

Five Costly Microsoft 365 Data Protection Gaps



For over 500,000 businesses worldwide, it's hard to imagine business as usual without Microsoft 365 — anywhere, anytime access to applications means you can work non-stop. That is until you can't.

Users often forget that in the cloud you are renting a service from providers, which means you agreed to their terms. In the case of Microsoft, the company commits to ensuring the building doesn't fall down and the lights stay on — or delivering high performance, access and uptime for Microsoft 365 applications.

But Microsoft does not take responsibility for what's inside Microsoft 365 — your data.

To prevent data loss, ensure business continuity and avoid compliance penalties, you need to be aware that Microsoft does not include formal data protection for Microsoft 365, so there might be gaps in your expectations and the reality.

ACCIDENTAL DELETION ISSUES
 29% of data loss is due to human error
 Source: CSO

RETENTION POLICY ISSUES
 80% of companies have lost data in the cloud
 Source: Osterman Research

INSIDER SECURITY THREATS
 90% of organizations are vulnerable to insider threats
 Source: Insider Threat Report

MIGRATION FROM ON-PREM TO CLOUD
 75% of CXOs say managing privacy and data protection regulations in the cloud is complex
 Source: CXO Today

LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE ISSUES
 \$57 million is the largest GDPR penalty issued to date (Google)
 Source: Fortune.com

Here are five common data threats Microsoft 365 business customers can face:

1. ACCIDENTAL DELETION ISSUES

With Microsoft 365, administrators and employees alike routinely delete Exchange Online emails, attachments and files, Microsoft 365 user profiles, OneDrive for Business files, and SharePoint Online content. Should an item need to be recovered, the age of the resource may render that impossible: Older data may be hard-deleted and unrecoverable while more recent deletions of newer resources may be found in the Recycle Bin or Recoverable Items folder.

2. RETENTION POLICY ISSUES

It's up to customers to manage retention policies, which can be time consuming and error-prone: You may think you've set the right parameters to retain data, but changing or misaligned priorities in Microsoft 365 data retention policies can result in data being hard-deleted. Be aware, if for whatever reason a hard-deletion occurs due to aging out of the existing retention policy, Microsoft has no ability to recover the deleted resource.

3. SECURITY THREATS

Microsoft 365 resources also require protection from malicious alteration or data destruction by disgruntled employees, contractors or partners. Microsoft does not guard against these foes — it has no way of knowing if deletion was accidental, malicious or intentional.

In addition, Microsoft are liable for the infrastructure, not the data — that responsibility and liability rests entirely with you.

4. MIGRATION FROM ON-PREM TO CLOUD

Microsoft does not address data loss issues during premises-based Microsoft Office to cloud-based Microsoft 365 migration. The two backup solutions are often incompatible, making it impossible to restore legacy data into the new environment. Meanwhile, few third-party data protection solutions integrate backup functionality for Office and Microsoft 365: they usually protect one or the other, but not both.

5. LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Compliance requirements (e.g. GDPR, HIPPA) and legal issues can exacerbate costs related to any data loss incident. Without timely access to data, businesses are exposed to government or industry-specific regulatory fines, legal penalties, revenue and stock price hits, plus damage to company brand and customer trust.

The Bottom Line

The reality is that emails, attachments, and shared files stored in Microsoft 365 are not protected from the most common and serious data loss issues, ranging from simple accidental deletions to sophisticated malware attacks. This means that Microsoft 365 data loss is an unhappy surprise waiting to happen — with incredibly high stakes. Failure to defend Microsoft 365 data can be career-limiting.

To learn more about easy-to-use, agentless cloud backup for Microsoft 365, visit our website: