

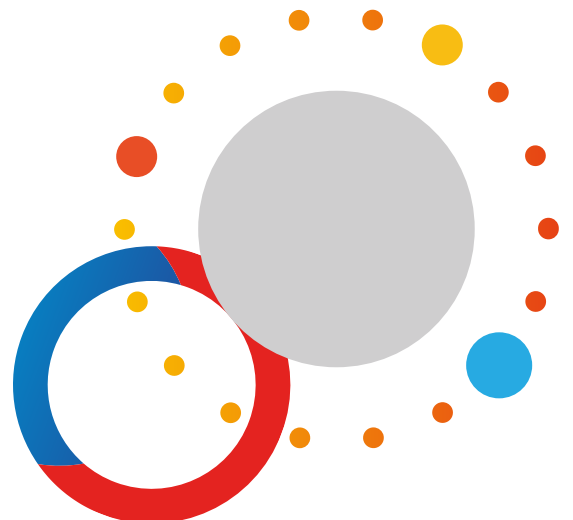
Embracing the Digital Workplace

Greater productivity, rapid solutions,
and autonomous working.



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1 How to organizationally embrace SaaS

Unless you've been living under several rocks for the past year, the phrase 'remote working' has become as commonplace in your vocabulary as 'pass the salt.'

And whilst the events of 2020 might have had you more on the tequila side of salt, there are positives to draw, not least of all the rise of the Digital Workplace.

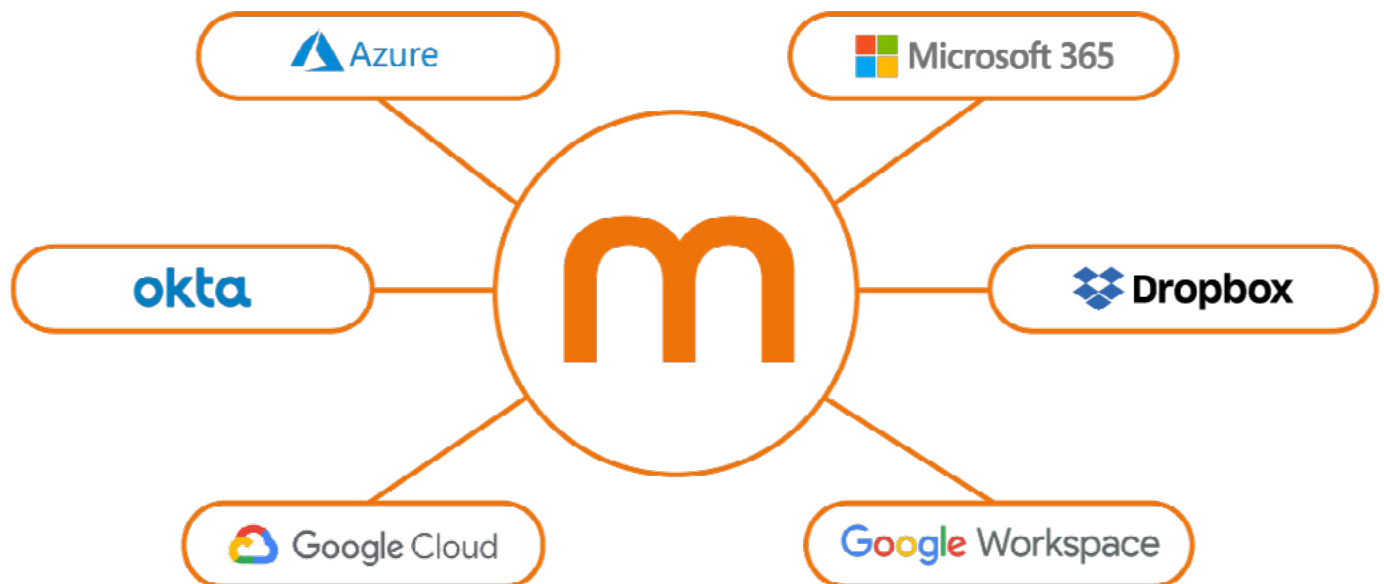
The world has been unified by needing to find digital connections where physical ones haven't been possible. Organizations in particular were forced to adapt and adopt, embracing technology and practices at speed, which allowed for more digitally connected workforces across the globe. Employees have learnt to collaborate in revolutionary ways, utilizing SaaS and cloud technologies to build the future of what will be the new, more flexible, normal – challenging the traditional working model.

But this requires leaders to embrace what comes with this change.

That means giving up the fear about SaaS applications, and recognizing the advantages that come with them:

- Sluggish workloads becoming productive workflows
- Complex project management transformed into interactive, digital kanban boards
- Manage your people with online, secure platforms designed to connect your workforce no matter where they are based
- Timely, admin-heavy tasks being handed over to AI, to free up the people





SaaS can help scale efforts and deliver results for any business, and any team.

Once you understand the advantages, now you need to evaluate what will suit your business. Not every SaaS is created equal, and there are plenty you won't need. Ultimately, you need to assess every one with this question: will it increase productivity?

The good news for business is that software companies are way ahead. We know ultimately that a 'one size fits all' approach will never work, as even two almost-identical businesses need to consider the difference in their teams, structure, and culture. These all come into play when choosing SaaS, because you're changing the way of working.

So, if businesses want a fluid tech infrastructure that isn't dependent on one provider, vendors need to get in the same gear.

Google and Microsoft acknowledge the importance of giving the customer what they want. You can access your Google doc online, or you can download, edit, and save in Microsoft 365. Allowing their technologies to integrate is one of many reasons why these two leaders have an almost-monopoly. They put you first.

Don't be afraid to mix and match vendors to suit. Whilst vendor lock-in is a real issue, take your time and do your research and you'll be able to get the best out of both (or more) worlds.

Did you know? ¹

Microsoft is the largest SaaS provider worldwide

2 Unplugging the IT bottlenecks

With the rise of the Digital Workplace comes a rise in demand, and this is where your support staff are going to feel the burn.

So whilst you're trying to streamline, but you're noticing tickets accelerate, you might wonder whether you've made things worse. IT bottlenecks are an issue in most organizations, but the same streamlining software causing the increase in support requests can be used to solve them.

Giving teams the autonomy to troubleshoot their own issues is an easy way to let go of tasks which don't require IT professionals. Democratize access to solutions, automate processes, and you will see the bottlenecks begin to flow freely.

(But of course, base your autonomies on policies, permissions, and workflows designed by your IT leaders. You're giving up tasks, not control.)

Here's how we give teams the power to be productive:

Email Signature Management

Allow your marketing team to manage your email signatures to help maintain brand consistency and promote marketing messages, without having to ask the IT department for help.

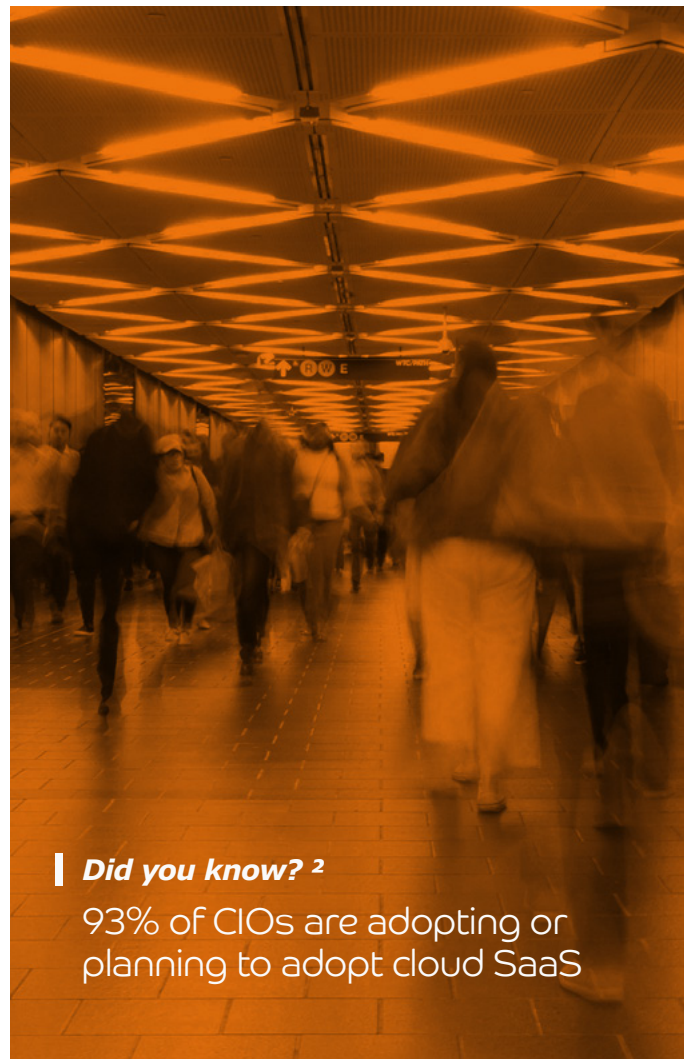
Read our [Email Signature Playbook](#) for everything you need to know.

Onboarding and Offboarding

With the move to the digital workplace, it's paramount you can successfully onboard and offboard users from a safe and secure platform.

Your HR team could be the perfect solution to this process as they are the ones who implement this! By simply giving them permission to manage this feature only, they can onboard a new user when they join, and automatically offboard them when they leave the business in just a few simple steps.

You can read more about our onboarding and offboarding processes [here](#).



| Did you know? ²

93% of CIOs are adopting or planning to adopt cloud SaaS

3 Keeping security up

From the ever tightening data regulations to the astronomic rise of cyber attacks during the pandemic, staying compliant and protecting your business has never been more essential.

And with businesses adopting multiple SaaS applications across a distributed workforce, the security of user data becomes a serious consideration. No longer are users tied into a server where everything is controlled on premise, and this can pose real threats. Moving to the cloud solves a lot of problems, but it's not a silver bullet.

It's important that you comply with your organization's policies and industry regulations, so how do you ensure security and compliance is met?



Step 1

Make sure you have safeguards for your business and its data. Our platform considers every touchpoint and shows you what features you need to consider.

Role Based Access

Employees can be given access to certain features within the platform, but restricted to view other areas. For example a marketing team can access email signature management to control company signatures, but will not be able see or control anything else.

Policy Management

The easiest way to get into a locked room is to have the key. Stop unwanted access by ensuring that you have a secure password policy, requiring your users to create stronger passwords, protecting recovery, and limiting login attempts. You can also double lock access by requiring a user to also provide manual verification using a personal contact method – known as 2 Factor Authentication (2FA). For example, if it's not normal for a user to login outside of business hours, or from a 'potentially dangerous' country CloudM gives you the ability to block access to the domain – even with a valid password.

Reporting

Make sure you can view all of the analytics you need to know for your platform. Extensive Logs gives you a table of any process or error that has occurred in the software, including failed and suspicious logins. Domain Insights also offers an overview of potential issues and improvements that you can rectify to improve the health of your domain before they occur.

Protect your data. Protect your organization. Without compromising.

Step 2

Implement and monitor processes and controls

Make sure the processes are owned by the IT team. They can be delegated, but should never be given up. This means you can spot any unusual behaviour or users. If you know who manages a certain area, you'll be able to spot if a user account doesn't look familiar and instantly investigate it.

Permissions Creep

Empower your users to do their job – not yours as well. As users move through different departments or roles within your organization, they can start to accumulate permissions with most then becoming redundant for their new role, but still having the potential to cause damage to your domain, either maliciously or accidentally through human error.

CloudM makes sure that your users are equipped with the correct tools for their job in your organization, using roles that can be assigned to a group and assigning permissions to a specific Organizational Unit or Smart Team, allowing those permissions to be automatically removed from a user if they are moved out of the group.

With CloudM, you can easily spot this through the logs sections where, for example, a user may have enabled a Smart Team. You will be able to see the following; who this user was, the date and time they initiated the process, their IP address plus additional information on the operation itself (such as the name of the group).

Step 3

Automate wherever you can!

Among the 101 advantages, automation is unparalleled in one thing: eliminating human error. More automation results in fewer mistakes, with a reduced risk of security breaches.

A great example of this is automating the offboarding of users. As soon as an employee leaves the business, their access to business accounts is revoked. It's not on anyone's to-do-list as it's automatically taken care of, as part of the workflow.

4 Keeping costs down

With SaaS applications, you'll probably find that most of them are subscription based.

Ah yes! A great way to avoid paying a hefty sum upfront, but instead you can simply add it to the company credit card and it's forgotten! Until you get bitten...

Costs can easily run away with you if you're not careful. It can be a subscription here, a subscription there, and before you know it, you are paying way more than you originally forecast.

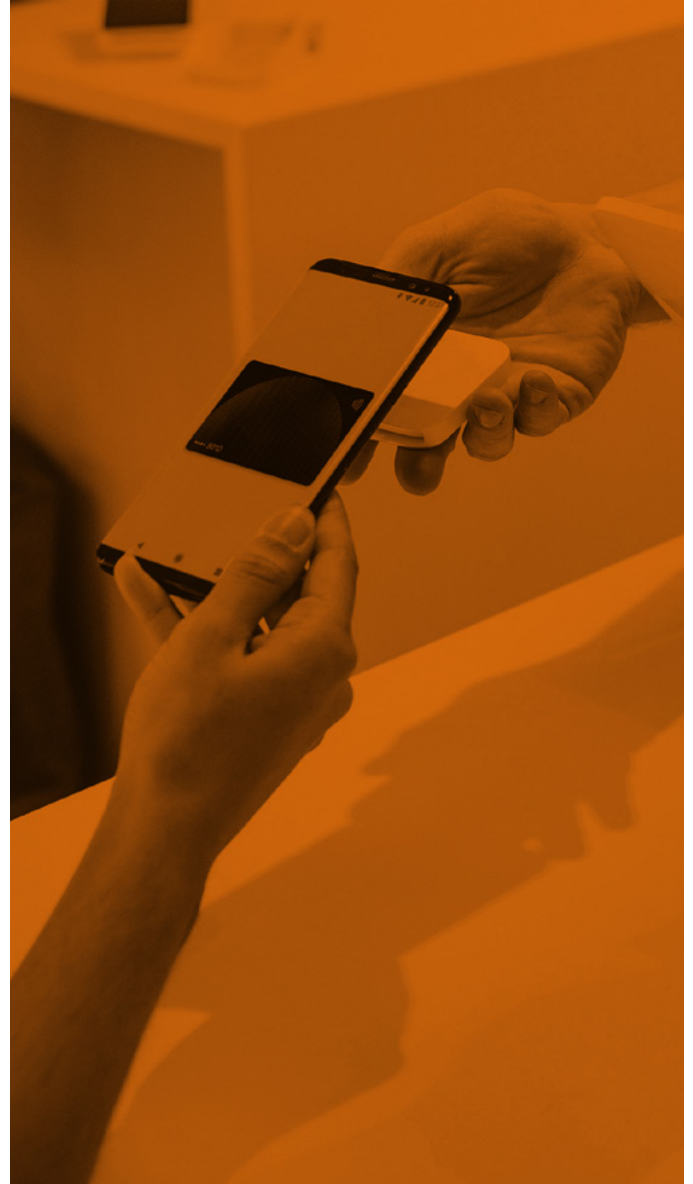
Oh, and we should probably mention it now, ***SaaS has a dirty little secret.***

The subscription-based payment model is actually designed to increase as a cost base, so it's crucial you pay for the applications which aid productivity, and that they don't just become unnecessary costs.

Make sure you have a robust, strategic process to monitor your spending, make sure the platforms align to business objectives and aim to control your license costs.

Using a tool like CloudM can directly assist in this sort of strategy, especially when it comes to user data.

For example, using CloudM you can view the number of unused Microsoft or Google licenses over the last 30 days in your domain. Not only can you see the adoption rate of the productivity suite, but free up licenses not in use, ultimately saving your organization money.



Did you know? ³

73% of organizations indicated nearly all their apps will be SaaS by 2021

5 Be proactive, not reactive



If you are implementing a remote working strategy and really want to utilize the digital workplace effectively, it's important to be proactive to scenarios, to ensure you are getting the most from your chosen application.

If you're not monitoring and evaluating your processes on an ongoing basis, it's hard to identify what is working well and what isn't.

Keep a close observation on the applications that are being used, how much are they being used, and by who.

Keeping track of this will undoubtedly help you justify why you may, or may not, need a certain platform; and it will also help you spot any potential security risks.

Ask yourself these three simple questions:



Q1 What departments are using what applications?



Q2 Who is collaborating with who?

Q3 Is there any strange activity on your domain? (Strange logins etc)

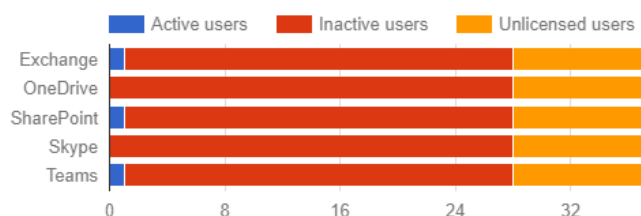
Acting as a proactive IT department ensures you know your users have everything they need to be productive, and being one step ahead of them means you can always justify your processes.

In order to make sure you're not adding extra workload, utilize the automated reporting tools available in such applications to make sure you are receiving accurate information in a timely manner. Once these automated reports are set up, you can easily dissect the information you need to back up any future conversations.

A great example of how this automated reporting works can be demonstrated in our CloudM platform. You can see the adoption rate of Microsoft Products by users in your domain – Active users, Inactive users and Unlicensed users.

Microsoft Products

3 days ago



Did you know? ⁴

By 2020, 85% of small businesses will invest in SaaS solution



6 Upskill yourself

Finally, and most importantly, if you want to implement change you need to lead from the front.

As an IT professional, increasing your knowledge of the digital workplace and sharing this with your management team will ensure you are proving the worth of digital transformation, backed up by know-how.

This sounds obvious but the digital workplace goes beyond tech, and encompasses culture change and employee engagement that will work towards a true transformation.

Understand the importance of connecting your employees no matter where they are in the world, and you can truly appreciate the power the digital workplace can have for collaboration and productivity – creating true business value and a great use case for moving to a more digital workplace.



Here's our top 5 benefits of the digital workplace for company culture

- 1 Encourage Innovation:** Removing daily admin and tech barriers from your employees allows them the freedom to innovate without being stifled
- 2 Attract better talent:** By building a fantastic work environment for your staff, you will, in turn, spark interest from strong candidates
- 3 Overall employee experience:** Give employees a seamless experience by arming them with the correct tools they need to do their jobs
- 4 Reduce business costs:** With more effective ways to meet virtually, travel costs, office spaces etc can all be limited!
- 5 Move with the industry:** Google and Microsoft have always held a flexible working policy, led by employee feedback and in depth research into their wellbeing. Move to a digital workplace and begin to move with worldwide changes and attitude to recognise more flexible working behaviours.

| Did you know? ⁵

80% of businesses already use at least one SaaS application

7 Conclusion

And if you only read one page of this eBook...

Accept and embrace SaaS in your organisation

- Pick the right application, to do the right job, to drive productivity
- Don't be afraid to mix and match vendors
- Accept that this will create new challenges for you, but there are solutions

Remove the IT bottleneck

- Automate tasks
- Democratize your IT: allow HR to offboard, Marketing to control email signatures
- Embrace the power of the cloud and your people could even develop their own solutions to problems with the right tools

Security is different and even more important

- The cloud isn't a silver bullet
- Distributed workforces create new challenges
- Make sure you have safeguards for your business and its data
- Implement and monitor processes and controls
- Automation is the solution for human error

Monitor costs

- Don't let subscription costs mount up
- Cloud technology is designed to always increase as a cost base
- Make sure you have a process to monitor cost, license count, and license usage

Be proactive not reactive

- Keep a close eye on what applications are actually being used
- Have the answers to these questions:
 - Which departments are using which applications
 - Who is collaborating with who?
 - Is there any strange activity on your domain? (strange logins etc)
- Give your users everything they need to be productive, and stay one step ahead
- Use automated and proactive reporting to achieve this

Upskill yourself

- Increase your leaders' knowledge of the digital workplace
- Lead from the front when implementing change (and know your stuff)
- This is more than a new IT system, it's a culture change and a true transformation

Sources

1,2,3,4,5

99 Firms, SaaS Statistics

<https://99firms.com/blog/saas-statistics/#gref>