

WHAT'S NEW IN EXCHANGE 2016 AND OFFICE 365

QuestTM





Introduction

With the wave of new features, enhancements and support policies coming in Microsoft Exchange 2016, you might be looking for a quick list of what's changed. Perhaps you're trying to determine whether Exchange 2016 is worth moving to. Maybe you are already convinced it is and are seeking talking points for your management. Or perhaps you're just looking to satisfy your curiosity. In any case, this e-book highlights the 14 most interesting and valuable changes you should know about.

1. THE EXCHANGE HYBRID CONFIGURATION WIZARD NOW RUNS FROM THE CLOUD.

The Exchange hybrid configuration wizard wears many hats: It configures federation, authentication, cross-premises mail flow, availability and security. With tie-ins across such a wide spectrum, it's no surprise this wizard has had its share of bugs and issues since it first shipped with Exchange 2010.

However, now the wizard's code resides in the cloud, so it can be analyzed, debugged and optimized by Microsoft constantly, without a support incident being created to look at the customer's environment. Feedback can be submitted online. Look for a more stable and better performing version of the hybrid configuration wizard in the near future. The wizard will also work with a future cumulative update of Exchange 2013.

2. ALL DEPLOYMENTS ARE NOW MULTI-ROLE.

Microsoft has been advocating multi-role deployment since Exchange 2010 — it's simpler, more scalable, better balanced and ultimately cheaper since fewer Exchange licenses are required. The minimum roles required for an Exchange deployment went from three in Exchange 2010 (Hub Transport, Client Access and Mailbox, with Unified Messaging and Edge being optional) to two in Exchange 2013 (Client Access and Mailbox, with Edge being optional).

Some customers chose to deploy single-role Exchange 2013 servers against Microsoft's best practices, but with Exchange 2016, they'll have no choice in the matter. Both client access and mailbox components are now merged into one server role that behaves much like a 2013 multi-role server. Therefore, there is no longer a Client Access role or a Mailbox Server role — just an Exchange 2016 Server role. So actually, this

section's title is a bit of a misnomer, since all Exchange 2016 installations will be single-role: the Exchange Server 2016 role. Customers who deployed single-role Exchange 2013 servers will have to adapt.

3. EXCHANGE 2016 NOW SUPPORTS PROXY FROM EXCHANGE 2013.

A common pain point during Exchange migrations has been the need to completely build out your new load-balanced Exchange servers to scale. This followed from Microsoft's recommendation to point your current namespace to the newest version of Exchange being deployed, which meant that version needed to be able to support your entire user population's traffic load. This made sense because a newer code base should understand how to proxy to an older code base, but not necessarily vice versa.

Thankfully, Exchange 2013 will now know how to proxy back to a 2016 mailbox, provided Exchange 2013 is running the appropriate (but yet to be announced) cumulative update. This will make transitions from Exchange 2013 to Exchange 2016 much easier.

4. THERE WILL BE NO MORE DAG CONTENT INDEXING OVER THE NETWORK.

This has been a highly requested feature since Exchange 2010. In an Exchange 2010/2013 database availability group (DAG), not only did Exchange transaction logs get shipped over the network, but content indexing traffic (used to ensure that users can quickly search their mailboxes) also went from the passive database copies to the active database copy. This traffic traveled over the MAPI/public networks, even if you had specified dedicated replication networks in the DAG. In some cases, this content indexing traffic could be up to 1.5 times the volume of the replication traffic itself — putting a huge burden on the network.



With Exchange 2016, we'll be seeing a significant reduction in the amount of bandwidth used between DAG nodes because there will be no more DAG content indexing over the network. Therefore, you'll be able to have more copies of your databases while reducing your network costs. This feature, which is expected sometime in the 2016 release cycle, is a huge win for Exchange experts and network admins alike.

5. OUTLOOK 2016 WILL PREFER ONLINE SEARCHES.

Starting with 2013, Exchange started to use Fast Search and Transfer (FAST), a Microsoft acquisition, for its search engine. Users using Outlook Web App (OWA) or Outlook in online mode could query their mailboxes for keywords and phrases using FAST content indexes stored on the Exchange Server. Windows desktop search or Google Desktop could be used to search the local .OST file of an Outlook profile, but growing mailbox sizes has made that an impractical solution for components that were never meant for 25GB mailboxes.

With increasingly large mailboxes, a robust search engine is a must, and Microsoft has certainly delivered in Exchange 2016. When connected to an Exchange 2016 mailbox, Outlook 2016 will prefer searching the server-side content indexes instead of the local .OST file. However, if

your Outlook client is in offline mode, the local search components will still be used, slowing the search.

6. EXCHANGE IS NOW SUPPORTED IN AZURE (AZURE PREMIUM STORAGE REQUIRED).

First came the ability to place a DAG file share witness in Azure. Now, customers who are willing to pay for the processing power can stretch a DAG node itself into Azure, or maybe even a hybrid server. However, for this option to be supported in production, you'll need to be using Azure Premium Storage, which means additional costs.

While this announcement does spur interesting discussions, Microsoft has been quick to state this solution isn't for everyone. Not only will an on-premises or Office 365 solution likely be cheaper, but planning and sizing Exchange on servers that you don't control adds design and operational complexity.

7. PUBLIC FOLDER DATA CAN BE PLACED ON HOLD.

Modern public folders in Exchange 2016 can be placed on hold. This feature is of particular interest for organizations concerned with compliance and discovery. If you need to keep public folder data in its original state during a legal or compliance request, you can place data

stored in modern public folders on hold for later querying and export. More details about this feature should be made publicly available when Exchange 2016 is released.

8. OFFICE WEB APPS SERVER IS REQUIRED FOR VIEWING AND EDITING IN OWA.

For rich browser-based viewing of Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote documents, customers will need to deploy an Office Web Apps server and an accompanying namespace, as illustrated in Figure 1. This server component (which cannot be installed on the same operating system as Exchange) enables viewing, editing and replying capabilities in OWA. Deploying an Office Web Apps server is optional, but organizations that depend heavily on OWA may find the productivity enhancements worth their while.

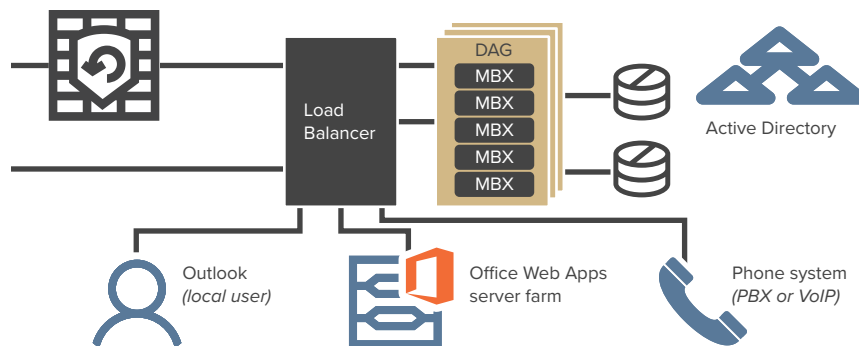


Figure 1. Where an Office Web Apps Server would fit into an Exchange 2016 design¹

¹ "Meet Exchange Server 2016" presentation at Microsoft Ignite, <https://channel9.msdn.com/events/ignite/2015/FND2204>

9. EXCHANGE 2007 AND OUTLOOK 2007 WILL NOT BE SUPPORTED.

Exchange 2013 required Exchange 2003 be completely removed from the forest and disallowed Outlook 2003 connections. Similarly, Exchange 2016 will block installation when Exchange 2007 is detected in the environment and prevent Outlook 2007 clients from connecting to the Exchange 2016 server. As of this writing, Outlook 2010 SP2, Outlook 2013 SP1 and Outlook 2016 are the only supported clients that can connect to an Exchange 2016 mailbox.

10. WINDOWS SERVER 2008 R2 IS THE MINIMUM DOMAIN AND FOREST FUNCTIONAL LEVEL.

According to Microsoft's announcement at the Ignite 2015 conference, Windows Server 2008 R2 — not Windows Server 2008 — will be the minimum domain and forest functional level for deploying Exchange 2016. This requirement is subject to change before release. We may never know if Exchange 2016 actually uses the new Active Directory functionality unlocked by the newer Windows Server version, but the Exchange 2016 team is certainly concerned with staying consistent with the other Microsoft product teams.

11. EXCHANGE ONLINE ADVANCED THREAT PROTECTION (ATP) IS SUPPORTED.

ATP can be used in either a completely Office 365 environment or a hybrid environment. It provides features such as safe attachments, time-of-click protection against malicious URLs, and advanced tracking and reporting capabilities. Organizations considering a move to the cloud can get a feel for the level of mail protection they can expect by first using ATP with on-premises Exchange.



12. OFFICE 365 GROUPS

The new Office 365 Groups feature enhances productivity by creating a shared workspace where group members can conveniently collaborate and quickly get stuff done. The workspace can include email, conversations, files and calendar events (see Figure 2). This new feature uses a range of building blocks, including Exchange, Skype for Business, Yammer, Delve, OneDrive for Business, SharePoint, OneNote and Azure.

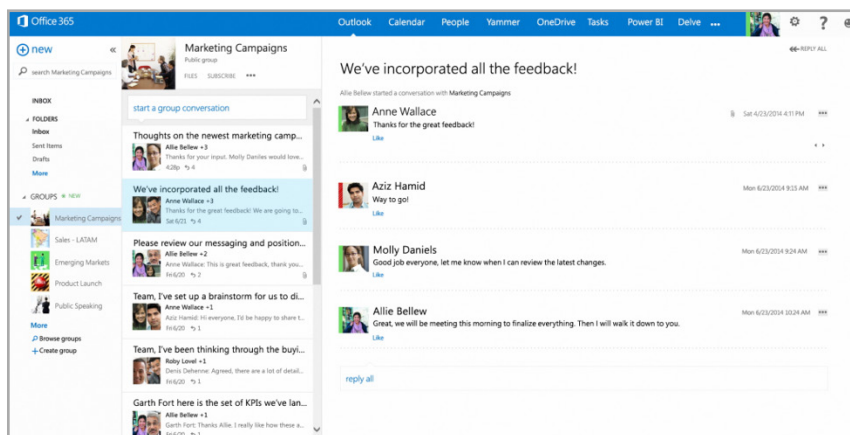


Figure 2. Office 365 Groups simplifies collaboration²

² "Delivering the first chapter of Groups in Office 365," <https://blogs.office.com/2014/09/25/delivering-first-chapter-groups-office-365/>

13. OFFICE 365 MOBILE DEVICE MANAGEMENT (MDM)

With Windows Intune and new Exchange 2016 ActiveSync functionality on display, Microsoft becomes a one-stop shop for the bring-your-own-device (BYOD) world (see Figure 3). Customers may find value in piloting devices with the holistic Microsoft solution even if they're currently using a third-party product or service.



Figure 3. Office 365 now offers mobile device management capabilities.

14. OFFICE 365 DELVE

Powered by Office Graph, Delve shows you information based on what you're working on and what's trending around you (see Figure 4). The coolest part of Delve is the level of transparency it gives you into what your colleagues are working on and how best to interact with them. This is really where we see Office 365's various products and services come together to accomplish every organization's end game: being more productive.

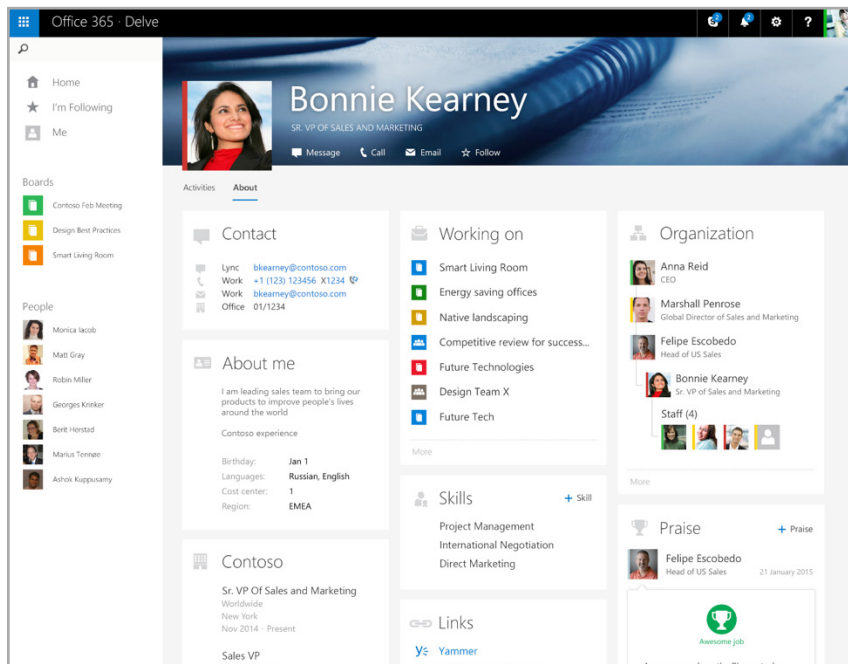


Figure 4. The new Profile experience in Delve³

Learn more at
quest.com/solutions/exchange/

³ "New Office Delve People Experiences in Office 365," <https://blogs.office.com/2015/04/14/new-office-delve-people-experiences-in-office-365/>



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