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4 STEPS TO MIGRATE FROM G SUITE TO OFFICE 365

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Planning to Migrate Data From G Suite to Office 365? Here's What You Need To Know Before You Start.

Both Microsoft Office 365 and G Suite (previously Google Apps) are software-as-a-service (SaaS) productivity tools that let you create documents, spreadsheets, and presentations while collaborating with team members in real time via the cloud. However, there are some significant differences between these two systems that you should take into account before migrating from one to the other.

In this document, we'll be migrating data from G Suite to Office 365. We've provided the best practices for managing this migration to ensure your data is protected during the process.

YOU MUST PLAN YOUR MIGRATION

Migrating data from Google to Office 365 requires knowledge and planning that may not readily available in your Microsoft Office 365 Onboarding Guide.

Before you begin, answer these questions:



1. Will you do this yourself, or will you ask your I.T. provider to help?
2. What are you migrating? Just your email or everything?
3. What migration tools will you be using?
4. Is there a required date for completion?

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1. Attempting a do-it-yourself migration? Maybe you should reconsider.

There are a number of third-party services that can help you migrate your G Suite data into O365. However, it's highly recommended that you work with a managed service provider (MSP), or at least consider asking one to assist during the process. You could run into obstacles that can cost you your data, and bringing in an expert after the fact could be complicated and costly.

2. Are you moving everything to Office 365, or just your email?

If you want to move more than email, will this data be from Google Apps or other platforms? Deciding to include data during the transition which was not part of the plan could result in some data not being migrated and/or being lost.

3. Do you have all the migration tools required to do this properly?

There are a number of software tools and services available for G Suite-to-O365 migrations. They range from free applications that handle IMAP (Internet Message Access Protocol) transfers between email programs, to more complex SaaS solutions to map and transfer data between Google and Office 365. Each come with their own advantages, disadvantages and costs. Do some research before you start the migration.



DETERMINE WHAT CAN BE MIGRATED AND WHAT CAN'T.

Although G Suite and Office 365 are similar, some elements won't transfer properly. Unfortunately, you'll have to do this manually. Determining this upfront helps you prepare.

The following are things you should consider:

Google Sites cannot be migrated via automated migration tools.

When Google revamped Google Sites in November 2016, they didn't include the new platform in their standard Google Drive REST API (representational state transfer + application program interface). Unfortunately, this is the service most migration tools use to extract data for import in Office 365.

SharePoint Online will need help.

Google also created legacy versions of the Google Apps that were retired in 2012 and these too were excluded from the Drive API. So, any Google Site created before December of 2012 or after November of 2016 can't be migrated easily to SharePoint Online.



Google Hangouts links don't convert.


The Google Calendar provides a Google Hangout. Google includes a Hangout link in the event's details, but not for Office 365. Therefore, when trying to integrate Skype for Business with Office 365, there are no pre-generated URLs for scheduling video conferences. If you use Google Hangouts for meetings, be sure your migration plan addresses this issue.

Calendar colors will differ.


Google has 24 different colors for their calendar events. Outlook online only supports six. When you migrate Google calendar to Office 365, the color key will differ, and you will need to address this.

There's no equivalent for Google Forms in Office 365 OneDrive for Business.

Response data from Google Forms can be converted to an Excel or CSV file, but the form won't translate properly. You can try to go directly to an Excel-compatible CSV file, but you must do so right away to ensure your Form data is retained. From here you can try using the Survey feature in Office 365 to perform many of the same functions, but they won't convert directly. You'll have to manually recreate a survey in O365 instead.



For external Google Forms a customer would fill out, you should consider a SharePoint survey. For internal-facing forms, an Excel survey may work best.



If you don't want to recreate your Google Forms, you may need to keep some of your Google Apps accounts to host them. If Forms were used throughout various G Suite user accounts, set up a new Form manager account and transfer the ownership to it.

“Muted” Gmail responses won't migrate properly.

Muted Gmail conversations (where follow-up and reply-all messages are marked as read and archived) won't be migrated properly to Office 365 Outlook online. Future reply-all responses made after the migration won't be muted. Instead, replies to previously muted emails will suddenly reappear in inboxes.



You must inventory files larger than 15GB.

Office 365 OneDrive for Business supports a maximum file size of 15 gigabytes, and G Suite Google Drive supports a maximum file size of 5 terabytes. If Google Drive users store large multimedia files that exceed 15GB, you must inventory and store them outside of the platform. They won't be compatible with Office 365.

Individual, customized email signatures won't convert properly.

Both Google Apps Mail and Outlook online allow for the management and migration of standardized email signatures when using the right migration tools and services. However, individual, customized email signatures can't be migrated using standard tools and services. You'll need to address these separately.

Some Gmail filters can't be migrated.

Gmail filters typically can't be directly translated into Outlook. You'll have to examine these separately and recreate filters once you have completed the migration to Office 365.



POLICIES MUST BE MIGRATED.

When you migrate data from G Suite to Office 365, your policies around data will migrate as well. You must plan for this and establish appropriate processes before completing your migration.

Migrated vs. archived data.

If data isn't business-critical, you may not need to migrate it. However, you should archive it for compliance purposes. This includes all your Google Apps user accounts for users that have left your organization. Don't migrate deactivated G Suite accounts. Rather, store them on a third-party system. Make sure these accounts are identified and accounted for prior to migrating from G Suite to O365.

Advanced Threat Protection settings must be adapted.

The Office 365 version of Exchange offers Advanced Threat Protection. It's the O365 counterpart of Gmail's Enhanced Pre-Delivery Message Scanning and other anti-phishing and anti-spam features.

Advanced Threat Protection offers more control over your Gmail mail quarantine policies. This means configuring your Office 365 email security will require more than simply migrating your sender lists. You'll have to adapt your previous email security policy in Gmail for Microsoft's O365 feature set.

Legal holds and eDiscovery requests.

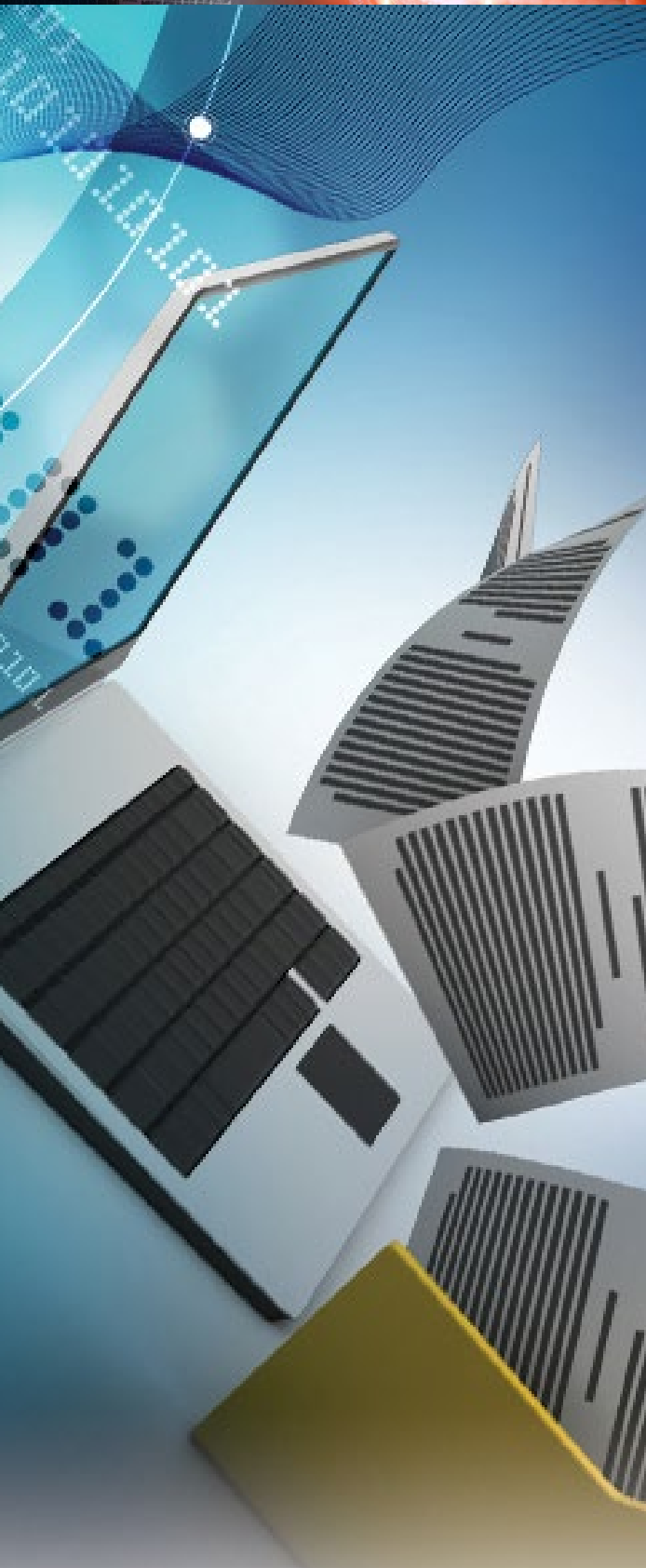
Keep in mind that as you migrate your data, all your messages, documents, and data will exist in both systems at the same time. This may go on for weeks or months at a time.

If during this time you're served with an eDiscovery request, or audit and compliance policies require a legal hold on any data, you must be able to provide data from both systems.

You must ensure an Office 365 Litigation Hold is conducted along with the Google Vault hold. You must devise procedures to deal with this possibility.

Calendar reservations may conflict.

It's inevitable that during your migration, some employees may be using G Suite while others will have transitioned to using Office 365. Reserving resources can be a problem. For example, there will be discrepancies when reserving conference rooms, audio/visual equipment, and other shared calendar resources. You should devise a process to sync this information in order to avoid confusion.



Naming conventions may differ.

When changing systems, you'll probably have differences when naming shared folders, user groups, or assets. You must clearly designate the old and the new names, and ensure these changes are communicated to all users.

You must adjust website access policies.

You must consider how these lists may change in O365. After you've retired your old Google domain, ensure the URLs associated with it don't go into your Office 365 blacklist. It's not enough to simply migrate your website and email domain blacklists or whitelists from G Suite to Office 365. You must be prepared to manually adjust your website access policies rather than just copy them from Google Apps to Office 365.

Determine how much spam and trash should be migrated.

Gmail has a Spam folder, and both Gmail and Google Drive have Trash bins. They may house data that was disposed of by mistake and must be maintained for compliance purposes. You should inspect these and determine if any data should be migrated.



THERE'S STILL MORE TO DO BEFORE YOU MIGRATE YOUR DATA.

Define your migration process.

Leave nothing to chance and implement the appropriate project management best practices. For example, do not migrate all your users to O365 at the same time. A staged migration using at least three stages is the safest approach:

1. 10 percent of users in the first stage.
2. 40 percent of user accounts in the second wave.
3. The remaining 50 percent in the third stage.



Be sure to leave time between each stage to deal with any issues.



Back up your original G Suite data.

This is the most important part of your migration plan. No matter how well you plan, data can still get lost. Your original Google Apps data can be destroyed if it fails to load properly into Office 365. Make sure you have a full third-party backup of all your Google Apps data. This way you'll always have a clean, reliable backup you can restore from.

Furthermore, some migration tools actively remove data from G Suite to ensure that once it lands in Office 365, there aren't two competing copies of the same messages, documents, or files. This can cause problems if G Suite data is corrupted during the transfer to Office 365.

Restoring data to G Suite and then re-migrating just those accounts or files that are lost is easier than trying to transfer data manually.

Have a rollback plan.

Some migrations just fail. Whatever the reason, you must have a plan in place to halt the migration and restore functionality to your Google Apps. This will require using reverse-migration tools—apps and services that are used to move data from Office 365 back into G Suite. Having this rollback plan in place protects you from a data disaster and ensures your business continuity.

IN SUMMARY

Although migrating data from G Suite to Office 365 is a fairly straightforward endeavor for experienced I.T. professionals, it's not something you should attempt on your own. As you can see, there are many pitfalls and details to consider. Your MSP will ensure the success of your G Suite-to-Office 365 migration.

For more information ***about the business value of Office 365 and why this migration is worth the effort***, contact us at: ***844-44-JMARK*** or ***JMARKIT@JMARK.com***.

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For thirty years, JMARK has been providing innovative I.T. solutions to organizations of all sizes. With all that experience comes extensive expertise. We understand the challenges that modern businesses face and can help you maintain continuity and efficiency, even in the midst of the continual changes occurring in technology needs and expectations. It is our mission to ensure that your technology supports your vision and goals.

Most importantly, at JMARK, we put people before technology. Everything we do, every service we offer, is a reflection of our “People First, Technology Second” philosophy. Because while we love technology, we also understand that I.T. is only useful when it serves to empower people and enhance the work they do; work that, in turn, can facilitate growth, spur innovation, increase opportunity, and open up new paths to success.

Contact JMARK today and let us show you what our I.T. services can do for your business.

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