

CloudStrategies Newsletter

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MICROSOFT BIG EASY OFFER NOW INCLUDES

- OFFICE 365
- WINDOWS INTUNE &
- DYNAMICS CRM ONLINE

Microsoft helps pay for your cloud transition!

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If you've been thinking about putting Microsoft's Online Services to work in your business and just needed a good reason to move ahead and find out more about it, here's a GREAT reason:



Customers purchasing qualifying Microsoft products before December 31, 2011 can now receive a subsidy of 15% of their annual subscription fee from Microsoft which can be applied directly to the transition services you need to assure the best possible implementation and migration.

The Big Easy Offer now includes the Microsoft Online Services that take your company into the highly agile, cost-saving and productivity-boosting world of the cloud:



It's familiar Microsoft Office collaboration and productivity tools delivered through the cloud. Everyone can work together easily with anywhere access to email, web conferencing, documents, and calendars. It includes business-class security and is backed by Microsoft. Whether you are a small business or multinational enterprise, Office 365 offers plans designed to fit your organization's unique needs. Learn more today.

Microsoft Dynamics CRM (Customer Relationship Management) helps you increase sales performance, boost customer satisfaction, and improve marketing effectiveness. When you want CRM in the cloud that is flexible, scalable, and easy to use, and that delivers outstanding value and business insights, there's no comparison to Microsoft Dynamics CRM Online. It's the ultimate cloud-based solution.



Windows Intune™ helps you manage and secure computers in your environment through a combination of Windows cloud services and upgrade licensing. Windows Intune delivers cloud-based management and security capabilities through a single web-based administrative console. With Windows Intune, you can manage computers from almost anywhere.



With an active Windows Intune subscription, you have the rights to upgrade to future versions of Windows, with the same benefits of the Microsoft Software Assurance program for Windows.

To learn more about Microsoft Online Services and how you can earn your 15% services subsidy, contact CloudStrategies today at 973-630-5020

CloudBreakingNews

CloudStrategies Has Moved More Than 200 Companies to the Cloud

CloudStrategies was created less than two years ago by a small group of former Microsoft employees with a clear yet simple vision that Cloud Computing would become the “normal” way for companies and people to use information technologies in the near future.

Today, less than two years later, CloudStrategies has grown to national prominence achieving recognition by Microsoft as one of their top 5 Cloud Champions. One of the ways in which that honor is determined is by how many customers they have helped move to the cloud.

Passing the 200 Mark

CloudStrategies recently achieved a new milestone having moved more than 200 customers to Office 365, Windows Intune, and other cloud computing services. These customers range from educational institutions to entertainment companies, from manufacturing, financial services, healthcare companies and lawfirms to retail and community groups.

Each of these more than 200 customers have turned to CloudStrategies for assistance along the path to the cloud.

✓ Initial Guidance & Business Analysis

With the hundreds of companies and providers offering cloud computing services it becomes overwhelming to try to identify the right combination and the right strategy. CloudStrategies works with every customer to understand their specific needs and to recommend the right services to achieve the desired results.

✓ Planning

CloudStrategies works closely with each customer’s management team to construct a strategic roadmap and blueprint every step along that path. Careful planning results in more rapid and effective implementation.

✓ Deployment

One of the keys to a successful cloud transition is to have services professionally deployed to all users so they can get right to work in their new environment immediately. CloudStrategies’ experts make certain that every deployment is carefully planned and properly executed.

✓ Migration

When customers move from their on-premises systems to a cloud-based solution it is crucial that all of their data be preserved and properly migrated to the new environment. With decades of IT experience, the CloudStrategies team treats this critical step with utmost care.

✓ Training & Support

Especially in the early stages of using a new platform, users can easily become discouraged if they aren’t properly trained or can’t readily obtain answers to questions. CloudStrategies assures the best possible user experience by providing extensive training and easily-accessed support from professionals who understand how to work with every level of user from beginner to expert.



To Cloud or Not to Cloud

SaaS IaaS PaaS Whaat??

Information Technology people have always used acronyms extensively. Some tech companies even publish a glossary to let everyone know what all of their acronyms stand for. Just when you were getting used to all the “TLAs” (Three-Letter-Acronyms), some new ones emerge that are four letters long, and probably just as confusing as all the others.

As you make your decisions to move some or all of your information technology operations to the cloud, it is useful to have a working understanding of the more frequently used acronyms.

SaaS—Software as a Service

Anyone who has ever purchased something on line, or played online games has used software as a service. In the old on-premises model, companies purchased software and loaded it onto servers located in their own offices. Usually this meant that the decision to purchase any particular software application had to be made on an enterprise-wide basis. This often had the effect of prolonging the decision-making cycle and denying the company access to that application for a longer period of time.

Many business applications, such as Microsoft Dynamics CRM Online and Office 365, deliver software applications over the internet to users who generally access them using nothing more than a web browser. Office 365 includes the highly popular Microsoft Office suite including Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Outlook, and more. It also delivers the world’s most popular email platform, Microsoft Exchange, as well as Microsoft’s leading collaboration and file management system SharePoint. Finally it includes their new unified collaboration platform, Lync. All are delivered over the internet meaning that no customer investment in servers or storage is required. All each user needs is a computer running a browser.

IaaS—Infrastructure as a Service

Many software applications, especially those developed specifically for a given company or one of their lines of business, will not be available as a service. Should those companies decide that they do not want the expense or burden of managing their own computing infrastructure, they can opt to obtain it as a utility computing service from an IaaS provider. All of the servers, storage, and networking infrastructure they require for their line of business applications is then housed in the provider’s data center rather than their own facilities. Most of these providers make it easy for client companies to provision more resources as they are required, or throttle them back when not in use, thus reducing their overall operating cost. This is often referred to as making this cloud computing strategy highly elastic.

PaaS—Platform as a Service

Software Application Developers often turn to PaaS services because they combine the necessary computing platform with a robust development environment and solution stack designed to ease rapid development, prototyping, testing and deployment of applications using webparts, web applications, and other utilities all available over the internet with no local server, storage, or networking necessary.

For deeper level explanations of these and other terms that may be unclear, reach out to CloudStrategies.



CloudCalendar



Learn more about **Cloud Computing** and how to create **YOUR best CloudStrategy!**

Visit our **Event Calendar** regularly for updates or to register at <http://www.cloudstrategies.net/calendar.aspx>

CloudStrategies 101: Including Office 365

Webinar: Are you curious about the "Cloud" and what it means to your business?

Join us for an in-depth discussion about all things cloud where we will help you learn why businesses are leveraging the "Cloud" to Save Money, Increase Reliability, and deploy IT solutions faster than traditional "On-Premise" solutions. In addition to business and economic value discussion, we will introduce several top Cloud Solutions such as:

- **Microsoft Office 365 including:**
 - Exchange Online 2010
 - SharePoint Online 2010
 - Lync Online
- **Windows Intune for cloud-based Desktop security and management**
- **Workspace Communications Hosted OCS and Lync Solutions**
- **Rackspace Cloud Solutions for Hosted IT Infrastructure**
- **Neverfail Cloud Based High Availability and Disaster Recovery Solutions**

Upcoming Sessions:

Thursday Oct 13th
Thursday Oct 27th

12:30 - 1:30p EST
(9:30 - 10:30a PST)

Intro to Office 365

Webinar: Microsoft recently announced Office 365™, as the new version of the popular BPOS Suite of Cloud software that will be deployed mid-2011. This excited new product brings many new features to the cloud that will enable many businesses to join the cloud revolution that have previously been unable to do so. At the event you will learn about the new features of the full Office 365 software suite :

- **Exchange/SharePoint and Lync**
- **Office Professional Plus**
- **Office Web Apps**
- **Robust and Granular management console**
- **Transition of Existing BPOS Customers to Office 365**
- **Rich Co-existence and federation service**

Upcoming Sessions:

Thursday Oct 6th
12:30 - 1:30p EST
(9:30 - 10:30a PST)

Moving your Microsoft Infrastructure to the Cloud with Rackspace Hosting Solutions

Webinar: Turning Cloud Computing into a winning business strategy requires expertise, experience, and the right set of cloud services. Beyond the productivity applications your people use each day are the core line-of-business applications that are the foundation of how you run your business profitably. In this session, CloudStrategies shows you how to leverage the experience, expertise and extensive resources of Rackspace Hosting to provide superior performance, reliability, sustainability, and durability for your key applications. You'll learn:

- **How to select the right size cloud servers for your requirements**
- **How to make the transition to cloud-based servers painless and productive**
- **How Rackspace Hosting provides the ability to scale servers on demand as your business grows**
- **How you continue to enjoy complete control over your computing environment in the cloud**

Upcoming Sessions:

To Be Announced

Microsoft Windows Intune - PC Management Platform

Webinar: How can you keep your PCs & employees operating at peak performance, when you or your users are in the office or on the road?

Microsoft recently announced Windows Intune™, a new solution that brings together cloud services for PC management and malware protection with a Windows® 7 upgrade subscription. Remote workers in multiple locations. Multiple PC configurations. Limited resources-these are just a few of the challenges that face businesses every day. Windows Intune™ not only helps you address these challenges, it takes PC management to a whole new level of simplicity. With its powerful combination of Windows® cloud services and Windows 7, Windows Intune offers a comprehensive solution to help keep your PCs and employees operating at peak performance.

At the event you will learn how to achieve big-tech results with a small-tech investment. Experts will show you how easy it is to:

- **How to select the right size cloud servers for your requirements**
- **Manage and secure PCs anywhere with cloud services**
- **How to provide the best Windows experience with Windows 7**
- **Stop malware threats before they stop you**
- **Identify issues before they impact business**

Upcoming Sessions:

Thursday Oct 20th
12:30 - 1:30p EST
(9:30 - 10:30a PST)

Microsoft Lync - Unified Communications in the Cloud

Webinar: Microsoft Lync™ Online (a component of Microsoft Office 365) delivers a fresh, intuitive user experience that brings together the different ways people communicate in a single interface. During this informative webinar, you will see and learn about using Lync for:

- **Instant Messaging and Presence**
- **Video and Web Conferencing**
- **Group Chat**
- **Full integration with Microsoft Office**
- **Enterprise Voice and software based VoIP (leveraging Workspace Communications)**

Upcoming Sessions:

To Be Announced

Founded in 1997 as one of the first Internet marketing firms, Exclusive Concepts is now one of only a few firms primarily focused on online retail. Primary services include Search Engine Optimization, Pay Per Click Advertising, Email Marketing, and Conversion Optimization.

Exclusive Concepts was faced with an aging email server running Microsoft Exchange 2003. The old server was just about out of storage to house the data and it looked like they were in for a very expensive new capital investment to replace it.

Seeking Alternatives

The executive team knew there were other solutions available, so they began to search for the right alternative. Initially they signed up for a 30-day trial of Google Apps for Business, but the limitations of this solution became immediately apparent.

As part of their business, Exclusive Concepts has developed very large and sophisticated Word documents and Excel spreadsheets which make extensive use of the macro programming capabilities. They quickly found that Google Apps for Business could not tightly integrate with these critical documents. In fact, when they were compelled to transfer their documents to the corresponding Google Apps, they found them to be far too simplistic and unable to perform any of the necessary functions.

With the announcement of the release of Microsoft Office 365 they quickly and easily determined that this new platform would integrate with their current business and tools very well, so they contacted Microsoft seeking answers to their questions and further support for their decision.

Microsoft referred them to one of their Top 5 national cloud champions, CloudStrategies, to provide the required support. They had already signed up for Microsoft Exchange Online and were considering replacing their existing file system with SharePoint. The CloudStrategies team helped Exclusive Concepts complete their Exchange Online implementation by simply answering their questions. After careful discussion, they recommended holding off on the SharePoint transition until the company was more prepared for it.

The Right Solution



Dan Thierl
Vice President of
Product Development

Exclusive Concepts Vice President of Product Development Dan Thierl was most impressed with CloudStrategies willingness to answer his initial questions readily. “The thing that stood out,” explains Thierl, “was that they were willing to put in the time and effort up front to give us the best advice, not necessarily just sell us a product. They looked at our business and what we were actually doing and really considered how we operate before they would actually recommend going down the path of upgrading to SharePoint. A lot of other companies would have just said ‘here’s SharePoint, let’s get you up and running on it.’”

Thierl anticipates that CloudStrategies will be very helpful in planning and executing their eventual transition to SharePoint. First, they need to determine if their complex advanced Excel tools can be successfully edited simultaneously by multiple users. “We don’t want to continue having multiple versions of files all over the place,” observes Thierl.

Hurricane Irene Meets Office 365

While the electrical power in Burlington, MA where Exclusive Concepts is located never went out during the recent northeast disaster of Hurricane Irene, the power in their building failed the next day, and stayed off for three days! Had they still been using their aging on-premises server, Exclusive Concepts would have faced disappointing many of the customers who depend upon their support every day. “We had everyone who needed a phone go across the street to another building that had not lost its power,” explains Dan Thierl, “and everyone else was able to continue working and serving our customers from home. I can’t put a dollar figure on it, but it would have cost us plenty with our clients who need our help.”

Regarding his experience with CloudStrategies, Dan Thierl observes, “They’re very professional. They follow up, and they provide a quality service!”