Protecting your Microsoft® Office 365 Data

A Roadmap to Office 365 Data Protection

Introduction

You walk in the office – feeling good about your data management and backup strategy. Data centers are covered – check. Endpoints are covered – check. But what about your Office 365 data? I mean your e-mail, calendar items, OneDrive, SharePoint and Teams files. That can't be overlooked in today's highly connected world.

You're reading this because you either own Office 365 today or you are considering the addition of Office 365. You are not alone - Microsoft Office 365 monthly active user numbers have steadily grown from 60 million active users in 2015 to 200 million active users in 2019.[1]
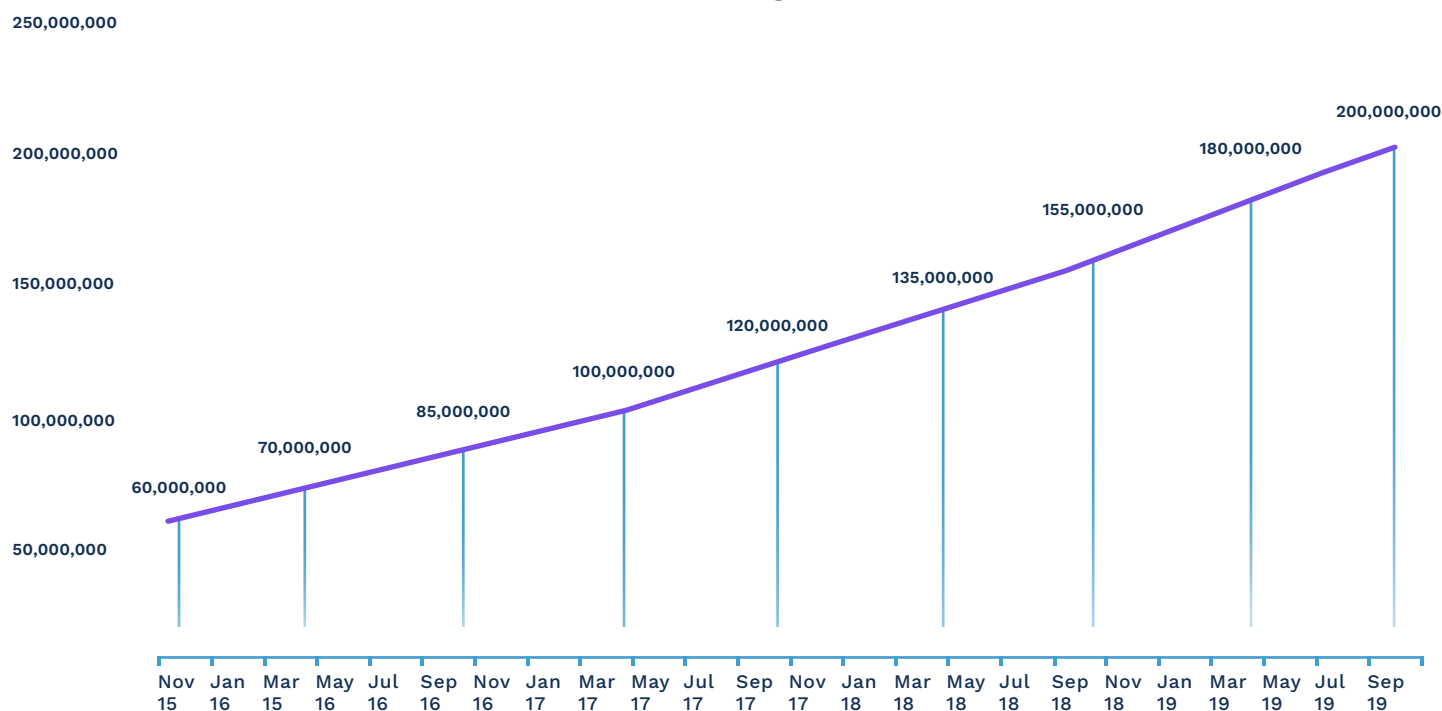
Office 365 Monthly Active Users

Figure 1: Growth in Office 365 Monthly Active Users since November 2015[1]

It's no secret that cyber-attacks are on the rise and Office 365 is not immune from them. A recently published report suggests that 29% of customers polled have seen their Office 365 accounts compromised by hackers in March 2019 alone, sending in excess of 1.5 million malicious and spam e-mails.[2]

Many may think the native data protection in Office 365 is serving their backup and retention needs, but truth be told, there are limitations that put your business's data at risk. Fortunately, there are ways to safeguard and enhance your Office 365 data through use of third-party data management solution for backup, recovery and extended retention.

Leaving your Office 365 backup to native Microsoft backup tools is not enough. Here's why.

Microsoft ensures high availability, but not enterprise-grade data protection or management – especially in a heterogeneous environment.

You may say, Microsoft already has me covered with its native backup/recovery capabilities. In reality, Microsoft Office 365 is built around a high-availability and shared responsibility model.

So, what does current Microsoft coverage look like? The native capabilities used to protect the data actually uses the platform itself to provide data protection. Best practices for data protection recommend having multiple copies of your data - two on different platforms and one in a remote location. The current Microsoft model would not align to that guideline.[3]

When it comes to data retention, Office 365 data will be retained for three years after which time, the data is deleted. There may be a need to keep data longer depending on your requirements so third-party data backup and recovery solutions may be needed to support longer archive durations.[3]

Office 365 uses a "shared responsibility model" which dictates that Microsoft is responsible for its global infrastructure and ensuring that the Office 365 remains up and running. Customers are responsible for access and control of their data that resides in the Office 365 infrastructure.[3]

Unless you are aware of all this and put a proper backup and extended retention plan in place for your data management, your data is exposed. Now you know you need more robust backup. What exactly should you be looking for?

There is a lot to juggle when choosing a backup and extended retention solution that's right for your business. As you begin your search, here are a few areas to consider.

#1 You chose cloud flexibility for applications. Why not cloud for backup?

Look beyond on-premises backup for Office 365. The right cloud backup solution lets you take advantage of the ease of implementation and automatic updates of a SaaS model, while still benefitting from sophisticated underlying performance, security, and scale. Keep your content separate from source data yet continue to get rapid recovery from deletion, corruption or attack.

Consider a SaaS-based backup and recovery that backs up your data where it lives - in the cloud.

Choose a cloud backup and recovery solution that is sophisticated enough to make day-to-day use and recovery easy.

#2 Don't sweat the small stuff. Look for features that smooth out management of backup operations.

The quest for operational efficiency should not end at the backup solution. Look for features that automate or simplify your ability to backup and granularly restore across all major Office 365 applications. Simplify operations with features like metadata search of inboxes, notifications and alerts, granular recovery, automation and policy-based retention capabilities.
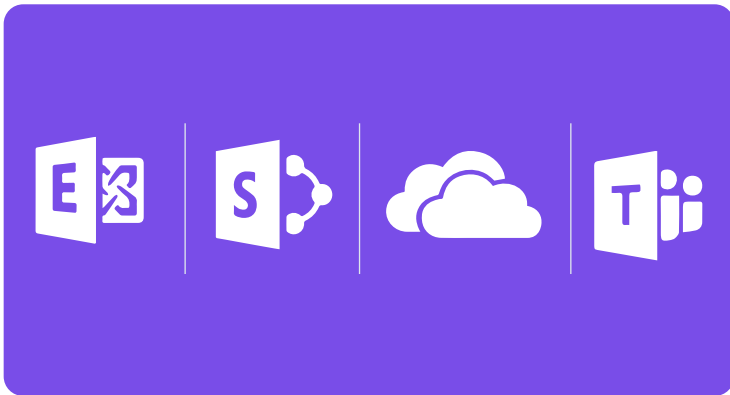
Consider a backup solution that is comprehensive, including Exchange Online, SharePoint Online, OneDrive for Business and Teams.

#3 Comprehensive Office 365 coverage that doesn't leave anyone out.

What good is a backup solution that only covers one piece of your Office 365 solution? Look for a backup and recovery product that gives you full coverage inclusive of Exchange Online, SharePoint Online, OneDrive for Business and Teams. It's not just mailboxes that need protection, so make your life easier when the time comes to recover lost data.

#4 Scalability is your business' best friend

If you've ever logged into your e-mail to find 50+ unopened e-mails, you know why scalability in your backup matters. When building a backup solution, you need the room to store all those mails along with SharePoint or OneDrive files. This scalability also helps to safeguard large amounts of data over time when recovery of a file or block of data is needed.

Choose a cloud backup and recovery solution that offers unlimited storage and unlimited retention to avoid limitations that could put your business at risk.
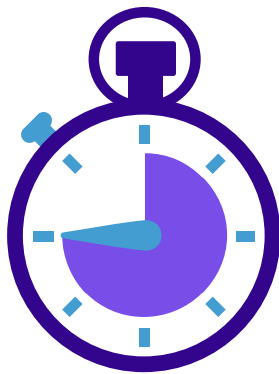
Consider a solution with a self-service trial, giving you time to do a solid evaluation of your own environment.

#5 Don't take our word for it – take it on a "test drive".

Taking on a data backup and retention project is no small task. You need to consider all existing touchpoints and how the new solution will impact them. That's why it is important to choose a SaaS-based solution that lets you try it in your environment to see how it fits. The longer the trial, the better so look for a solution that gives you the most time to work through any implementation challenges before purchasing.

At Metallic™, a Commvault Venture, our engineers and product team have decades of combined experience protecting customer data. Our cloud-based data protection solution comes with underlying technology from industry-leader Commvault and best practices baked in.

Metallic Office 365 Backup & Recovery uses this enterprise-grade backup and recovery expertise to take on the modern challenge of cloud content backup while still leveraging the simplicity and ease of use of SaaS. And with Metallic, you know you have comprehensive coverage for e-mail, calendars, contacts and even Teams that will scale as your needs grow.

So, when you are looking for the best solution for your Office 365 data, consider the expertise and rich feature set of Metallic Office 365 Backup & Recovery.

Check out Metallic with a free trial today

Sources:

(1) Office 365 Hits 200 Million Monthly Active Users, Oct 24, 2019: https://office365itpros.com/2019/10/24/office-365-hits-200-million-monthly-active-users/

(2) Forbes, "Microsoft Office 365 Accounts Under Attack – What You Need To Know", May 2, 2019

(3) 2019 Osterman Research, Inc., Enhancing Data Protection in Microsoft Office 365: https://www.commvault.com/whos-responsible-for-protecting-data-in-office-365