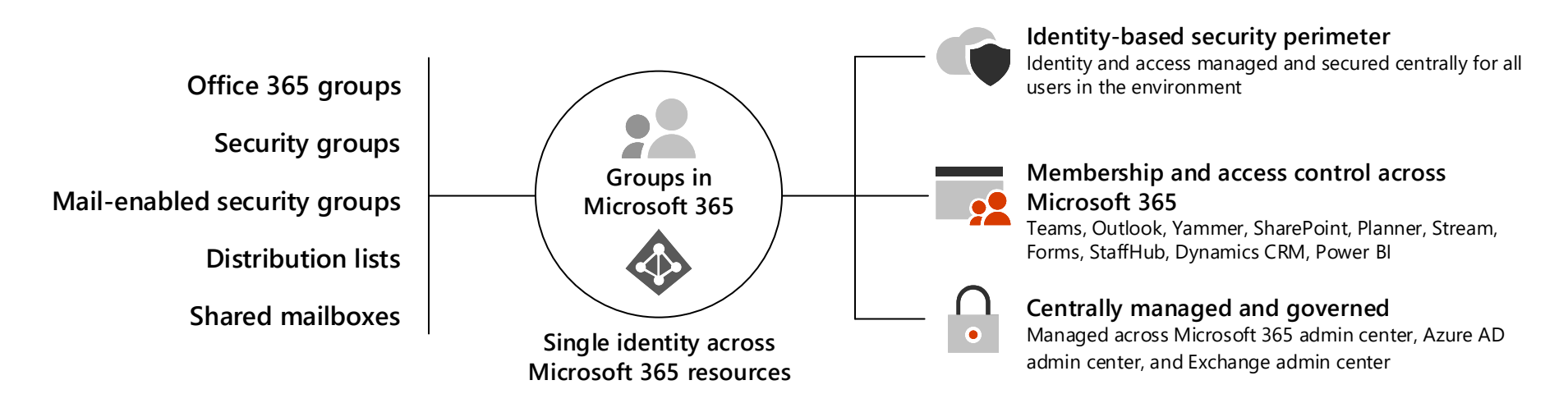**Microsoft**

Groups in Microsoft 365 for IT Architects

What IT architects need to know about groups in Microsoft 365

Microsoft 365 includes five types of groups that are used to manage access to resources and for communication. Group membership is based on Azure Active Directory accounts. As an admin, your team creates some groups to manage conditional access, devices, and other resources.

Many groups are created by members of your organization for collaboration using Teams, SharePoint, and other collaboration tools. While membership in these groups can be highly dynamic, you still manage the underlying Azure AD accounts, including enforcing conditional access, using Azure AD Identity Protection, and other controls to protect your organization.

Office 365 groups
Security groups
Mail-enabled security groups
Distribution lists
Shared mailboxes

Groups in Microsoft 365

Single identity across Microsoft 365 resources

Identity-based security perimeter
Identity and access managed and secured centrally for all users in the environment

Membership and access control across Microsoft 365
Teams, Outlook, Yammer, SharePoint, Planner, Stream, Forms, StaffHub, Dynamics CRM, Power BI

Centrally managed and governed
Managed across Microsoft 365 admin center, Azure AD admin center, and Exchange admin center

Types of groups and where they are created

Groups can be created in several of the admin centers and by users from within apps.

	Security group	Office 365 group	Mail-enabled security group	Distribution list	Shared mailbox
Type of group	Used for granting access to resources and for managing devices.	Used for collaboration. Includes a group email and shared workspaces.	Includes the ability to send mail to a group. Cannot be dynamically managed. Cannot contain devices.	Used for sending notifications to a list of people.	Used when multiple people need to access the same mailbox, such as a support email address.

Where groups can be created

Azure AD

Microsoft 365 admin center

Exchange Admin

Outlook

Teams

SharePoint

Planner

Yammer

Managing groups

Groups can be managed across admin centers. Controls vary depending on the scope of the admin center. For example, Azure AD provides control over dynamic group membership and licensing.

The Exchange admin center provides the most controls for managing mail associated with groups.

Manage all group types		Manage most groups types
Microsoft 365 admin center	**Azure AD admin center**	**Exchange admin center**
• Sort on group type • Manage group members and owners • Create a friendly email address when creating mail-enabled groups • Edit the email address for distribution lists and mail-enabled security groups • Edit name and description • Edit privacy and subscription settings • Allow or prevent outside senders • Delete groups	• Manage all group types, except shared mailbox groups • Manage group members and owners • Manage dynamic group membership • Assign licenses and applications • Assign Azure resources • Review activity (access reviews, audit logs)	• Manage all group types, except security groups • Manage group members and owners • Manage where messages are accepted and rejected from • Allow delegates to send mail from the group • Edit privacy and subscription settings • Change the language for group notifications • Manage additional mail settings for distribution lists, mail-enabled security groups, and shared mailboxes

Governance for admin-created groups

Use naming conventions for groups created by admins so you can find and manage these.

Additional governance practices

Conditional access	Create Office 365 groups in Azure AD to manage access to Microsoft 365 services and other SaaS applications.	**Device management**	Create security groups in Azure AD to manage devices.
Group-based licensing	Create security groups in Azure AD to assign licenses based on groups.	**Azure resources**	Create security groups in Azure AD for managing access to Azure resources.

Collaboration spaces for Office 365 groups

Collaboration spaces for Office 365 groups differ based on where the Office 365 group is created.

While users can create Office 365 groups in Outlook, other apps create Office 365 groups behind the scenes when users create Teams, SharePoint team sites, Planner plans, and Yammer groups.

Where the group is created	Who/what creates it	Shared Outlook inbox	Shared calendar	SharePoint team site and document library	Shared OneNote notebook	Planner
Azure AD	Admin	●	●	●	●	●
Microsoft 365 admin	Admin	●	●	●	●	●
Outlook	User	●	●	●	●	●
Teams	Teams	Hidden	Hidden	●	●	●
SharePoint	SharePoint	●	●	●	●	●
Planner	Planner	●	●	●	●	●
Yammer Office 365 connected	Yammer	Hidden	Hidden	●	●	●
Yammer	Yammer	Hidden	Hidden	●		