

# Migration to SharePoint Online – Journey to the Cloud



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## Abstract

There have been debates brewing on the surface of operations that revolve around the idea if SharePoint should board the cloud or stay put on premise. While, its granted that Office 365 leverages multiple benefits for end-users in terms of more agility, mobility and ease of access, what are the key concerns we should take into account prior to SharePoint migration? Letting things be as they are, are there different types of SharePoint migration approaches? What are the elements to inspect while going forth with a manual SharePoint migration? What are the parameters that need to be met to justify the ROI? This Happiest Minds whitepaper addresses the above questions and more in detail with its disruptive competencies.

## Introduction

**SharePoint Online** is a cloud based version of SharePoint included in 'Office 365 Suites' offer by Microsoft. It gives the leverage to the organization to create a public facing corporate website, an Intranet site and any number of Team/Organization based solutions and site in a single location. Because it is a Cloud hosted platform, it significantly reduces the cost of managing the **IT infrastructure**. Additionally, this also provides the benefits of centralizing the organization content.



SharePoint Online also dominates the competition though strong integration with Microsoft Office.

## Migration Approaches

If you are already using SharePoint on-premises and want to migrate to SharePoint Online, then you can follow any of the below approaches:

- Manual
- Hybrid
- Code or 3rd Party tools

In the current scope of things, we would like to cover only the best practice for manual migration, principally because Hybrid and tools based migration vary based on tool selection and your model.

# What to inspect before manual migration

There are a number of factors one needs to consider before migrating from SharePoint Online to on-premise, below are some of them:

- Which plan to subscribe

Unlike SharePoint on-premise, where you have only standard and enterprise license options available, SharePoint Online offers a range of licensing option and below are few:

- SharePoint Online Plan 1
- SharePoint Online Plan 2
- Office 365 Small Business
- Office 365 Small Business Premium
- Office 365 Midsize Business
- Office 365 Enterprise E1
- Office 365 Enterprise E3



Taking into account the many needs of your organization, like the unified compliance framework required and the cost which it is willing to invest on SharePoint, you have to carefully identify which plan is good for you to subscribe.

Every plan has a different set-off feature and will have separate license cost in accordance. Considering your organization's size and your cost priorities, you have to decide which plan suits your need the most.

## • What to migrate



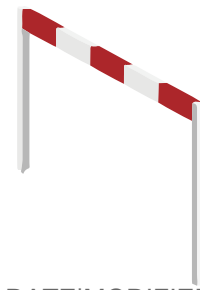
After you have identified the plan to subscribe, the second most important thing is to access the content to be migrated from SharePoint on-premises to SharePoint Online. Below are some of key parameters to be taken into account:

- What is the total size of the file share data that the customer wants to migrate? – SharePoint Online has per site collection limit of 100GB unlike on-premises having 200GB
- How many files are there in total? – SharePoint Online has a fixed limit of 5000 items per view, folder or query and unlike SharePoint on-premises you cannot increase it.
- What are the largest file sizes? Try to plan the file size as maximum size file can be 2GB but considering the bandwidth it is not recommended to keep more than 250 MB.
- How deep are the folder structures nested? Recommended total length of URL in SharePoint is around 260 characters. Do not use blank spaces and give short names like ST for sales team.
- Is there any content that is not being used anymore? Identify and archive the data that is of no use.
- What file types are there? Identify your file extension and compare with file extension allowed in SharePoint Online. This is applicable if you are migrating additional data along with SharePoint On-premises data also.

### • Obstacle of data migration manually

In case of manual migration, the following are the few things you ought to consider.

- You can only copy and paste the files.
- You will lose the metadata of files.
- You will lose the File versioning.
- Manual migration will replace CREATED BY|MODIFIED BY as well as CREATED DATE|MODIFIED DATE with the user who is doing migration and date will be set as date when migration is done.
- You cannot move List information as you cannot copy and paste. But if you are using SharePoint 2013 On-premises, you can migrate some information by saving the list as List templates.



### • Examine your information architecture

If you are planning to [migrate your data](#) from On-premises to SharePoint Online, then look into restricting your data.

- Draw and plan your data architecture:
  - How you wanted the sites to be setup
  - Navigation and flow
  - Document libraries and Lists
- Flatten your data: If you are using traditional folder structure, then plan to consider using metadata for file tagging. This will improve your information structuring and search.



### • Security

This is also the right time for you to evaluate your permission setup. As during the manual migration, the security will not migrate with the data. You need to look into how you wanted the permission and security to be built up in SharePoint Online and you can improve the same as you want. Create and setup as many AD groups permission as possible to have controlled security.



### • Customization

If you have done any customization in SharePoint On-premises, then while migrating to SharePoint you need to rebuild your customization, aligning with SharePoint Online features and deploying the customization as Sand Box solution or developing using client object model as development in SharePoint Online is scoped to the site collection level.



## • Training

Success of any project depends on how ready the end-user is equipped to use new system. Training of end user is the key component of a successfully migrating SharePoint On-premises to SharePoint Online. Below are few reasons why training is important:

- Employee satisfaction
- Tackle more task
- Motivation to use SharePoint
- Increased adoption



## SharePoint Environment in Happiest Minds

We, at Happiest Minds Technologies, always provide the rich, advance and good blend of SharePoint solutions to our customers, so that they can easily automate the processes for the business. We have an experienced team for advanced SharePoint solutions. With approved plan, excellent understanding of technology, team work and commitment to time, we make difference happen, which in turn makes the customer “HAPPY”.

## About the Author



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Ali Abbas Khan is a SharePoint consultant with a strong background on administering and maintaining large SharePoint servers & farms. He is currently managing a team of diversified SharePoint experts that provide development, support and administrations solutions to clients. His interest areas are capacity planning, farm designing & disaster recovery planning. Prior to his engagement with Happiest Minds, he has worked with IBM, Wipro Technologies & Mahindra Satyam.

## About Happiest Minds

Happiest Minds, the Mindful IT Company, applies agile methodologies to enable **digital transformation** for enterprises and technology providers by delivering seamless customer experience, business efficiency and actionable insights. We leverage a spectrum of disruptive technologies such as: **Big Data Analytics**, AI & Cognitive Computing, Internet of Things, **Cloud**, Security, SDN-NFV, RPA, Blockchain, etc. Positioned as "Born Digital . Born Agile", our capabilities spans across product engineering, digital business solutions, infrastructure management and security services. We deliver these services across industry sectors such as retail, consumer packaged goods, edutech, e-commerce, banking, insurance, hi-tech, engineering R&D, manufacturing, automotive and travel/transportation/hospitality.

Headquartered in Bangalore, India; Happiest Minds has operations in USA, UK, The Netherlands, Australia and Middle East.

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