

## Microsoft 365 Considerations

If you run your own on-prem Microsoft Exchange Server for email, you should consider that the total cost of ownership (TCO) is much more than just the cost of a Microsoft Exchange server, licensing, and installation.

Here are some things to consider if your business is using an on-prem Microsoft Exchange Server:

- Overall cost of maintaining and supporting a Microsoft Exchange Server
- Cost of the hardware to run the Microsoft Exchange Server (server, disk, RAID, power, heating, cooling, backups)
- Cost of bandwidth (Internet)
- Cost of the licensing and client access licenses (CALs)
- Cost of installing and configuring the Microsoft Exchange Server (it's not as easy as 1..2..3!)
- Cost of security (SSL certificates)
- Cost of maintaining and updating the hardware and the operating system (server maintenance contracts and upgrade insurance)
- Cost of downtime for any hardware or Internet failures
- Cost of Microsoft Exchange Server consultants if you do have any issues

In all of our years in the IT business, we have rarely seen a problem with an on-premise Exchange server that is an “easy fix”. And trust us when we say that I’ve seen plenty of misconfigured Microsoft Exchange Servers, too. Microsoft Exchange Server and other on-premise mail systems tend to be complex with a lot of moving parts and require specific expertise. They require a lot of work and time to keep them operating properly and in tip-top condition. Our team at Blue Lightning IT Services has spent enough time installing, configuring, and troubleshooting Microsoft Exchange Server transport services and log files to know that there can definitely be benefits to moving Microsoft Exchange Servers offsite to Microsoft 365, especially for small businesses.

## HERE ARE 7 OF THE BENEFITS OF SWITCHING TO MICROSOFT 365

- By moving to Microsoft 365, you get pay-as-you-go pricing, which provides predictability and flexibility. Buy as many licenses as you want. Scale up, or scale down. It’s really a lot simpler than running an on-premise server. This can save a lot of up-front cost.

- Microsoft 365 is financially backed by Microsoft, a trusted name, with more up-time, geo-redundancy, disaster recovery and powerful security. At Blue Lightning IT Services, we recommend best-of-breed, robust, and mature solutions, not fly-by-night or “cheap” hosting plans. Microsoft is a trusted name in technology, and they have made a huge investment into an enterprise infrastructure to run Microsoft 365.
- Get only the licenses you need for each user. This can be a particularly good idea for seasonal businesses or those who have a need to expand and contract the number of users on the email system.
- Microsoft 365 is backed by Blue Lightning IT Services support that is available when you need it. We will work with Microsoft 365 Support on your behalf to resolve any issues that your business may face. All of our Microsoft 365 clients enjoy the same support benefits.
- Upgrades happen automatically so your IT management costs go down. To stay secure and reliable, the Microsoft Exchange Server needs to be patched and updated regularly. The problem with on-premise servers is that each of these upgrades (especially service packs) can take the server offline for hours at a time. And what happens when patches and updates go wrong? With Microsoft 365, Microsoft handles all updates in a way that doesn't affect availability. In other words, email stays up, even when updates happen.
- Standardized tools mean you don't need to remember multiple logins or learn new applications for each device. With Microsoft 365 single sign on (SSO), you have the same username and password to access email, SharePoint, OneDrive, and your Microsoft Office apps.
- Scale up as your business grows with a simple phone call. When you need more licenses because you hire additional staff, just give us a call, and we can quickly add a user and onboard them. Just like that, you have a new user set up with email, SharePoint, OneDrive, and Microsoft Office applications.
- Finally, one of the biggest advantages of moving to the Microsoft 365 platform is that you can get the entire Microsoft Office suite with your email plan. This means that you get not only your mailbox, but a full copy of Microsoft Office (different versions available, depending on the plan you choose). It simplifies licensing dramatically, since you no longer have to deal with purchasing box or open license copies of Microsoft Office on the fly or as needed. Plus, your Microsoft Office suite is always up-to-date on all your devices – PC, Mac, iPhone, Android...it doesn't matter!

So, if you are in need of support with migrating your current on-premise Microsoft Exchange Server to Microsoft 365 please don't hesitate to contact us. Even if you already have a current Microsoft 365 environment, it still requires support and maintenance. We will be happy to help with supporting and maintaining your Microsoft 365 environment. Contact us today!