4 Ways to Effectively Overcome Microsoft 365 Adoption Hurdles

Microsoft 365 provides organizations with a host of features to improve work life. But if employees choose not to use the tools available, they miss out on collaboration benefits and create security problems. Fortunately, by presenting multi-faceted training, involving the right people, and communicating effectively, organizations can accelerate Microsoft 365 adoption.

Companies move to Microsoft 365 to tap into a variety of benefits. Some hope to improve productivity. Others need to stay competitive and support remote work by moving to the cloud. But along with the clear benefits, changing office technology affects day-to-day work life for employees in significant ways. And some users hesitate to engage.

Challenges to Microsoft 365 Adoption

When end users prove reluctant to adopt new technology, understanding the reasons for their reluctance can prove crucial to overcoming hurdles. With a feature-rich product suite like Microsoft 365, users may not know when to use which tools. Should they use Yammer, Teams chats, or email for discussing a project, for instance? OneDrive or SharePoint for storing files?

In addition to determining the right tool for the task, employees need to know how to use the tools. No matter how many powerful features Visio offers, for instance, if they have not learned how to use the app, it will prove more frustrating than helpful.

Users will always look for the easiest way to get their work done. If they cannot find the right tool on the list of approved apps, or if they cannot figure out how to use the tools provided, they will look elsewhere. Unfortunately, this use of unapproved tools, or shadow IT, can create security gaps.

Finally, Microsoft 365 adoption projects falter when they lack support from key personnel. On the other hand, executive sponsorship and active support from stakeholders and other visible employees encourage users at all levels to climb on board. When organizations to take steps like those outlined below, they ensure a successful Microsoft 365 migration.

Provide Ongoing, Multi-faceted Training

Implementing a suite of tools like Microsoft 365 means altering how people do their work. Yes, Microsoft 365 can improve efficiency, help people collaborate better and support information governance. But those benefits only come when end users know how to use the products. And that means they need ongoing, engaging training targeted to their regular tasks.

Training begins early. Long before going live, start communicating with emails, posters, Q&A sessions and more. Make sure users understand what will change with the new system. Studies show that basic training helps employees achieve 20 percent greater productivity. Make that training mandatory for everyone. They may grumble initially, but they will thank you later.

Demonstrate the Benefits

Simply telling users that Microsoft 365 will make them more efficient and solve all their problems will not inspire them. Rather, show them real-life examples of ways that the new system can help them work smarter and meet strategic goals. Encourage users to share success stories, innovative ways they used Microsoft 365 to collaborate or improve processes.

One way to demonstrate the benefits of the new system involves recruiting evangelists to share their enthusiasm. These champions can come from all levels, from executives to entry-level employees. When they share their Microsoft 365 knowledge and experiences with their peers, they build understanding and engagement.

Launch to Early Adopters First

Before rolling the new system out to the company, start with a group of early adopters. An ideal early adopter group would include a cross-department team that collaborates on a project or process. This might include a mix of power users and those who struggle with new technology. It should also include IT staff who will be providing support during go live.

Implementing an early adopter program will allow the organization to iron out any issues prior to launch. Communicate with the group regularly to collect feedback and adjust as necessary. This group may provide you with some of your champions when you roll out to the rest of the company.

Monitor End User Adoption

To ensure success, monitor user engagement for several months before and after system launch. The Microsoft 365 Adoption Guide recommends a series of satisfaction surveys to gather data about user experience. As the surveys highlight outstanding challenges, make necessary adjustments to training or processes.

Take Advantage of Microsoft 365 Expertise

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