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April 2022

How to Save Money and Optimize Your Office 365 Licensing

Every company aims to save money. This adds up as an essential aspect, especially when it comes to spending on their software licenses. For example, one of the major software used in businesses is Microsoft Office 365. The cost for basic Microsoft 365 is \$6 per user per month, with the premium license going for \$22. If your organization has several users, this can be a considerable amount that can significantly impact your IT budget.

So, what should you do to save your Office licensing costs, especially with their price increase?

Solution: Optimize your Office 365 licenses. Keep reading to learn how to optimize your Office 365 licensing and save money for your business.

How Much Does Office 365 Cost Your Business?

It is essential to know how much O365 would cost your business to determine whether your decision to optimize your licenses is worthy. To put this in perspective, here are the price changes that will be in effect starting 1st March 2022:

- M 365 essential will go from \$5 per

- user to \$6
- M 365 Business Premium will move from \$20 to \$22 per user
- If you are using the M365 E 3 variant, prices will go from \$5 to \$6 per user per month
- Office 365 E3 variant will move from \$32 to \$36
- O365 E1 will move from \$8 to \$10
- The premium O365 E5 tier will move from \$35 to \$38

With these prices, organizations with the least number of users (three hundred for the Basic option) will incur \$300 per month based on the changes made by Microsoft. These figures can be higher based on the number of people and licenses you need. The only way to cut your expenses is by optimizing your M365 licenses. Here is how:

How to Save Money By Optimizing Office 365 Licensing

Your company's administrators and teams should enact policies that guarantee productivity even with optimized Office 365. Remember, you do not have to compromise O365 values in your company while reducing your overall cost. Here are tips you can use to optimize your M365 licensing and cut down on your company's costs:

Educate Your Employees About Office 365
Every company has three types of

Upcoming Events

Webinar
Strengthening Your Security Foundation
April 6, 2022

Lunch & Learn
CEO Succession with The Leadership & Legacy Group
April 13, 2022

For more information on our upcoming events, please visit www.tcsusa.com.

employees:

- Those who know every single feature about Office 365 and know what to do with it
- Those who do not entirely understand all the features of Office 365
- Those that do not use this software at all.

If your company has employees who do not understand or have experience using Office 365, you should teach them. Training can help increase the efficiency of the software in your company and ensure that they utilize licenses that are best suited for their positions.

You can schedule training sessions in your company to encourage these two kinds of employees. You should also utilize the free trials that Office 365 provides to familiarize your employees with the software before buying their licenses.

Buy Licenses Specific to Every Employee's Role and Responsibilities

Once all your employees have familiarized themselves with Office 365, they should decide on specific programs that suit them. For instance, some employees only need Microsoft Outlook for email, while others need most Office 365 programs, Excel, Word, etc., for their roles. Of course, you do not need to buy an all-inclusive plan for everyone. One perfect solution is buying E5 licenses for advanced users and E3 or E1 licenses for low-level employees.

Manage Licensing Process for Employees' Departure

Your first step of optimizing your Office 365 licensing is identifying licenses assigned to employees that have left or are about to leave your company. This process is suitable for a company that does not use Software Asset Management, control, or governs assigned licenses. Here are steps you should consider when identifying licenses assigned to offboarding workers:

- Request an up-to-date employee transitional report from the human resources officer. It is essential to have a monthly employee transition report and build a process around Office 365.
- Export information from the admin portal from licensed users, including those with free or trial licenses, to a spreadsheet.
- Perform a spreadsheet analysis to compare licensed Office 365 users and your Human Resource report about offboarding employees to flag out employees who have left.

- Remove the Microsoft Office licenses attached to employees who have left. If it is essential to have access to their email, you can modify the user and license to be a guest account of another active user.
- Document and automate the process used to remove offboarding employees and instruct your admin to conduct regular spot checks to ensure it is working.

Create a License Recovery and Cleanup Policy

A cleanup policy is also an effective way to deal with unused licenses and offboarding employees. License recovery usually depends on identifying licensed Office 365 features that are not in use and making them available for other employees who need them. This can help avoid instances where you need to buy licenses for every employee and keep your cost manageable.

There are different ways to deal with inactive accounts. For instance, you can set up a 60 or 90-day policy before considering a license to be inactive. You should also consider employees whose license was disabled and decide whether to renew their licenses or not since you cannot remove them automatically. Revoking a license can also flag your mailbox for deleting, which is not your best option.

You can choose a less expensive license as an alternative to an unlicensed shared mailbox. For instance, you can change an unlicensed E4 to an Exchange Online license to cut your cost and maintain the mailbox. You can also change individual mailboxes to shared options and avoid assigning licenses to every user.

Organize Your Company Microsoft Office 365 Users and Permissions

It is time-consuming to profile all Office 365 users, but it pays off well in the long run. For many organizations, procuring the E5 and E3 licenses might be a suitable option to cut down on their costs, but there is more that you can do to cut your expenses further.

For instance, if your company has employees in the manufacturing production line that check their emails infrequently. In that case, such employees do not need an E5 or E3 license. Instead, all they need is an E1 license.

Besides that, you can profile all users according to their similarity in functions and assign a license that works best for them. Bundling users and giving licenses according to their functionality will significantly reduce your cost of buying universal licenses that they do not need.

You can also scale this process further by providing licenses according to the employee's job level. For instance, you can give E5 licenses for C-level or VIPs while the rest of your workforce maintains E3 licenses.

Please note that this process can be time-consuming, so you should seek support from key stakeholders to ensure that changes makes sense for your workforce.

There are many ways to optimize your O365 and cut down on your cost. You can deploy these measures using your IT team, but a third-party company guarantees the best outcomes. All you must do is find a company that has established itself in the IT industry and has a reputation for providing the best services.

Total Computer Solutions Receives Recognition by the Best Christian Workplaces Institute

Total Computer Solutions (TCS) is proud to announce that it has been awarded the "Best Christian Workplace" certification by The Best Christian Workplaces Institute (BCWI). This award makes TCS the only Managed IT Service Provider in North Carolina to have received this award.

"TCS is pleased to have received this award, especially during this season that has been so challenging for some businesses," said Barry Utesch, President and Owner. "This award reflects hard work and commitment by our entire team, and I humbly accept it on their behalf," said Utesch.

Christian-owned and biblically focused, Total Computer Solutions' mission statement reads, "Our Mission is to glorify God as we provide exceptional IT services focused on building relationships with our clients and employees." This reflects how the company desires a culture of exceptional professional services and a company that actively promotes strong values and positive actions that impact the office, the community, and the world.

Client Strategy Manager, James Moore, "thinks TCS helps fulfill a Biblically charitable reason for working; "Eph 4:28 KJV] 28 ...let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

Total Computer Solutions has decades of experience providing managed technology solutions to meet the specific needs of businesses, giving them the time

and expertise necessary to keep technology from disrupting productivity.

Total Computer Solutions (TCS) is a full-service IT support and services, including network security, cloud computing, network administration, and managed backup services. Founded in 1990, TCS serves small to medium-sized businesses in Central North Carolina.



Adam Spivey
System Analyst

ASK A TECHIE

"What is the difference between getting hacked or breached?"

If someone is living in your home without your knowledge, you have been breached. If someone has taken your home from you, then you have been hacked. With a breach the intent could be to siphon data or performance, while a hack could be for fun or profit gains.



UPCOMING WEBINAR: Strengthening Your Security Foundation

Date: Wednesday, April 6th, 2022

Time: 11:00 AM

Speaker: Andy Purcell, Business Consultant, Total Computer Solutions

Registration: Visit tcsusa.com/events/ or call 336.804.8449

The cybersecurity landscape is continually changing, and small and medium businesses should prioritize security. In addition, organizations should take a business-minded approach to cybersecurity concerns. Attend this webinar and learn how to combat cybersecurity challenges that are intensifying.

Key Topics for Discussion

- Why Security is Critical
- How the Cyber Landscape Has Changed
- SMB Challenges with Cybersecurity
- Ways to Protect Your Organization
- Why the Dark Web Matters
- Recommendations for Staying Protected in the Future

To register, please visit tcsusa.com/events/.



Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
1 Peter 1:3



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LUNCH & LEARN

Six Surprising Secrets About Succession and Exit

Date: Wednesday, April 13th, 2022

Time: 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Location: Attend virtual or in-person at Undercurrent Restaurant, Greensboro, NC

Speaker: Abby Donnelly, CEO Coach, The Leadership & Legacy Group

Registration: Visit tcsusa.com/events/ or call 336.804.8449

Join TCS for a fast-paced, engaging program with The Leadership & Legacy Group as they uncover the Six Surprising Secrets of Succession and Exit and what you can do to address them proactively. In addition, you'll learn strategies, tools, and models to more effectively navigate this critical transition and exit on your terms.

Seating at the event will be socially distanced. The event will be adhering to the Guilford County guidelines.

To register, please visit www.tcsusa.com/events/