Gimmal

CONTENT SERVICES & MICROSOFT 365

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WHITE PAPER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the need for content management grows throughout many industries, being able to identify the best path forward can be daunting. Today's content management world is flooded with multiple repositories all that meet varying requirements.

This white paper explores the current multi-repository content management landscape companies are experiencing, and examines how the Microsoft ecosystem has evolved. We find that, with some assistance, SharePoint and Microsoft 365 make an ideal starting point for organizations facing various content management issues.
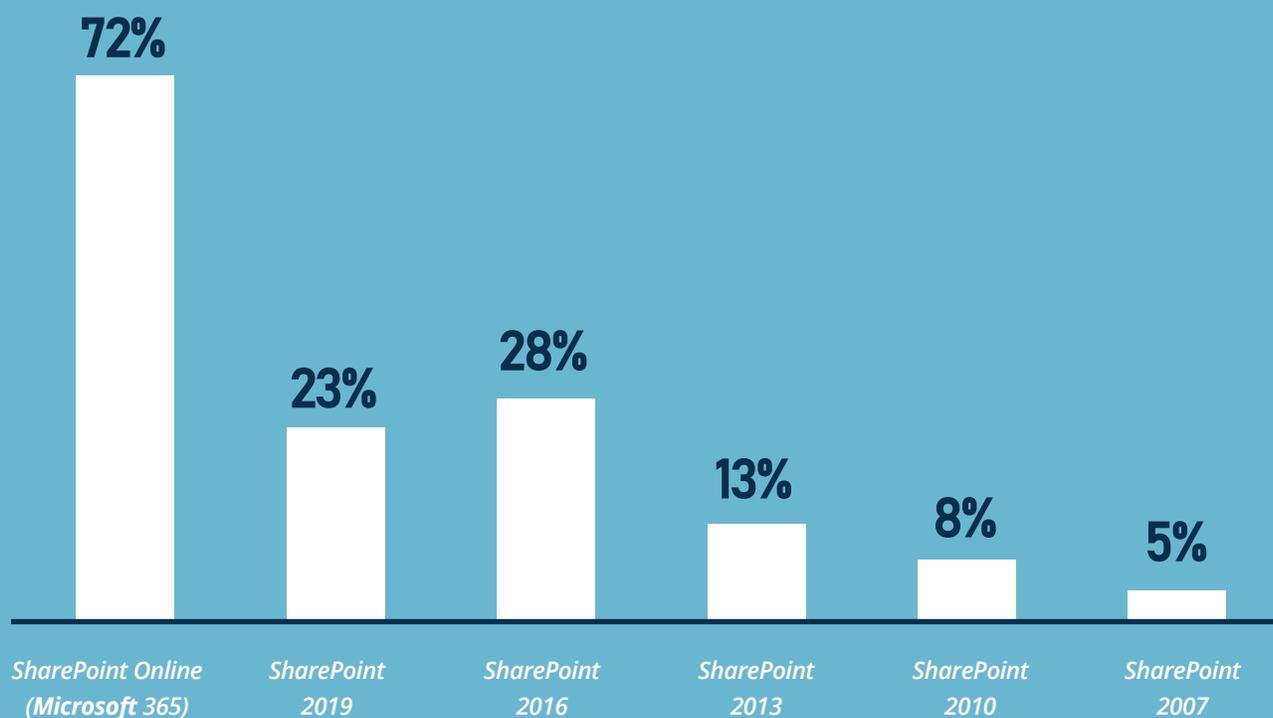
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

A few years ago, many still clung to the hope that a "killer collaboration platform" would come along, simplifying electronic information management by bringing everything together within one silo. It's safe to say that today that dream is dead.

In today's multi-repository world, making content services a priority means making integration a priority. As SharePoint (and the rest of the Microsoft ecosystem) has evolved, it has become increasingly clear that the vast integration capabilities offered through Microsoft platforms make **Microsoft** 365 the ideal hub upon which to center a comprehensive information management strategy. Let's take a look at why.

THE FUTURE OF SHAREPOINT IS MICROSOFT 365

Which of these versions of SharePoint do you use or plan to use?

72% SharePoint Online (**Microsoft** 365)

23% SharePoint 2019

28% SharePoint 2016

13% SharePoint 2013

8% SharePoint 2010

5% SharePoint 2007

AIIM Industry Watch: *How does the Microsoft 365 Revolution Impact Governance and Process Automation?*

SharePoint Online is now the standard experience, with the on-premises versions being deployed for only special cases.

2. STARTING FROM MICROSOFT 365

Chief Evangelist and Past President of AIIM, John Mancini once suggested that "SharePoint" has become a common noun for content management, like Kleenex for tissue, and Xerox for copying. He had a point – adoption is near ubiquitous. But this view doesn't capture all of the nuances (nor is it intended to).

Over the past few decades, organizations have constructed more or less makeshift content services systems that meet their wide-ranging requirements for capturing, sharing, securing, and working with information. They have taken this piecemeal approach, in spite of the redundant licensing and the maintenance, support, development, and operating costs that come with the use of multiple systems.

THE MOST DESIRED CONTENT SERVICES CAPABILITIES ARE

Content Integration into core business process	Flexible and hybrid deployment capabilities	Built-in Records Management	Automated categorization and classification
44%	**39%**	**36%**	**35%**

AIIM: 10 Things You Need to Know About Content Services

Microsoft SharePoint gained popularity in large part because it is cost-effective (due to it being included in many corporate enterprise agreements) and its integration with Microsoft **365.** It has introduced organizations to document management, but until a few version ago, it was not sufficiently developed to replace the legacy content services patchwork. With the mass adoption of the cloud, **Microsoft** 365 and its partner ecosystem have progressed sufficiently to replace the legacy patchwork, including on-premises SharePoint, and offer a viable alternative to buying and maintaining multiple content services platforms.

The most expensive component of any content services implementation is commonly the conversion from a previous vendor's defunct technology. I contend that this is one of the most important risk factors for companies to consider when implementing a content services solution. In many ways, organizations that select content and collaboration products and solutions that are not built on **Microsoft** 365 are taking a poorly calculated risk.

According to a 2014 Report from AIIM and Reveille, almost 55% of information managers surveyed said they were under pressure to reduce cost of operations, and a full 50% were under pressure to migrate content from legacy systems.

Five years later, there is one clear choice.

*Microsoft is the safest of bets. Their finances are healthy, and no one is going to acquire them. There is no existential threat to Microsoft. This is supported by the single fact that over half of organizations globally use **Microsoft** 365. When considering long-term retention and the potential cost of risks associated with information management, what is more important than trusting that your vendor will still exist when it's time to, for example, destroy a document?*

3. WHY NOT KEEP IT ALL IN MICROSOFT 365?

Microsoft 365 has the basic content management and collaboration functions organizations need, and comes with the benefits of Microsoft's vast network of partners... but then what? Many business units have very specific needs that don't neatly fit into the capabilities available, or you may have groups within your organization resistant to change. Other groups are subject to additional regulations around how and where content can be stored. Any of these scenarios could be reasons your organization is unable to store 100% of its content within a single repository.

This is why, when considering content management, having a solution that lives outside of any one repository is necessary. Information governance should not be a capability of a repository – it should stand on its own and reach into repositories to manage content according to your rules. Information management should be rules-based and as automated as possible, with the same rules governing every content source.

4. HOW CAN ORGANIZATIONS ENABLE INTELLIGENT INFORMATION GOVERNANCE?

The simplest way to enable more intelligent information governance begins at the point of upload. Again, this is where the extendible nature of the Microsoft platform and their large partner network enable real innovation. Using Gimmal, an organization can transform a simple SharePoint element into an intelligent document sorting tool. Users can drag and drop a document for upload, at which point the software analyzes things such as the file name, drop location, file contents, and more to determine the proper metadata and storage location based upon rules defined by information managers. This eliminates the end user burden of endless metadata entry, which is prone to error and hard to enforce, but nonetheless mission-critical.

5. HOW WILL NEW CAPABILITIES IN 2019 AFFECT DEPLOYMENT DECISIONS?

With the mass adoption of Microsoft's **Microsoft** 365 platform and the constant features being delivered on top of Microsoft Azure and Microsoft 365, you can expect considerable innovation in the capabilities of information management. Artificial intelligence will continue to evolve, improving classification of content, and detecting security and compliance risks. This trend is not likely to end soon, so playing the waiting game for better technology will continue to make storing content a guessing game and will put your organization at risk for cybersecurity attacks, GDPR-type violations, and data retention mistakes.

6. WHAT ABOUT COST?

An **Microsoft** 365-based content services solution has a lower total cost of ownership than any legacy platform. Many companies already have a technology investment in Microsoft, which makes **Microsoft** 365 a desirable solution. In addition, the ROI that most clients experience when moving from a legacy system to **Microsoft** 365 is significant. Annual maintenance fees for legacy systems can also be very high. Many times, Gimmal clients can recognize an immediate ROI just based on the elimination of annual maintenance fees. The internal support costs for **Microsoft** 365 are also a benefit, especially in training and resources. Specialized training on proprietary platforms is no longer required, and **Microsoft** 365 resources are abundant in the marketplace.

THE ROI OF MICROSOFT 365

163%
Three Year, Risk-adjusted ROI

468%
Internal Rate of Return

$5.6M
Internal Rate of Return

Source: ROI of Microsoft 365: Forrester Total Economic Impact Summary | March 9, 2015. Slideshare.net

> *Another cost benefit is simply related to the cost of moving resources to the cloud. This includes both hardware and labor costs. A move to **Microsoft** 365 will remove SharePoint, Exchange, and various other vendor servers from your data center, and will reduce the labor associated with managing the platform.*

We also encourage clients to look at the upgrade path of their legacy system. Many times to maintain support from the legacy vendor, an organization may be forced into a costly upgrade. It is critical to understand the ramifications of the upgrade, because many times it is simply a migration disguised as an upgrade. And often that "upgrade" is more costly than a migration to **Microsoft** 365.

In addition, **Microsoft** 365 has benefits such as a consistent interface from the administration through each and every application, and multiple integrated technologies for portals, collaboration, business intelligence, content services, search and integration to line of business systems. In reality, Microsoft provides a comprehensive platform for content services that includes Windows, Azure, Exchange, SQL Server, and SharePoint, and much more.

7. CONCLUSION

In today's multi-repository world, making content services a priority means making integration a priority. The vast integration capabilities offered through Microsoft platforms makes **Microsoft** 365 the ideal hub to center a comprehensive information management strategy.

Companies have a wide-range of requirements, and have constructed make-shift content services systems to manage these requirements. They have taken this approach despite of the redundant licensing, maintenance, and costs of operating multiple systems.

Though, the most expensive component of content services implementation is commonly the conversion from a previous vendor's defunct technology. It's important that companies consider these risk factors when implementing a content services solution.

The best bet is for organizations to utilize Microsoft **Microsoft** 365 due to the many benefits **Microsoft** 365 provides along with Microsoft's vast network of technology and applications. **Microsoft** 365's lower cost of ownership and ROI that is experienced when moving from a legacy system is significant and impactful.

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