

The case for IT consolidation



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The IT consolidation opportunity

This eBook is for IT leaders who want to stop managing the chaos and bring harmony to their IT infrastructure, management and employees. Find out how to drive performance, reduce complexity and cost, boost efficiency, strengthen security and prepare your organisation for AI by consolidating to a unified platform.

01

IT sprawl is out of control

When it comes to managing a digital ecosystem, unified control can seem to be out of reach. **Meeting your organisation's evolving demands for productivity, security and AI readiness often means patching solutions together one tool at a time.** While this approach manages to keep things moving, it also creates a complex IT system that is often disconnected, time-consuming and costly to maintain.

IT teams can quickly become overwhelmed by this complex, and often costly, stack of tools for endpoint management, identity and access management, messaging, email, productivity... the list goes on. Different tools often mean different suppliers with unique requirements and siloed environments. No wonder it feels like budgets and resources are stretched thin.

The complexity creates challenges for the entire organisation. Productivity stalls when employees spend their day navigating multiple logins and struggling to share information across disconnected tools. As they try to access resources from different devices and locations, fragmented endpoint management makes it harder for IT teams to maintain security. It's time to unify IT tools and simplify management.

The ecosystem of specialised IT tools and suppliers keeps growing and it's happening fast.



Stop paying the complexity tax

Every new software licence follows a similar pattern: another solution, another cost centre, another layer of complexity. IT leaders are being asked to do a lot on a limited budget, and somehow still find the resources to support new AI initiatives. To keep the budget under control, many IT leaders must constantly evaluate their infrastructure for duplicative and unused licences. In 2024, IT leaders pursued savings in the following ways:

83% reduced spend on unused software²

82% improved their supplier **contract negotiation**²

79% purchased cheaper licence option(s)²

These strategies can provide moderate savings, but there's a catch. Managing this growing patchwork of applications creates a 'complexity tax'. It takes valuable time and personnel to audit tools and remove idle functionality while managing security and access settings for disconnected solutions. Rather than focusing on high-impact work, IT teams spend valuable time auditing licences, negotiating with suppliers and searching for incremental savings while individually maintaining each existing solution. These time-consuming tasks steal focus from more meaningful work.

Despite these cost-cutting measures, the complexity tax creeps back up. The only sustainable path forward is to rethink your technology approach. Consolidating to a comprehensive platform will cut through the complexity and enable teams to focus on transforming the business.

15%

of organisations paid more than US \$5 million in **software supplier audits** over the last three years²

61%

of IT asset management professionals say that they **still don't have full visibility** into IT assets that have an impact on business outcomes²

02

Free your IT team from disconnected solutions

For organisations with a large suite of technology offerings, the daily reality of IT work is exhausting. Each single-use solution requires its own expertise, and the technology ecosystem becomes a maze of disconnected tools.

IT teams become overburdened with all the management, maintenance, integration and support tasks. Each specialised tool demands hands-on management, so you'll need multiple specialists with narrow skillsets just to keep systems operational.

Already, **64%** of IT business leaders report challenges when hiring candidates due to a lack of necessary skills or experience.³ That makes it harder for you to hire, onboard and upkeep expert knowledge on your team.



03

The power of unity

There's a better approach to IT management. By consolidating to a unified solution, you can reduce IT overload and maintain a strong, flexible and focused team. This lets you:

Streamline management of supplier contracting, maintenance and operations

Improve productivity by accelerating support and request management

Proactively secure your IT environment with unified visibility and management

This isn't just about streamlining systems. It's about clearing the path for what matters most: empowering your team to shape the future of how your organisation works.

Minimise digital friction

Technology should help clear the path forward, not create obstacles. As an IT leader, you know that **disconnection between productivity tools affects the entire organisation.**

Sixty two per cent of people say that they struggle with too much time spent searching for information in their working day.⁵ The average employee now spends **57%** of their working day on meetings, emails and chats, so it's no wonder that **68%** of people say that they don't have enough uninterrupted focus time.⁵

Disconnected point solutions create resistance in daily workflows in subtle ways, but the frustration adds up quickly. Multiple logins, siloed work, scattered information, systems that don't work together – every point of friction is a small tax on creativity and innovation.

By consolidating to one platform, you can reduce these barriers and create space for valuable creativity to emerge. Imagine your organisation transformed by consolidation. Workers use a central, secure gateway to access all the tools and resources they need. Information flows freely and collaboration happens naturally.

When friction fades away, people rediscover their capacity for more meaningful work. It's not just about clearing obstacles – it's about creating an environment where technology amplifies what people can do.



Centralise security

The cyber threat landscape is more complex than ever. Bad actors are better resourced, more sophisticated and armed with tactics that challenge even the best-prepared security teams. As security threats become more sophisticated, it becomes harder to keep up. **Eighty per cent** of organisations have attack paths that expose critical assets.⁶ **Eighty two per cent** of security leaders have been surprised by a security failure which evaded a control that they thought was in place.⁷

Organisations now spend **65%** of their security budgets on third-party products, while only **35%** goes to internal labour.⁸

What’s driving this lopsided spend? Large enterprises often manage a wide array of tools to ensure that they have the best solution for each specific task, even when this means juggling a larger suite. This approach can lead to increased spending and complexity.

600M cybercriminal attacks occurred in 2024 – per day⁶

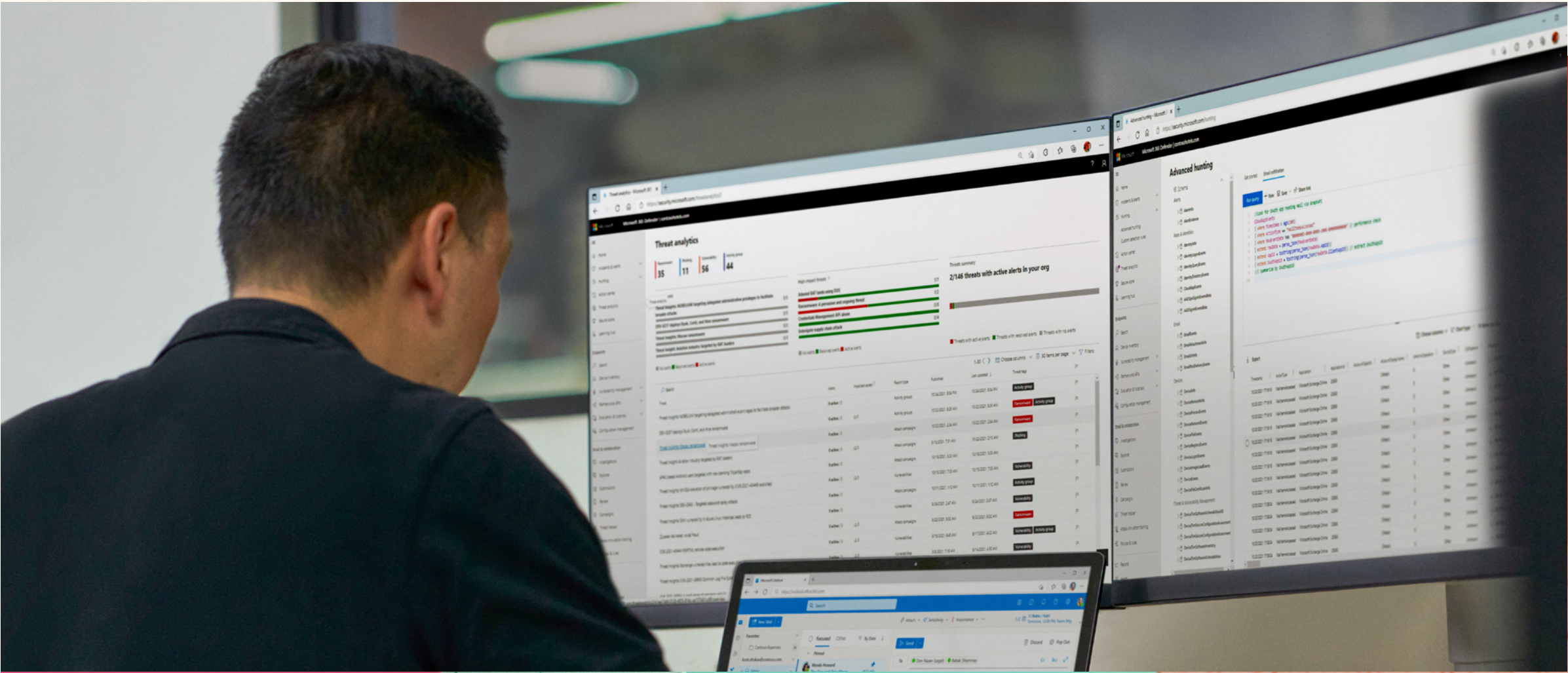
2.75 X year-over-year increase in human-operated ransom-linked encounters⁶

In response to increasing threats, security teams add more solutions.

19% The two-year average increase in the number of security tools that large enterprises use⁷

Adding more security tools can feel like establishing a stronger defence for your organisation. However, solution chasing can actually leave your organisation more vulnerable. A complex IT environment – with many interdependencies – is harder to comprehend, manage and secure. Tool overload prevents you from getting a clear, enterprise-wide view of your complete tech stack. It also creates a larger potential attack surface with more 'side doors' into corporate systems.

By consolidating your security onto a comprehensive platform, you transform complexity into clarity. This means a clear line of sight across your entire digital estate. The strongest security posture isn’t found in a growing collection of distinct tools. It comes when you establish the right foundation with a central platform.



04

Safeguard AI usage

Employees are eager for AI to lift the weight of work.

75% of employees **are already using AI** at work⁹

78% of workers using AI **are bringing their own AI tools** to work⁹

Employees aren't waiting for security protocols to catch up. As 'Bring your own AI' (BYOAI) tools gain popularity, organisations can fall behind. Only **24%** of generative AI initiatives include robust security measures.¹⁰

If organisations don't build the right foundation for secure AI usage, employees might fill the productivity gap with shadow AI: unsanctioned tools that exist outside your systems and beyond your control.

Shadow AI creates two key challenges:

No oversight

Shadow AI opens the door to serious risks; what's stopping employees from copy-pasting sensitive information into their personal AI tool of choice? Every interaction with uncontrolled BYOAI becomes another security threat. Your data is likely to end up being leaked or may be used to train an outside model.

Limited usefulness

Seventy nine per cent of employees would feel comfortable using AI for analytical tasks,⁵ but an AI tool is only as good as the information it can access. Segmented, siloed AI tools often deliver incomplete answers. That's why BYOAI tools provide only limited usefulness for workers.





Organisations are now at a crossroads: let fragmented AI usage spiral into potential security failures or take control and adopt a unified AI-ready platform. As an IT leader, you have a key strategic opportunity to guide your organisation through this critical moment. Deliver the full power of AI across your organisation with an enterprise suite that brings together productivity applications, security and compliance capabilities – all designed for seamless AI integration.

A consolidated platform makes it possible to effectively deploy the right tools to reduce the risks of AI usage and protect your data. Consolidation also helps you better deploy and manage a seamless, secure connection between your organisation's AI solution and proprietary data, resources and workflows. This allows your AI solution to provide the accurate, actionable insights that employees need to deliver high-impact work.

05

A unified platform

Microsoft 365 E3 is a unified platform that simplifies IT management, enhances your organisation's productivity with connected experiences, secures tools and endpoints, and integrates seamlessly with AI.

The benefits of consolidating with Microsoft 365 E3

Reduce IT costs

Choose a comprehensive solution that simplifies management from the cloud and consolidates suppliers to minimise total costs and improve ROI.

Protect your organisation

Secure access to data, applications and resources with a centralised solution for threat protection, strong multifactor authentication, conditional access policies and continuous access evaluation.

Securely adopt generative AI

By building a secure foundation with a comprehensive platform that maintains data privacy and security, your organisation becomes ready to adopt AI with Microsoft 365 Copilot.

Cut through IT complexity

Centralise application, endpoint and identity management while reducing point solutions for productivity – controlling access and use without interrupting the flow of work across your organisation.

By consolidating your IT ecosystem with Microsoft 365 E3, you're choosing a more secure and more productive way of working. This comprehensive platform equips your IT team and your whole organisation to meet whatever comes next.

Lead the way with IT consolidation

Today’s pace of IT sprawl is no longer sustainable. Consolidating your digital ecosystem isn’t just a strategic move – it’s critical to reducing costs, simplifying management, accelerating productivity and strengthening security. By unifying your tools and processes, you’ll empower your organisation to work more efficiently, innovate faster and embrace AI with confidence.

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