



MICROSOFT 365 Q&A WITH ANDY BEVAN

Andy Bevan, head of cloud and digital transformation at Daisy, discusses how to deliver a successful Microsoft 365 rollout

Daisy provides Microsoft 365 migration services, licensing and ongoing best practice management to organisations of all sizes.

With around 35,000 Microsoft cloud solution provider (CSP) licenses under management, in organisations ranging in size from 100 to more than 5,000 seats, Daisy is able to deliver its services tailored to fit every use case.

Working across a broad range of sectors, Daisy has carried out a wide variety of implementation and migration projects, bringing customers into the Microsoft Cloud from on-premises systems, introducing Teams collaboration - at speed, as a result of the pandemic - or reshaping the unified communications strategy.

We catch up with Head of Cloud and Digital Transformation, Andy Bevan. He reveals how Daisy can help businesses with their Microsoft 365 rollout, the benefits of working with a partner and the key factors a business must consider before embarking upon a migration...

Andy, can you start by telling us how Daisy can help businesses with their Microsoft 365 rollout?

Of course. While we have a broad range of services at our disposal, the whole process starts with a consulting engagement. We work closely with every customer to understand their specific current situation, their desired outcomes and what the constraints might be in preventing a successful journey to the cloud. Above all, though, it's about determining their specific use case and maximising their benefit in moving to the Microsoft 365 operating model.

Added to that is our direct CSP status, which means we can procure and administer licences on our customers' behalf. Then we have professional services that allow us to design, configure and migrate – and that includes users, data or other services being migrated to Microsoft 365. Apply a wrapper of security and training, as well as the ongoing management of the Microsoft 365 environment, and we've got a very strong set of tools at our disposal to help our customers.

What are the key benefits of working with a partner such as Daisy, instead of trying to manage a Microsoft 365 rollout by yourself?

One of the big things we bring to the table is our understanding and expertise across a range of use cases in different verticals in different environments. That means that we can bring out the best in Microsoft 365 for the organisation we're working with at the time.

We can also help companies avoid the little things that disrupt a migration. It could be not making the best of your licensing entitlements, or it could be piecemeal migration of email solutions impacting your business operation.

Another area we cover comprehensively is data protection. You need to consider backup or archive of data, especially if you're working in a high compliance environment where you must retain data under specific conditions and demonstrate that you have done so.

Microsoft has a hugely strong portfolio of course, but there are certain additive services out there that are worthy of consideration, whether that's using a third-party backup solution or a third-party mail security or archiving solution.

Just by virtue of moving to the cloud, don't assume Microsoft has taken care of everything. With our breadth of experience we understand Microsoft's shared responsibility model in depth and can help an organisation identify and bridge any gaps we find.

What are the main factors companies need to consider before embarking on a Microsoft 365 rollout?

Even before we consider the actual migration, it's so important to understand the Microsoft 365 ecosystem and its capabilities well. Naturally, with the migration process there are many technicalities to consider, but it's been well rehearsed over the past few years by experienced people like Daisy who understand how to do it successfully.

What an organisation should really consider quite carefully though, is what they expect from Microsoft 365 and understand its capabilities and the art of what's possible. You could just say 'I've got a hosted Exchange solution and I've got some file servers with my data, and I use Microsoft Teams for IM, presence and internal calling.' But rather like businesses in the 1980s, where they simply computerised their paper based systems, they didn't really benefit. All that happened was that they continued doing what they'd always been doing just that bit quicker.

The companies that took the opportunity to see 'how can we do things differently?', were the ones who benefitted most from computerisation. The same applies to the cloud. How do you use it well to positively affect your business outcomes?

What are the things that a company might overlook when considering a migration to Microsoft 365?

Companies shouldn't just focus on the business functionality of Microsoft 365.

As an example, it's important to look at authentication and security. How will you bake that into your overall design so that it becomes seamless?

Selecting the right licence for the use-case is also important. Obviously, there are the kiosk-based services where it's entirely cloud based, but you might need a more traditional approach where you have the cloud services, but have the ability to use the client software independently of the cloud. There are all sorts of nuances in making that decision and it's really important to be clear about what your users actually need.

By the same token, you might want a function that would require you to go from an E3 to an E5 subscription, which is going to come at an additional cost per seat. Alternatively, you could stick at an E3 licence and buy an additive service that provides the specific function you're looking for.

For example, you might only use Office 365 E3 but you want Intune to manage your endpoint devices. You could get it included just by changing to a Microsoft 365 subscription if you're prepared to pay the full additional cost - but by working with you, we can help work out the best license combination to fit your specific target requirements at lower cost.

Can you give us any specific examples of how working with Daisy has benefited a customer using Microsoft 365?

Sure. We were able to help unify operations for a disparate organisation with multiple warehouses and offices throughout the UK.

We were able to assist this major warehousing and distribution business improve its communications and collaboration through the deployment of Microsoft Teams.

Accountancy firms tend to have regional office footprints and auditors who need to work securely from their customer site locations.

Through the power of Microsoft 365 we have provided customers in this sector with the ability to securely connect, collaborate and communicate, whatever the user's location, enabling a fully distributed operating model.



About Andy

Andy Bevan is Head of Cloud and Digital Transformation at Daisy

As an experienced IT professional with 35 years' experience, Andy has a proven track record in solution architecture, technical leadership and transformation. Andy has extensive knowledge across the technology spectrum. He has applied this knowledge and his strategic proficiency in all vertical sectors, particularly legal/professional services, finance/financial services, health, public sector organisations, ISV/SaaS and the media. At Daisy, Andy's leadership ensures that cloud, availability, connectivity, security, and all other facets of the technology infrastructure are mapped to resilience and the future of the organisations we work with as trusted partners.

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