



7 Reasons for Oil & Gas to Hop on the Microsoft Office 365 Bandwagon

Let's face it: Oil and gas is lagging behind other industries when it comes to embracing enterprise-level cloud-based technology solutions. You know how they say, "better late than never"? I'd like to make the case that now is the time for the energy industry to leave upgrades and server maintenance behind to embrace Microsoft Office 365, and I've got 7 great reasons to back me up.

-  Cost Effectiveness
-  Knowledge Transfer
-  M&A



Microsoft Office 365 lets you invest more capital into your assets and less on IT.

PROS

1. Cost

I'm not here to break down Microsoft's pricing model for you, but let's just say it can be a small fraction of the cost it takes to internally maintain servers, licenses, upgrades, maintenance, and support staff. Microsoft Office 365 plans for business start as low as \$6/month for access to Exchange, SharePoint, Lync, and the core Office applications.

A recent E&P Magazine article said, "We are like a factory that is producing wells daily and then using those well to produce." If you could divert more money into drilling wells by freeing up capital from IT savings and still deliver quality technology solutions to your business, why wouldn't you?

2. Updates & Maintenance

Imagine a world where you don't have to worry about upgrades or managing servers and network infrastructure anymore, at least when it comes to your Microsoft products. With Office 365, Microsoft will take care of all this work for you. When there's a problem, Microsoft handles that for you.

3. Mobility & Accessibility

With Microsoft Office 365, your solution is available wherever you are, as long as you have an internet connection. Don't have Office clients installed on your equipment? No worries; you can still access Word, PowerPoint, and Excel directly through the browser. The functionality is somewhat abbreviated, but it will allow you to make those last-minute edits before your presentation. This also appeals to the new

generation of workers, who probably have at least three devices on hand at any one time, including their laptop, tablet, and smart phone. This means they also use non-standard browsers, like Chrome, FireFox, and Safari. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

4. Security

Microsoft has an industry-leading Security Development Life Cycle that ensures that security best practices are followed at every stage of development and delivery. They are constantly monitoring their services for both known and unknown threats across a network of highly available data centers, built and operated with a defense-in-depth approach to people, processes, and technology. At an oil and gas company, intellectual property is second only to physical land assets. It's of the utmost importance that you can trust your information is secure, while simultaneously making it available to your information workers, wherever they are.

5. Reliability

I'm writing this article in Houston, TX, and down here we definitely have to worry about disaster recovery (including hurricanes swirling in from the Gulf of Mexico) to test the integrity of our power grid and other infrastructure. When power and internet go out, what happens then? Microsoft's service level agreement (SLA) promises 99.9% scheduled uptime. Microsoft has multiple data centers, located in various places all over the world, providing redundant network architecture so you never have to worry about disruption due to unforeseeable events.

6. Compliance

In the oil and gas industry, we have to comply with government and industry regulations. Microsoft Office 365 has been certified as compliant with ISO 27001 standards, completed SAS70 Type I & II audits, and achieved the EU Safe Harbor seal. There are also controls for HIPAA and FERPA compliance.

7. User Adoption

Let's face it, if you build something and no one uses it, you will see zero return on investment. Microsoft Office 365 is intuitive and looks and feels like the tools your team already uses. This means less training to get your team ramped up and engaged in captured, searchable collaboration. What's more, there is a single sign-on using your active directory, and the integration between the products you love like Exchange, Lync, SharePoint and even Yammer is already well ahead of what's currently available for on-premises versions.

CONS

1. Loss of Control

You can no longer flip switches to fire workflows during testing, sync your content type hub at will, or tweak your search configuration. In the three years I've been working with Microsoft Office 365 solutions, it has gotten a lot better, and they're promising to open even more doors for us in the future, so I'm optimistic we'll have more control soon. In the meantime, we have a lot of money in our pockets to invest back in the business, instead of maintaining infrastructure.

2. Support

We're all used to being able to call our help desk and wait patiently for them to solve our technical issues. With Office 365 we may still call our help desk, but now that team will have to call Microsoft support for things they used to be able to control or handle themselves. As a result, some things may take longer to get resolved.

With the fast pace of today's business and tsunami of information, oil and gas companies must increase their business agility. The latest technology, such as Microsoft Office 365, can help you do just that, while simultaneously enabling mobile workers, capturing the knowledge of your seasoned workers, as well as enticing the best and brightest of the younger generation coming up through the ranks to not only join, but to stick with your firm.

Turn the page to read about the [7 best practices for Increasing SharePoint Adoption at Your Company](#).



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Carol has close to a decade of experience leveraging SharePoint to create enterprise content management, collaboration, and business process automation solutions that meet business needs. She has helped oil and gas clients address challenges related to contract and records management, contract and AFE approval workflow, lease digitization, and offshore extranets.

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