days¹, so the likelihood is high that you won't notice something is missing or gone until it's too late for the recycle bin.

By talking with hundreds of IT professionals across the globe who have migrated to Office 365, six vulnerabilities in data protection rise to the top:



¹ <https://discover.office.com/6-steps-to-holistic-security/chapter1/>

#1 ACCIDENTAL DELETION

If you delete a user, whether you meant to or not, that deletion is replicated across the network, along with the deletion of their personal SharePoint site and their OneDrive data.

Native recycle bins and version histories included in Office 365 can only protect you from data loss in a limited way, which can turn a simple recovery from a proper back-up into a big problem after Office 365 has geo-redundantly deleted the data forever, or it has fallen out of the retention period.

There are two types of deletions in the Office 365 platform, soft delete and hard delete. An example of soft delete is emptying the Deleted Items folder. It is also referred to as "Permanently Deleted." In this case, permanent is not completely permanent, as the item can still be found in the Recoverable Items mailbox.

A hard delete is when an item is tagged to be purged from the mailbox database completely. Once this happens, it is unrecoverable.

#2 RETENTION POLICY GAPS AND CONFUSION

The fast pace of business in the digital age lends itself to continuously evolving policies, including retention policies that are difficult to keep up with, let alone manage.

Just like hard and soft delete, Office 365 has limited back-up and retention policies that can only fend off situational data loss. It is not intended to be an all-encompassing back-up solution.

Another type of recovery, a point-in-time restoration of mailbox items, is not in scope with Microsoft. In the case of a catastrophic issue, a back-up solution can provide the ability to roll back to a previous point-in-time prior to this issue and saving the day.

With an Office 365 back-up solution, there are no retention policy gaps or restore inflexibility. Short-term back-ups or long-term archives, granular or point-in-time restores; everything is at your fingertips to make data recovery fast, easy and reliable.





#3 INTERNAL SECURITY THREATS

The idea of a security threat brings thoughts of hackers and viruses. However, businesses also experience threats from the inside and they are happening more often than you think. Organisations fall victim to threats posed by their very own employees, both intentionally and unintentionally.

Access to files and contacts changes so quickly, it can be hard to keep an eye on those in which you've installed the most trust. Microsoft has no way of knowing the difference between a regular user and a terminated employee attempting to delete critical company data before they depart.

In addition, some users unknowingly create serious threats by downloading infected files or accidentally leaking usernames and passwords to sites they thought they could trust.

Another example is evidence tampering. Imagine an employee strategically deleting incriminating emails or files — keeping these objects out of the reach of the legal, compliance or HR departments.

#4 EXTERNAL SECURITY THREATS

Malware and viruses, like ransomware, have done serious damage to organisations across the globe. Not only is company reputation at risk, but the privacy and security of internal and customer data as well.

External threats can 'sneak in' through emails and attachments, and it isn't always enough to educate users on what to look out for — especially when the infected messages seem so compelling.

Exchange Online's limited back-up/recovery functions are inadequate to handle serious attacks. Regular back-ups will help ensure a separate copy of your data is uninfected and that you can recover quickly.

#5 LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Sometimes you need to unexpectedly retrieve emails, files or other types of data amid legal action; something you never think it is going to happen to you until it does.

Microsoft has built in some safety nets (Litigation Hold), but again these are not a robust back-up solution capable of keeping your company out of legal trouble.

For example, if you accidentally delete a user, their on-hold mailbox, personal SharePoint site and OneDrive account is also deleted.

Legal requirements, compliance requirements and access regulations vary between industries and countries, but fines, penalties and legal disputes are three things you don't have room for on your to-do list.

#6 MANAGING HYBRID EMAIL DEPLOYMENTS AND MIGRATIONS TO OFFICE 365

Organisations that adopt Office 365 typically need a window of time to serve as a transition window between on-premises Exchange and Office 365 Exchange Online.

Some even leave a small portion of their legacy system in place to have added flexibility and additional control. These hybrid email deployments are common, yet pose additional management challenges.

The right Office 365 back-up solution should be able to handle hybrid email deployments and treat exchange data the same, making the source location irrelevant.





CONCLUSION

Go ahead and take a closer look. There are security gaps you may not have been aware of before.

You already made a smart business decision by deploying Microsoft Office 365, now find a back-up solution that offers you both complete access and complete control of your Office 365 data and avoid the unnecessary risks of data loss.

Learn more about Office 365 back-up at:
www.oni.co.uk/back-up



WHY ONI?

Established in 1992, ONI plc is a leading provider of IT solutions and services to both public sector and commercial markets. Privately owned, we offer a comprehensive range of on-site, cloud and hybrid technology solutions.

We have worked hard to establish ourselves as a centre of excellence for digital transformation, but we're not resting on our laurels. We have ambitious plans for even further growth over the coming years, which will see us increasing both our capacity and range of services. Keen adopters of new technologies, we are proud of our reputation as innovators.

Our expertise already spans core network infrastructure, unified communications and collaboration, contact centre solutions, data centre services, connectivity and cybersecurity.

ONI cloud services are delivered from our own Tier 3+ Data Centre, located in the South East of England, and include infrastructure, disaster recovery, UC, collaboration and contact centre solutions as-a-service.

ONI is committed to providing our customers with the availability, performance and agility required to transform their business. It's what we call Business Assured and comprises three core pledges.

100% UPTIME GUARANTEED

Most service providers promise four 9's or even five 9's in terms of availability, but 99.99% uptime still means you are without service for 52min 35s every year. When dealing with business-critical applications, we don't think you should compromise on availability. If you pay 100% of your fees, you should get 100% availability.

Our commitment to 100% uptime underpins our data centre and managed service portfolio; providing our customers with peace of mind that they will always have access to their data and applications.

ON-PREMISES OR CLOUD AGNOSTIC

For many organisations, the future of IT lies in a hybrid converged infrastructure that features elements of on-premises, colocation and cloud-based products and services. But getting agnostic advice on the best place to deploy each application can be difficult.

Cloud service providers naturally will only ever promote as-a-service propositions. Likewise, legacy systems integrators will have experience of on-premises hardware but not the skills necessary to transition services successfully to the cloud. In contrast, ONI offers the best of both worlds.

By combining legacy on-premises solutions with our Data Centre services, our customers benefit from transformative digital solutions, deployed where they add most value. Our agnostic approach to deployment helps organisations to gain a competitive advantage by reducing costs and delivering leaner, less complex IT solutions.

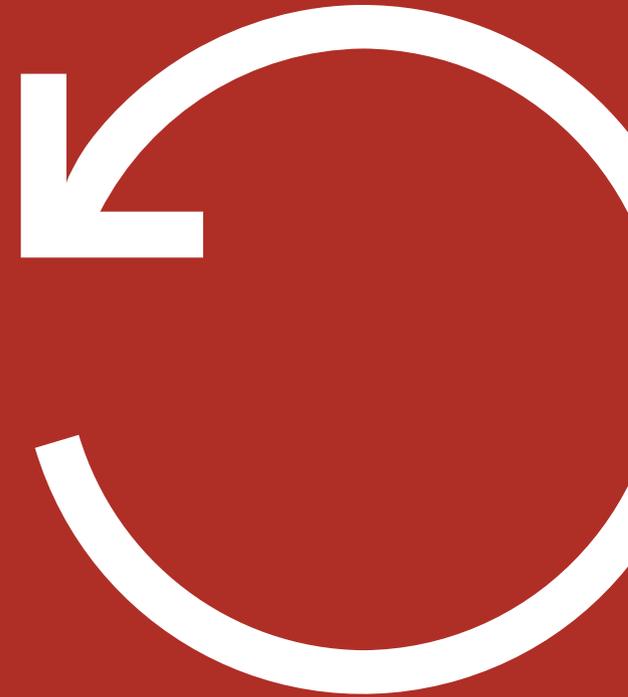
PREDICTABLE AND TRANSPARENT COSTS

Cloud services from ONI are provided from a single orchestration platform; one that offers a simplified product range and an all-inclusive price, based on customer usage. There is no need for specialist procurement knowledge to understand a complex product offering or EA pricing structure, let alone fluctuating exchange rates, making it easy to stay in control and avoid unexpected spiralling costs.

ONI Assure Managed Services provide unmatched details about the status of IT infrastructure devices; enabling IT professionals to make better informed investment decisions about life-cycle management and avoid unnecessary costs. Improved visibility of contract renewals, or when devices reach end-of-life and end-of-support, makes budgeting more accurate and more predictable.

AVAILABLE FROM ONI:

- Managed Services & Support
- Hosting & Colocation
- Networking & Connectivity
- Back-Up & Disaster Recovery
- Cybersecurity Solutions
- Contact Centre Solutions
- Mobility & Collaboration
- Unified Communications



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Established in 1992, ONI plc is a leading provider of IT services and solutions. We deliver a unique blend of on-site, hybrid and Cloud computing systems, from our Tier 3+ UK data centres. Our workforce holds over 400 accreditations from vendors such as Cisco, VMware, NetApp, Veeam, Gamma, BT and Microsoft.