Petri Webinar Brief
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Moving Between Cloud Tenants: Technical Considerations

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Overview

Office 365 tenant-to-tenant migrations are a major challenge for organizations of all sizes. While Microsoft has introduced some cross-collaboration between tenants, they don't yet have a good way to move data and workloads between tenants. As mergers, acquisitions & divestitures become commonplace and we continue to see a large uptick in the use of the Office 365 service, we technologists need to adapt and prepare for these complex projects.

Context

In this webinar, you will learn the questions to ask prior to a tenant-to-tenant migration, how to plan for your Office 365 tenant-to-tenant migration, identifying what to move, and methods of tenant-to-tenant migration for Office 365.

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Key Takeaways

Why Tenant-to-tenant Migrations are Problematic

Because of the nature of cloud services, where competing companies could be using the same cloud, you don't want the Coke recipe ending up in the Pepsi files; the focus is to keep everything separate. Adoption of these services was built around the idea that Microsoft could effectively keep data safe, secure, and isolated from other content stored on its servers.

Migrations between tenants are hard projects because not all data migrates. And some of the data that does migrate, may not appear correctly post-migration. When a lot of data is involved, migrations can be slow, they can have a significant user impact, and if this is happening during a merger, acquisition, or divestiture, there are further complexities when trying to combine or split data from two different organizations.

The good news is that you are not alone. Microsoft is slowly making this process easier and Microsoft partners are also streamlining the process as well.

Definitions

When migrating tenants, there are a few key definitions that you should know; they are listed below:

Staged/Cutover: When you have too much data, too many people, or the project is too large to do in one move, you work in stages to move the assets in groups, rather than one large migration. A cutover is when you can do everything at once on a given date/weekend.

Merger: Two equals coming together – when two firms of a similar size join together.

Acquisition: When a larger company typically buys a smaller company – migrations are traditionally driven by the larger company in this scenario.

Divestiture: When you sell off an existing part of a company to another company.

Spin-Off: A flavor of divestiture, when a part of a company becomes its own entity.

Transition Service Agreement (TSA): The agreement of how the companies involved in the merger/ acquisition/divestiture will operate during the transition phase. This is an important focus for technologists to understand the timeline or deadline to migrate, what the supporting firm will offer, and other important considerations.

Questions to Ask

When preparing for a migration, it is essential to know what challenges you will likely encounter. In the webinar, Mike provides starter questions that will help better prepare your company (and your data) for the tenant migration.

What Workloads Move

When planning for your migration, it's important to understand that data and Microsoft workloads typically fall into three categories. While migrating the "easy" workloads may sound like the simple part, it can be quite complex;

| Easy	Does Not Move/Difficult	Caution
Exchange	Delve	SharePoint
OneDrive For Business	Flow	Power BI
SharePoint?	Forms	PowerApps
	Sway	CRM
	Streams/Video	Public Folders
	Yammer	Azure Applications
	To-Do	Teams
	Planner	

however, when compared to the others, these are generally the easier tasks. The middle column is an area that can create friction with migration. Mike notes that these products often result in a data abandonment scenario or it's a highly manual process to move that content to the new tenant.

Microsoft Teams is one of Microsoft's newer products, some of the content can be moved but not all of it will migrate easily, if at all. For example, to date there is not a method to migrate Microsoft Teams chat data. Quadrotech does have a method to recreate the team, re-add members, and migrate the files tab.

Easy Items

While most of the 'Easy' content is well documented and understood, there are a few items that you need to be aware of before moving data.
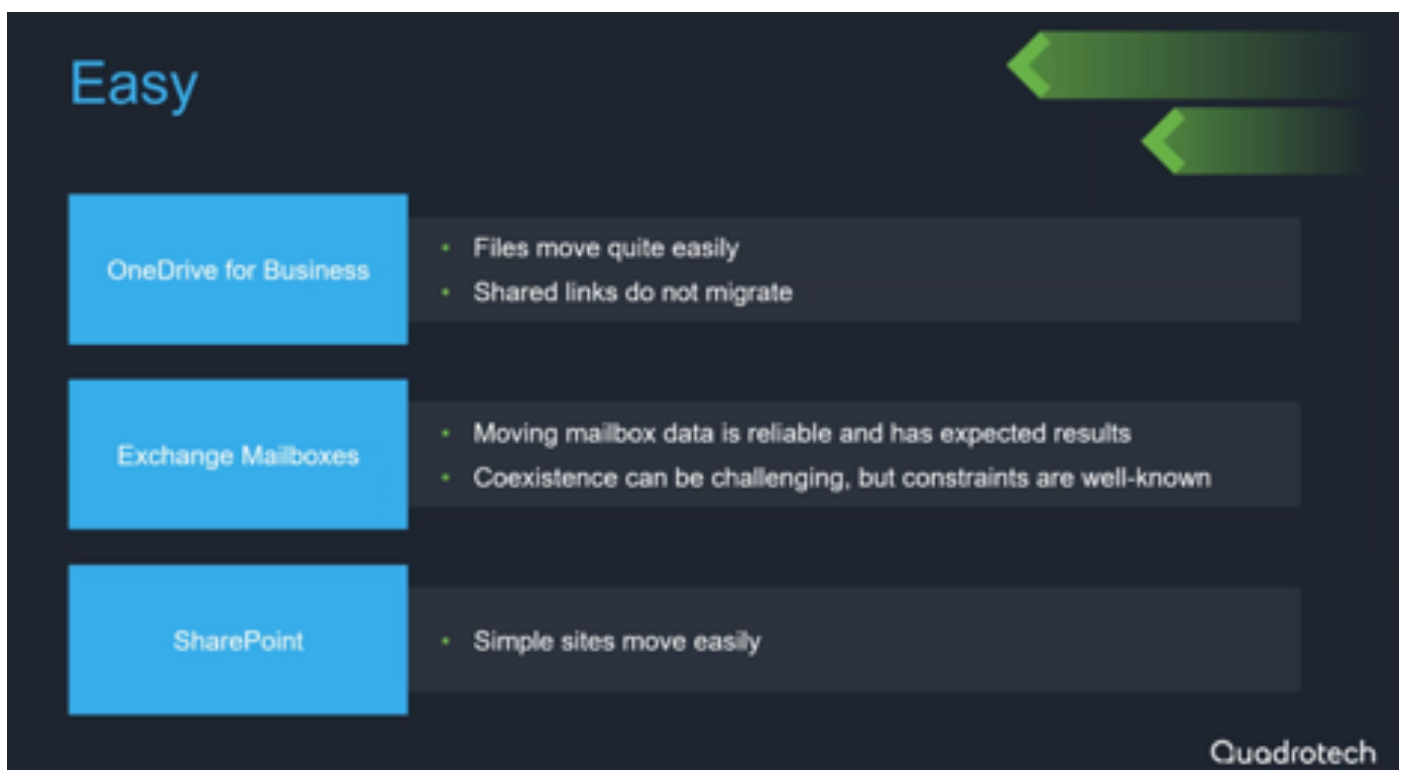
If your company relies heavily on shared links in OneDrive for Business, those items will not migrate to the new tenant. Moving Exchange and basic SharePoint sites is much easier than most other tasks. These processes are well documented and have reliable and expected results when moving tenants.
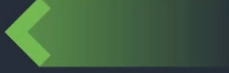
Does Not Move/Difficult Items

When looking at harder to move data, you need to be aware of what the application is communicating with and what backend data it touches. If it touches an Azure service, then the Azure service needs to move at the same time.

Keep in mind that if you do move an Azure service, it will need to be re-authenticated post migration. When it comes to Azure workloads, each product being hosted is a migration project in itself. If Azure is the backend for other systems, like a PowerBI dashboard, the dashboard would need to be setup again post-move.

In this category, many of these services are interconnected which means you need to move all the components at the same time. This is where a project manager can become a valuable asset to your migration.

Does Not Move/Difficult

PowerApps & Flow	• Applications and Flows rely on data from other sources, like SharePoint • Users must manually export/import
Power BI	• May be connected to Office 365 data, or custom data connectors • Users must manually export/import
Stream	• Video isn't stored in a location that can be automatically migrated • Users must manually export/import

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Does Not Move/Difficult

Planner	• Plans and tasks often link to content as well as people • No migration path
Yammer	• Data can be exported, but not re-imported and re-built • No migration path
Azure Workloads	• Each situation is custom

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Caution

When it comes to Teams, SharePoint, and Domains, moving the data is possible but there are a few caveats that need to be understood before the migration starts.

While some Microsoft Teams data can be moved, chat logs, at this time, do not migrate as the API does not exist. In the future, Microsoft will make this possible, but the feature is currently not implemented.

With basic SharePoint data, migrations are straightforward. But if you have custom JavaScript or PowerBI dashboards, this can complicate the process and needs to be fully documented before you attempt to migrate the content.

Project Challenges

There are a number of challenges beyond specific application migrations that you should understand, primarily the speed of business vs. migration speed. In a tenant to tenant migration, data moves slower than migrating on-premises where you can move hard drives across town.

Proper due diligence is key to a successful migration. Even though you are moving from one cloud service to another cloud service, this does not mean everything will work once migrated. Lack of documentation post migration can be a significant cause of extending the migration time.

And always keep in mind the end user, the #1 issue Mike sees out in the real world is the reconfiguration of the mobile device. Having good procedures and communicating how to reconfigure these endpoints can stop many calls from reaching the help desk.

Successful Projects

Successful migrations are not impossible and with the correct tools and procedures in place, you can make a tenant to tenant migration process much easier.

Proper planning, such as gathering as much useful information as you can, mapping source to targets, and planning for data that won't move, will pay big dividends during and post migration.

Further, using third-party tools like Cloud Commander, Radar Reporting and collection scripts from Quadrotech can save time and money by reducing the overall time it takes to work on a migration.

As you begin your process of exploring options to migrate from one tenant to another, Quadrotech has the software and resources available to make this process easier and the expertise to make sure that it is done correctly. Contact the Quadrotech team to learn more.