

# Your ultimate Microsoft 365 guide...

## Prices and benefits

With Microsoft updating consistently, there's a lot to keep up with; ranging from the price guide, to what's included, to updates. Hopefully the information ahead will guide you towards deciding which package and applications best suit you or your business, and inform you surrounding each application involved and their main advantages. The initial topic to discuss here is costs and the various Microsoft 365 packages that are available. Microsoft 365 is an annual commitment ranging from just £1.50 per user per month for the standard K1 license, to the Microsoft 365 Business Premium package, costing the (simultaneously small) amount of £15.10 per user per month, when taking into consideration the benefits you gain from each application that comes with the package.

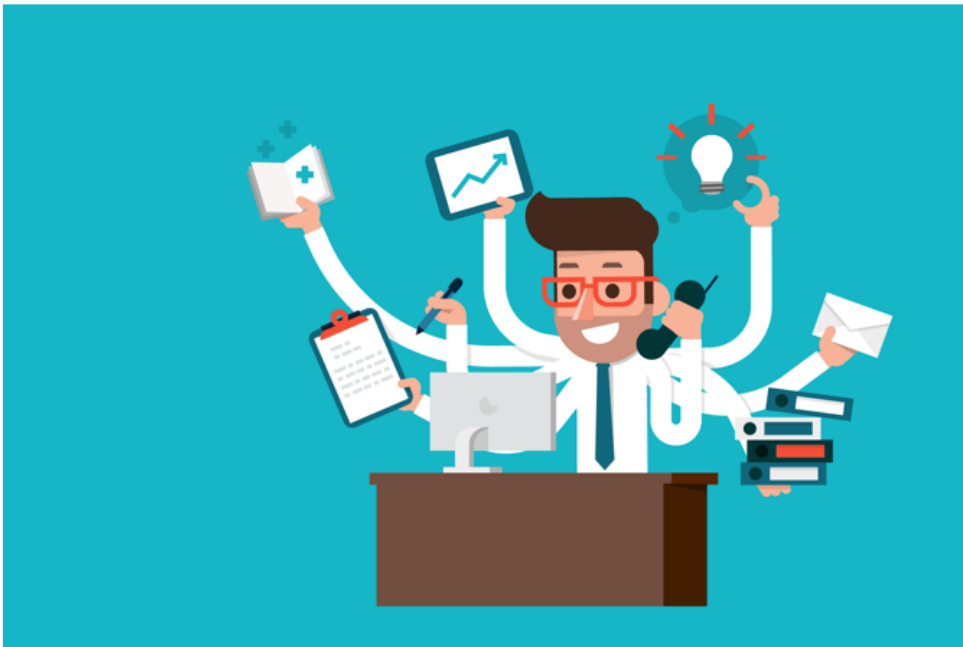
The extra cost of this premium package includes vital features such as extra security measures, device management, and desktop versions of Office applications for PC and Mac products. Key benefits the user will gain from the standard £3.80 Microsoft 365 Business Basic package still include web and mobile versions of each applications, email and calendaring, file storage and sharing, teamwork and communication, security and compliance, and support and deployment, as well as some tools to build and manage your business. If you wish to explore these guides more, use this link as the price guide for the various options: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-365/business#compareProductsRegion> .



## Tools, apps, and how to take advantage of them

Each tool and feature within Microsoft 365 can be used to their own advantages, and can aid both individuals and teams within a business to succeed in becoming more efficient, improving teamwork, and communicate to the best of their abilities. Firstly, Outlook has many features that can be used in order to create an increase within efficiency as well as making it easier for business minded individuals to become all the more organised. For example, the use of the docking peek in the Outlook calendar allows you to gain a snapshot of your day/ week/ month, making it easier to arrange meetings, book holidays etc. Customers' emails will also be protected with the use of message encryption therefore the security factor surrounding Outlook is highly sophisticated. However, this only applies to individuals who have an @outlook.com, @hotmail.com, @live.com or @msn.com email domain.

Publisher is often overlooked by businesses but is an application that can help your business excel in becoming more professional when aiming to create promotional content for marketing such as labels, leaflets, newsletters, and posters as well as for more business oriented purposes such as creating business cards.



Next, Microsoft Word is extremely useful in terms of integration, as it compliments other Microsoft programs such as PowerPoint and Excel. Examples of this integration include working on a spreadsheet within one application, then copying and pasting it into another. The format will predominantly stay the same as the table, graph etc. are being integrated from one to another, but will retain the same content and features as well as still being extremely editable. One of the initial collection of features that the user is initially drawn to is the layout features, as these make the Word environment so easy to use, therefore allowing the user to make a professional and straightforward document by adding in features such as bullet points, tables, references, and images easily.



One of the most predominantly paramount elements of SharePoint to many users is that it is so user friendly. For instance, when using SharePoint multiple people can be working on the document at one time, meaning the ease of collaboration can be taken advantage of like never before. With SharePoint being designed for collaboration, as mentioned earlier, it is accessed by most users online; although, some customers are unaware that working offline is an option. This can be accomplished by SharePoint easily allowing the user to sync everything and download the files onto their PC/ laptop. Combined, this is then displayed on the device similar to that of SharePoint online, and if you make a change on one of these documents you can then save it back to SharePoint offline; finally syncing it back when there is access to the online version again.

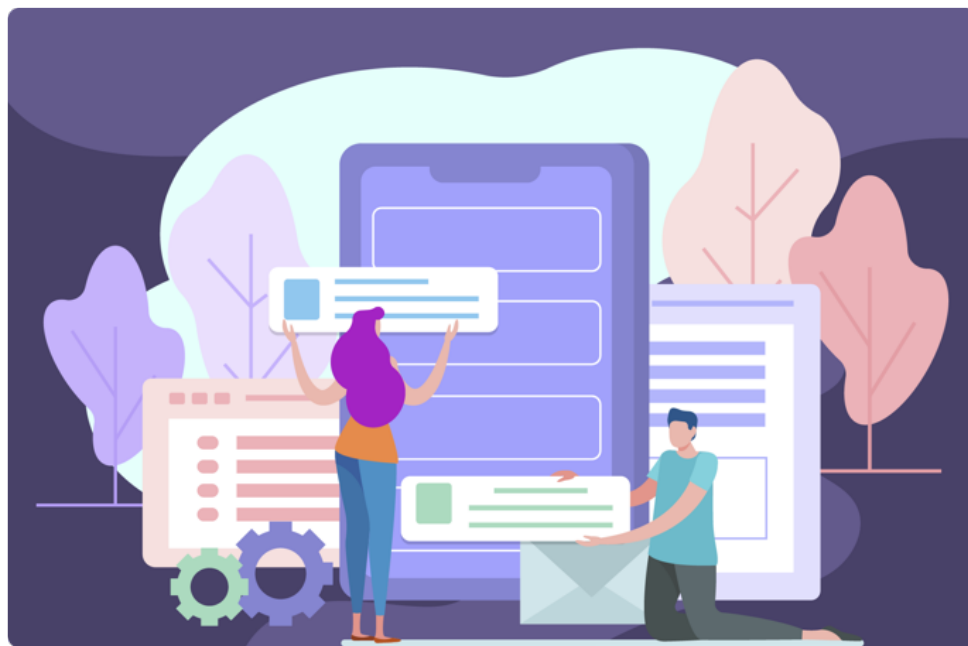
With PowerPoint being considered less of a serious application used for business purposes, features included are that of slide transitions and 3D graphics in order to support an interesting and visually pleasing presentation. However, if you want the presentation to be more professional, as

mentioned earlier, Excel is extremely easy to integrate with PowerPoint, as features such as pre-prepared graphs can be added into the presentation.

Excel is also used by most businesses, as, the strong ability to understand complex data, Excel has become a staple within the professional world. The application aids businesses in most departments of a company, for example, marketing may use it to manage sales, human resources for budgeting purposes, and even admin employees using the tool to understand how much to pay employees when taking into account extra expenses such as sick pay, holiday pay, and overtime.

Furthermore, OneNote can be used in most professional circumstances, being used as a replacement for many for a notepad as you can easily carry your laptop or tablet with you (as most professionals do anyway) without the concern that the notes and consequently the notepad may become heavier. OneNote also allows you to arrange your notes easily and more precisely than one may whilst using a traditional pen and paper, as you can move notes, create various notepads for differing roles within your job, and digitise written notes. This can be extremely useful for professionals who use maths and equations within their everyday working lives. With the ability to also solve these equations for the individual by clicking 'Solve for...' underneath the digitised equation, this tool would no doubt make any professional's life more efficient.

There's also a 'research' feature which allows you to complete extensive research through searching for a specific topic. Once that topic has been searched, OneNote will recommend various sites, books, and articles to visit and read. Integration (much like other Microsoft 365 applications) is a large enticement towards the application, as OneNote means you can share a notebook and collaborate if, for example, you need somewhere to store group ideas geared towards a group presentation.



The Email Admin Centre is an online device used for managing employees, software, and cloud services all within one central place. Here, you can update information within the company surrounding employees, money, as well as installing software for you or other users by using the admin centre. Another valuable feature here includes checking the service health of the business's system and perhaps a client's system, making sure the systems are running smoothly, resulting in peace of mind for both parties.

The primary advantage of using OneDrive within a business or as a professional individual is that everything syncs. All that is stored with the desktop, including documents, photos, and videos are each automatically backed up to the Cloud, therefore these files will always be safe, secure and easy to transfer to another PC if needed. As a result, these files will be secured against any digital/cyber-attacks and threats, whilst also being secure if the individual's or business's network becomes corrupt or crashes unexpectedly.

Many professionals would argue that Teams is the central hub surrounding their business tools, being the best form on communication when it comes to video chat, calls, as well as having features such as recording these calls and chats for future use. Leading on from this, these recordings can be easily transcribed using Microsoft Stream, as well as the user having the ability to alter the text for the purpose of, perhaps, using the call or chat as a tutorial for a YouTube video, or simply just as a reference for the meeting itself. This would, as a result, become useful in terms of there being no need to take minutes during the meeting, therefore the individuals can focus solely on the meeting itself. Furthermore, fully functioning phone systems can be set up through Teams, with hunt groups being a large benefit of this, as phone calls can be distributed to various individuals from a single telephone number. These calls on Teams also now let people to see up to 49 people at one time, as well as there being no 40 minute chat limit unlike its main competitor: Zoom. Finally, other beneficial Teams features now include the fact that users can now host webinars, voicemail can be enabled, people can screenshare with one another (making collaboration easy), and allowing people to log in or out of hunt groups via call queues among teammates and groups.

## Updates

Microsoft is constantly coming out with new and innovative updates. Throughout this closing section some of the main new features from the May 2020 update will be discussed... Firstly, app icons for the Microsoft 365 range have been altered, being less monochrome and more colourful, opposing the backgrounds that appear behind these icons within the task bar. These backgrounds are now white or black (depending if the user is using dark mode or not).



Another, bigger recent change is the fact that Cortana is now its own application instead of just being available to access through the home screen, consequently becoming more adaptable and carrying out more advanced features. These features include opening apps and adjusting settings such as brightness and volume, creating or replying to an email through instructing Cortana to do so, and create meetings within your calendar. All in all she has become a considerably amount more developed and has much more purpose now within business environments.

Additionally, both quick search and reverse search are now both readily available, with reverse search referring to the user having the ability to search for other photos specifically related towards an image the user searches through.

The user can also now set their own individually customised data limits, therefore never having to worry about how much data they are consuming. This limit can be set through the data usage setting, being dictated and reset by the user monthly, after a certain amount of time, or indefinitely. The final feature that will be discussed here is the fact that the text cursor can now be indicated by a change in colour, and the mouse colour can also be altered. These are both small features that can make a big difference when seeing your text cursors and mouse clearly, being able to alter to colours used to make them stand out more; and can make life much easier for users who are short sighted, partially blind, or have a similar disability.