Features of Microsoft Online Services

Exchange Online is one of several services hosted by Microsoft and available from Microsoft Online Services. These Internet-based offerings are designed to make it easier for businesses to rapidly and cost effectively access up-to-date communications and collaboration technologies.

Each service delivers business-class reliability and reduces the burden of performing routine IT management tasks such as installation, provisioning, ongoing maintenance, patches, updates, and upgrades.

Exchange Online subscribers benefit from a set of features that are common to all Microsoft Online Services offerings:

- **Secure access:** Microsoft Online Services are accessed via 128-bit Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption. Anyone who intercepts a communication sees only encrypted text.

- **Business continuity:** Redundant network architecture is hosted at geographically dispersed Microsoft data centers to handle unscheduled service outages. Data centers act as backups for each other: If one fails, the affected customers are transferred to another data center with limited interruption of service.

- **Intrusion monitoring:** Microsoft continuously monitors the Microsoft Online Services systems for any unusual or suspicious activity. If Microsoft detects such activity, it investigates and responds appropriately. In the unlikely event that a significant incident occurs, the customer is notified.

- **Security audits:** Ongoing assessment of the Microsoft Online Services infrastructure ensures installation of the latest compliance policies and antivirus signatures, along with high-level configuration settings and required security updates.

- **High availability:** Microsoft Online Services have a 99.9 percent scheduled uptime. If a customer's service is affected, Microsoft Online Services offers financial remedies subject to the terms and conditions of the service level agreement (SLA).

- **Support:** Web form and phone support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for the service administrator.

- **Administration Center:** This easy-to-use Web site is made available to company service administrators for managing all Microsoft Online Services. After logging on to the Administration Center, service administrators can perform a number of common tasks such as adding and deleting users, adding contacts and distribution lists in Exchange Online, and creating and configuring Microsoft SharePoint Online sites. The Administration Center is also where service administrators can download software, such as the Microsoft Online Services Sign In application, Directory Synchronization tool, and Migration tools.

- **My Company Portal:** Users can log on to the My Company Portal Web site to launch Microsoft Online Services. They can access services such as e-mail, create a SharePoint site, download the Sign In application—and more.

- **Sign In application:** This tool conveniently allows Microsoft Online Services end users to sign in once and access all services without being prompted repeatedly for their password.

- **Virus filtering:** Microsoft Online Services helps guard against online threats. Microsoft Forefront™ Online Security for Exchange automatically removes viruses and spam in incoming and outgoing e-mail. Microsoft Forefront Security for SharePoint scans for viruses in intracompany e-mail and in all documents that reside in SharePoint Online sites.

- **Directory Synchronization tool:** For subscribers with on-premises Active Directory® service deployment, this tool helps keep the on-premises Active Directory and the Microsoft Online Services directory in sync.

Microsoft Exchange Online Standard Service Description