

Office 365 Becomes First and Only Major Cloud Productivity Service to Comply With Leading EU and U.S. Standards for Data Protection and Security
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Microsoft announces improvements to its support for security and privacy in Office 365.

REDMOND, Wash., Dec. 14, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Microsoft Corp. today announced that Microsoft Office 365, the company's next-generation cloud productivity service, is the first and only major cloud-based platform to offer leading information privacy and security standards for customers operating in the European Union and United States. As part of its contractual commitment to customers, Microsoft will now sign the EU's model clauses, which will help customers certify compliance with the European Commission's stringent Data Protection Directive, and the U.S.-mandated Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20000822/MSFTLOGO>)

Microsoft also announced the availability of the Office 365 Trust Center. The site provides in-depth information about the privacy and security practices for Office 365 and was recently redesigned to be more accessible and easy to understand. The new site can be accessed at <http://trust.office365.com>.

Compliance Updates

In February 2010, the EU released these standard contractual clauses (commonly referred to as "model clauses") to legitimize the transfer of personal data via international networks to locations outside the European Economic Area (EEA). When included in service agreements with data processors, the model clauses assure customers that appropriate steps have been taken to help safeguard personal data, even if data is stored in a cloud-based service center located outside the EEA. European regulators have the option to request that customers halt the use of a service that hasn't taken appropriate steps to safeguard personal data until they have evaluated the service and deemed it compliant with EU data protection and security standards.

Along with furnishing the model clause provisions, Microsoft has gone a step further than other cloud providers to include a data-processing agreement for EU customers. Some of the 27 member states have more exacting requirements than those of the EU-wide Data Protection Directive. To streamline the use of cloud-based services for customers operating under additional compliance requirements, Microsoft has included with the model clause provisions a robust data-processing agreement that was developed in view of the specifics of member-state regulations.

"Developing cloud-based productivity tools that meet the needs of European businesses means more than simply building apps in a browser," said Jean-Philippe Courtois, president, Microsoft International. "Microsoft has a more complete approach to European data protection and security laws than any other company, and we're proud of the work we've done to ensure the widest range of organizations can move to the cloud with confidence — or choose an equally functional on-premises option."

As the first major cloud-based productivity service to obtain certification under ISO/IEC 27001, a rigorous information security management benchmark, Microsoft submits to a yearly audit of its information security policy by an independent expert and shares the results with its customers. Additionally, Microsoft has developed its online services to provide physical, administrative and technical safeguards that facilitate full compliance with HIPAA requirements.

"Until recently, concerns about the security and privacy of patient data have been the most common barrier to healthcare organizations realizing the full potential of cloud-based technologies," said Michael Robinson, general manager for U.S. Health & Life Sciences at Microsoft. "Microsoft is helping remove that barrier by embedding privacy and security capabilities in Office 365 that enable health organizations to address their HIPAA compliance requirements. Today, Office 365 can help hospitals, insurers and clinics confidently empower their staff to be efficient and productive virtually anytime and almost anywhere while substantially reducing their IT operating costs."

About Office 365

Office 365 brings together Microsoft Office, Microsoft SharePoint Online, Microsoft Exchange Online and Microsoft Lync Online in an always-up-to-date cloud service. With Office 365, moving to the cloud does not require people to change the way they work because it's based on the familiar, industry-leading productivity tools people know and trust. Employees get new ways to work together with ease, on virtually any device or mobile phone,* using familiar applications such as Office that they already know and love. Business owners get the reliability, security features and IT controls they need in the cloud.

More information about Office 365 and regulatory compliance are available at [Office 365 FAQs](#).

About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq: MSFT) is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

*An appropriate device, Internet access and a supported browser and/or carrier network connectivity are required.

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