

Achieving the modern workplace: How Henkel moved more than 40,000 users from Office 2003 to Office 365 ProPlus in five months



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Here at Henkel, we've been very busy modernizing our IT infrastructure. After upgrading our computers to get everyone on Windows 7, we decided to adopt Microsoft Office 365 for all of our productivity needs. Office 365 is a cloud-based productivity solution that includes Exchange Online, Lync Online, SharePoint Online, and the Office 365 ProPlus client. We had been using Lotus Notes and Office 2003 and felt we were not achieving the full potential of the organization. We wanted to break down siloes, and in the past we depended on email for the majority of communications.

This is why we wanted to invest in a modern, integrated set of tools to support a more productive and modernized work environment. Rather than investing in upgrading old solutions, we opted to make a major leap forward. Office 365 was the perfect fit to make sure we are always providing the latest capabilities going forward.

I'll start by saying the project was a tremendous success. Within five months, we migrated more than 40,000 users worldwide to Office 365 ProPlus. Many people thought we could never achieve that schedule, but we decided to move quickly rather than spend time and money trying to integrate the old and new environments. Our employees are very happy to have the latest version of Office and are taking advantage of new capabilities like integrated presence information and the convenience of simultaneous document editing. A sign of success in changing the email culture is that usage of Lync increased from a handful of users to almost 50 percent of the company in a few months.

Partnering with Microsoft

We had some challenges going in, but were able to work with Microsoft to address each one. We received great support from Microsoft during the sales process, and they made us comfortable with the security and compliance capabilities in Office 365. We're also happy with the ongoing support that Microsoft is putting into the Office 365 service and the

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responsiveness to our needs. We've seen rapid responses to our feedback in the regular updates of new capabilities, such as the recently added ability to control which components of Office we install and improved compression to reduce the size of updates.

Application Compatibility

Perhaps the biggest challenge with the deployment was around application compatibility, both with the initial move and with the regular updates Microsoft makes to Office 365 ProPlus. We had Office 2003 in place for about ten years so there were a lot of applications that interfaced with it. Microsoft typically recommends leaving the existing copy of Office on the machine so that it is available for incompatible applications, but we didn't want to do that since Office 2003 had already passed its end-of-life date.

We cataloged the applications that were centrally managed and provided the application owners access to virtual machines with Office 365 ProPlus to do their testing. We also provided end users with access to test any Lotus Notes plug-ins or macros they might have. In total, we catalogued and tested 1,350 applications.

Overall, the compatibility testing went well, but we had about 20 applications that were not compatible. Most of these were no longer supported by their vendors or were applications we created. We were able to modify or patch most of these applications. For the rest we took advantage of the side-by-side capabilities of Office 365 ProPlus to install a copy of Excel 2007 for the users that required it. It's pretty amazing to me that 99 percent of our applications could go straight from Office 2003 to Office 2013.

We still test application compatibility for our major systems with each monthly update, but we are gaining confidence as more and more vendors actively support Office 365 ProPlus and we begin using the Apps for Office model for new applications. SAP recently announced that its products would support the release cycle, which was a major relief for us. Microsoft told us that they are committed to not significantly changing the object model going forward so our applications should continue to work.

Office Deployment and Updates

When we first considered Office 365 we were worried about our employees having to sign in when using Office. We didn't want a more complicated user-experience. Using ADFS we provide our users with the exact same experience they had before. Setting up ADFS was very straightforward and DirSync did not give us any problems.

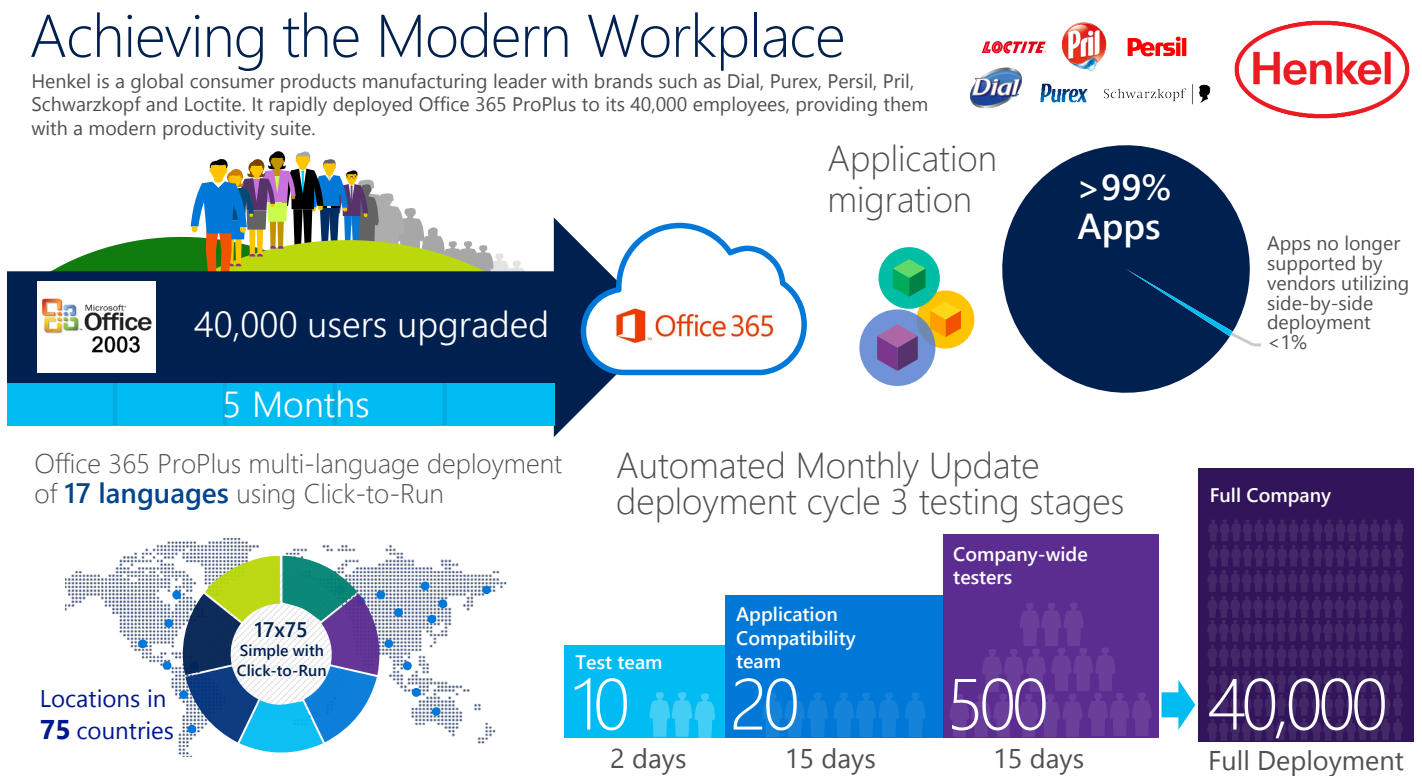
Since Click-to-Run, the deployment technology used by Office 365 ProPlus, is new to us, as is the concept of monthly updates for Office, we had to

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think about the best way to ensure we maintained a reliable environment. We had one Distributed File Service (DFS) server in each of our 63 domains and then used our LANDESK solution to manage the deployment. This is the most convenient way for us to deploy because not all of our sites have direct Internet connections.

Since we have operations in 75 countries, our employees speak many different languages and we typically deploy support for multiple languages on each of our machines. The standard Click-to-Run deployment will install Office in the same language as the operating system, but we wanted to install multiple languages on each machine as we typically install English in addition to any local languages. We solved this with a simple PowerShell script that looks at the languages already installed on the device and installs a copy of Office for each of them.

The initial deployment and activation were very straightforward with less than a two percent failure rate. When we had a failure it was typically due to an incompatible application on a user's machine or a license that had not been assigned. These issues were easy to resolve and the deployment went very quickly.



Preparing for a Culture Change

In IT, we not only changed how we manage the software releases, we also changed the culture of how we interact with our Henkel colleagues. We now have the opportunity to drive more productivity within the organization and how the organization evolves in the future by actively promoting the adoption of new technology. We implemented an extensive user education program to prepare both top management and end users for the new solution. And we developed our own

branding for the Office 365 solution—“Office 365: Simplify your way of working”—and then set out to ensure that everybody was prepared. We held information sessions; sent personalized emails, which were translated into 27 different languages; developed 56 different eLearning modules in ten different languages; and even set up booths in different cafeterias worldwide to answer questions. In addition, we introduced new learning and communication channels that we didn’t have before, like the Office 365 Tube with short video tutorials and so-called MOOC sessions, which are 30-minute webinars with a presentation and Q&A element. By preparing our users, meeting with executives and managers to explain the changes, and setting proper expectations, we were able to complete this major migration with very high levels of user satisfaction. One important KPI for me was that nobody sent an escalation to my boss during the entire process.

Conclusion

So that was our experience. Getting the entire company on the latest version of Office in five months was a great achievement—we expected it to take at least a year. Since it was not difficult for us to migrate from Office 2003, I can only imagine how easy it would be to make the move from Office 2010. The fast, smooth deployment of Office allowed us to move forward with other cloud technologies; we now have Lync Online and Exchange Online deployed across the company and the use of SharePoint Online is growing. We are looking forward to a productive future with Office 365.