Microsoft 365

Nurture customer trust with built-in security

Building a culture that values security is relevant to your business, no matter the industry or size of the company. But if you don't have a dedicated security team like many small and medium-sized businesses, it can be a struggle to understand the security capabilities of a given technology and what responsibilities fall to you, let alone determine which security technology solution is right for your business.

Your to-do list for implementing security is significant:

✓ You have to consider if the policies, technologies and personnel you have in place can enable seamless communication and collaboration without compromising the organisation's security needs, including the security needs of your customers.

✓ Your data security policy should show customers how you're dedicated to securing their data, especially as you add or remove employees, vendors, partners, devices, data and software solutions.

✓ You must also understand the security capabilities of the solutions your business uses for communication and collaboration.

✓ Security is crucial for collaborating on sensitive documents, and every bit of additional complexity in your file storage system increases the chance of risk and reduces your team's efficiency.

Once you've checked all these boxes, you have to ensure that as your business and processes evolve, your security measures can scale at the same pace.

Fortunately, there are collaboration tools with built-in security available, like Microsoft 365.

"I've talked to a lot of small business owners who think, 'I'm too small to be a target for hackers.' The reality is, you're a target at any level, whether you're a five-person start-up, a 50-person small business or a global organisation with 500 employees."

William Peteroy
Chief Technology Officer
Gigamon
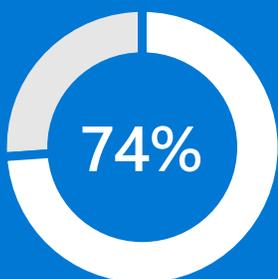
74% of owners of small and medium-sized businesses believe they aren't likely to be attacked – yet 43% of data security breaches target small businesses.[1]

[1] 'The State of Security for Small and Medium-Sized Businesses', Microsoft, 2019.

Quick security tips and tools

Forrester found that having resources available in one cloud-based location, Microsoft Teams (part of Microsoft 365), can reduce your team's downtime by 14.6% and make security and compliance easier.[2]

Combined with implementing a few smart practices, policies and permissions around secure data use and sharing, Microsoft 365 can empower your employees to collaborate effectively and drive value for your customers. Keeping customer data secure is critical for establishing and maintaining their trust. This isn't just an imperative for business leaders – it can be a potential competitive differentiator.

[2] 'The Total Economic Impact™ of Microsoft Teams', Forrester, 2019.
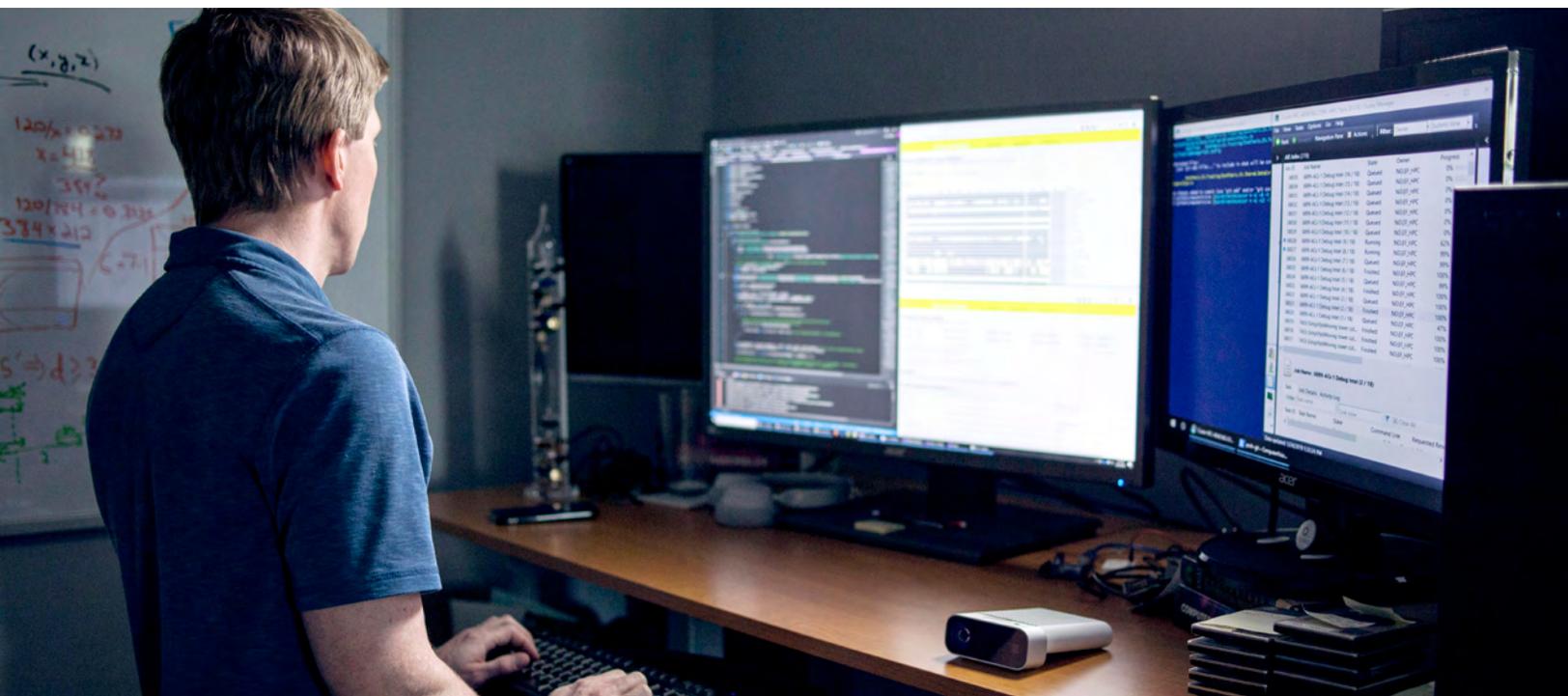
For Gigamon, a network and security technology company with headquarters in Santa Clara, California, smart and comprehensive security is integral to the business' operations objectives and product offering. William Peteroy, CTO at Gigamon and overall cybersecurity expert, recommends these four steps for securing your business and customer data:

Enable multifactor authentication for all your users and accounts, whenever possible, to reduce the risk of an attack.

Craft policies and permissions for all users and devices accessing your systems, including contractors – especially if their access is meant to be temporary.

Ask cloud vendors you're considering working with about the security capabilities of the tool and the vendor's security responsibilities, as well as your own.

If you allow employees to use their own devices for work (such as mobile phones), create a policy that governs how these devices access your data. Keep track of all devices used to access your systems, and install access-control software to ensure compliance with your security policies.

The Microsoft Security Assessment enables you to quickly evaluate how well your business is protected from cybersecurity risks and get specific recommendations to improve the security of your business.

Microsoft 365

Read more in this series
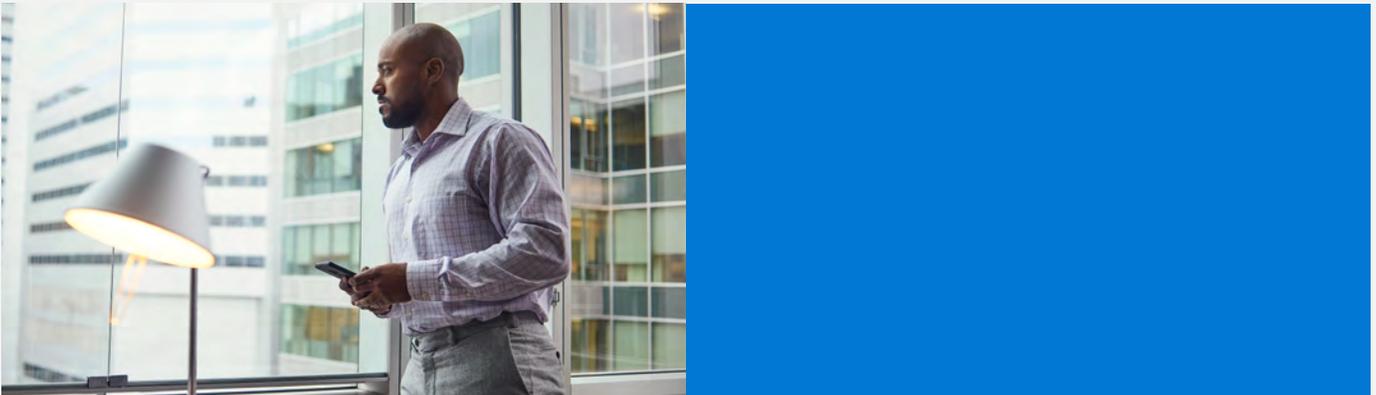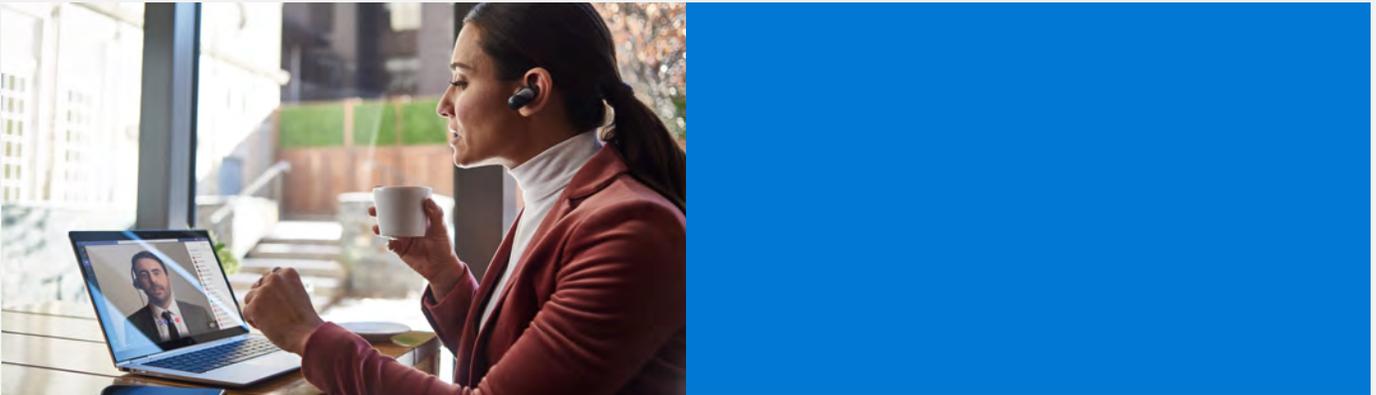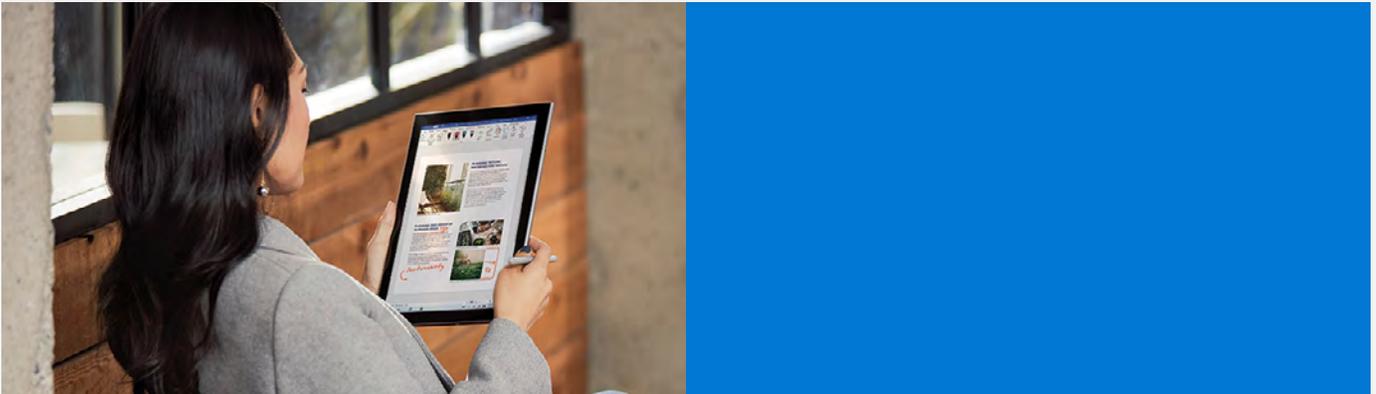
Security with Microsoft 365

When you combine effective collaboration with robust data security practices, the upshot is huge. You can mitigate risk, deliver more value, improve customer trust and increase your chances of writing your own business success story.

As your business evolves, you'll face an increasing number of cyberthreats that can be addressed by making security central to collaboration. Learn how to make security central to collaboration, while becoming a better guardian of business and customer data.