

Up in the cloud and beyond

Our customer is up there with the most forward-thinking companies when it comes to their IT collaboration platform. They are already in the cloud running Microsoft Office 365 to meet their business needs. As such, their workforce utilizes the benefits of services like Teams, Power Apps, Power Automate, and SharePoint Online, to name a few.

Their collaboration platform is supported by both IT and business users as they continue their digital transformation journey and head into the modern workplace. With such rapid platform growth comes the challenge of managing it and staying in control. The coined phrase “cloud sprawl” or uncontrolled growth can gradually put platform health, performance, and security in decline.

To make sure they did not subside to the negative effects of cloud sprawl, our customer commissioned a Rencore Assessment to keep their Office 365 environment performant, secure, modern, and in line with the latest Microsoft updates. With award-winning software and expert advice, the Rencore Assessment enables our customer to keep IT infrastructure current with its rapidly evolving business needs.

A little background history

Our customer is a Fortune 500 organization and a market leader in the insurance sector providing general and life insurance solutions. They operate in more than 210 countries and territories and employ over 50,000 people globally. Customers include individuals, small businesses, mid-sized and large companies, as well as multinational corporations. Last fiscal year, they disclosed revenues of 47 million dollars.

Challenges faced

SharePoint and Office 365 has the potential to be sculpted uniquely in the image of the organization that utilizes it. In the not too distant past, customizations were a thing only development teams created - now all users make the needed adjustments to fit their needs.

This agile way of customizing SharePoint and Office 365 helps optimize business communication and business productivity. Consequently, rapid growth can leave IT struggling to keep control of their IT environment. Our customer could see this wasn't just a flash in the pan. It was, in fact, a pain-point that would get worse with time. Therefore, they set about finding a Microsoft Partner to help address platform growth and assist them in staying in control.

Solution

After a thorough research process, our customer decided Rencore was the partner to help them stay in control of SharePoint growth. The first stage was a scoping meeting, which collected all requirements and expectations to provide a bespoke assessment approach.

About Rencore

Rencore is a software company providing award-winning solutions essential to the SharePoint and Office 365 space. They empower organizations to stay in control of the growth of their Microsoft collaboration technology by providing insights and advice on how to act on them. Using Rencore software and services, organizations can run an extended, secure, governed and modern SharePoint environment which meets business needs.

Unsurprisingly, user adoption was high throughout the organization. Thus, the following topics were identified as the primary assessment focus of their Office 365 tenants:

- Measure the degree of platform customization.
- Identify customizations made by the end users.
- Identify potential blockers for future platform use.
- Identify blockers for modernization of classic sites.

Results

For the environment scan, only customizations (scripts, master pages, Flows, forms, workflows etc.) were examined, contents like documents or permissions of the end users were not part of the examination.

The environment scan uncovered a high level of customization characteristics typically of those by end users. This high level of customization increases the risk of vulnerabilities and problems when using Office 365, and can result in poor performance for the end user and increased support requests for IT.

Identified potential vulnerabilities:

JavaScript	2033
Content Editor	628
Script Editor	131
Flows	500
HTML files	2270
InfoPath Forms	4
Custom actions	136

Moreover, the analysis identified 500 user-created Flows. Some Flows contained a combination of business activities such as Outlook, and external activities like Google Calendar, which is prohibited. It is recommended that Flows are cataloged regularly.

As our customer will use mainly modern sites in the future, existing classic sites are planned to be migrated or converted. The assessment identified several blockers for modernization custom master pages, unsupported web parts, and the use of many sub webs. The automated code check analysis showed most custom scripts were used to manipulate contents of the SharePoint page, e.g. UI elements. Changes in the default UI of SharePoint breaks page functionality, and this could lead to additional support tickets and increased support efforts to fix and solve performance issues.

In Closing

The findings were presented, along with an action plan, on how to stay in control of SharePoint. Our customer is planning on implementing this action plan within the next 8-10 weeks. The environment should be reviewed regularly to identify new customizations and fix new vulnerabilities at an early stage. Code quality must be checked regularly by IT to avoid negative effects on stability, performance, supportability, and security. Continuous monitoring software was recommended to help detect customizations or applications added over time in the cloud. Every customization will be flagged immediately if it does not meet the required standards. Lastly, our customer has all the information to navigate roadblocks and deliver, if necessary, a successful classic sites migration project.

Do you want to
stay in control of
your **SharePoint**
and **Office 365**?

Rencore offers automated solutions to discover, understand and act on vulnerabilities and modernization blockers.

Reach out! Visit www.rencore.com today or drop us a line on sales@rencore.com to see how we can help you.