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Microsoft Office 365 goes down for users in many countries across Europe

Customers of Microsoft's online productivity suite are unable to log in to Outlook email and other services due to Azure outage



Office 365 is Microsoft's online productivity suite



By **James Titcomb**

2:43PM GMT 03 Dec 2015

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Microsoft's Office 365 services - which provide online access to Word, Excel and Outlook, among other software - was offline for many users across Europe on Thursday due to a problem with Microsoft's cloud computing service, Azure.

Many users reported being blocked from accessing the Office 365 portal, with **Down Detector**, a website that tracks outages, seeing a spike in reports. Many appear to be related to problems signing in to Outlook, Microsoft's email portal.

The issue has now been resolved. A Microsoft spokesman said: "Some customers, particularly those in Europe and the UK, may have been unable to access services earlier today. Services are fully restored and we thank customers for their patience."

The incident appears to be related to Azure, Microsoft's cloud computing platform, on which 365 runs. The **Azure status page** said: "Starting at approximately 09:00 on 3rd Dec, 2015, customers began experiencing intermittent issues accessing Azure services that use, or have dependencies on Azure Active Directory.

"Engineering teams have identified an Azure Active Directory configuration error that is believed to be the root cause of the issue. The team is working on failing over the impacted service components to a different environment. Impact is largely

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centralized to the West Europe and North Europe regions. An update will be provided in 60 minutes, or as events warrant."

Office 365 is Microsoft's subscription service to its Office suite of productivity software. Given the name - which suggests an always-on, constantly available service - the outage is somewhat embarrassing.

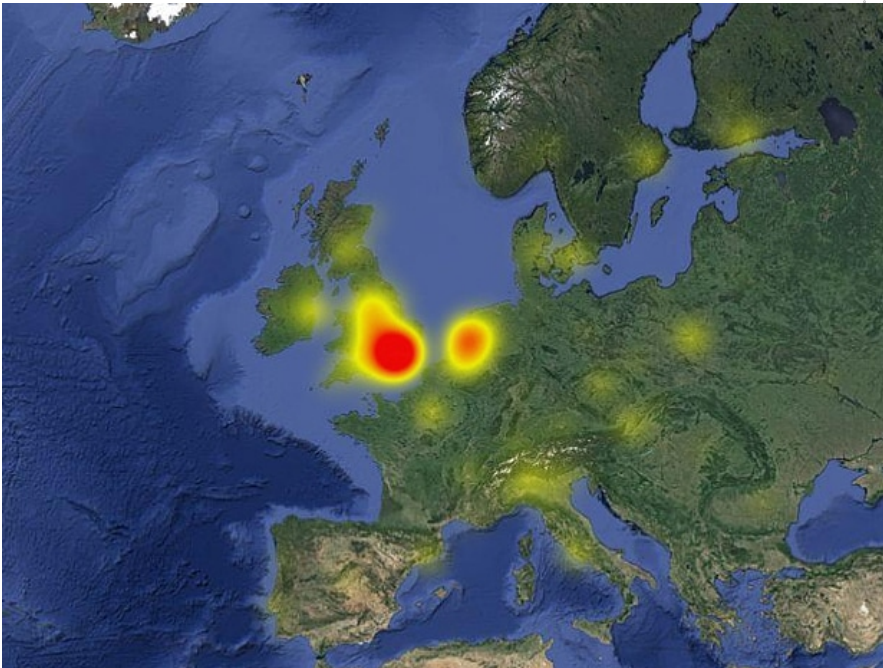
It's called Office 365, so it can be down for 1/4 of a day every year.

— Barry Rowlingson (@geospacedman) December 3, 2015

Microsoft in urgents talks to reconsider renaming Office 365 to Office 364.

— David Legion (@DavidLegion1) December 3, 2015

Although many people have been able to log in using mobile apps or desktop software, the **Office 365 portal** was not responding when users try to log in through a browser. The outage appears largely confined to Western and Northern Europe.



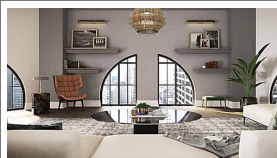
Outages were reported in many parts of Europe by Down Detector Photo: Down Detector

Orlando Scott-Cowley, cyber security strategist at cloud email company Mimecast, said: "For many UK businesses, email is their most critical IT workload and also highly valued by employees.

"It's irrational to expect this not to happen again and as UK productivity and critical services increasingly rely on a handful of global cloud providers, we need to ask wider questions about the nation's business continuity plans."

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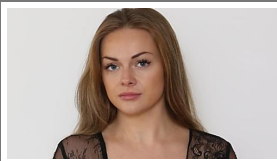
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