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Microsoft Places Enablement

G Cloud: Service Definition

Version 1.0



Microsoft Places Discovery, Migration & Implementation Services

Service overview

Our range of Places services packages cover advisory, configuration (including Proof of Concept), migration and support services for Microsoft Exchange resource booking and Microsoft Places.

They are designed to help public sector organisations design, implement, migrate and maintain room and desk booking solutions using **Microsoft native capabilities**, with optional support for transitioning from third-party booking systems.

The services are delivered remotely and are suitable for organisations using Microsoft 365, Exchange Online and Microsoft Places.



Service area	Description
Review of current booking processes & readiness	Review and analysis of existing room and desk booking processes, including user journeys, administration, policies and constraints and readiness roadmap. This includes identifying issues, risks and inefficiencies, and providing practical recommendations for improvement. Reviews typically focus on Exchange resource mailboxes or Microsoft Places but can include third-party systems where customers are able to demonstrate current processes.
Exchange resource mailbox design and configuration	Design, creation and configuration of Exchange resource mailboxes based on customer booking requirements. This includes defining booking rules, calendar processing, permissions and policies. Scripts can be provided to support consistent mailbox creation and configuration following agreement of the specification.
Migration of booking data	Migration of booking data from third-party systems into Exchange resource mailboxes or supported booking platforms. This includes migration from CSV exports and guidance on alternative migration approaches. The service includes advice on the impact of migration choices on users, data integrity and historical visibility.
Creation of IMDF maps	We can convert existing floor plans into IMDF format for seamless upload into Places - or create new floor plans, following which they can be maintained by you or our team.
Microsoft Places planning and configuration	Planning, configuration and adoption support for Microsoft Places, including scenarios where Places is implemented alongside existing Exchange resource mailboxes. This includes Places

Service area

Description

setup, room and desk configuration, and creation and maintenance of IMDF-compliant floor plans.

Exchange and
Microsoft Places
object maintenance

Ongoing support for managing Exchange and Microsoft Places objects as estates change. This includes additions, removals and updates to rooms, desks and related metadata. Supporting scripts and structured templates can be provided to simplify administration.

Microsoft Places
advanced features

Advisory and configuration support for advanced Microsoft Places features, including readiness dashboards, check-in policies, analytics, peripheral support and sensor integration, where available and licensed.

Training and
knowledge transfer

Creation of written and or video training materials covering the services above. Training can be tailored to the customer environment and audience, including IT administrators, facilities teams and end users.

Intended Audience

Recommended workshop participants include:

- **Super users** – a small group to explore functionality first-hand and share their needs.
- **Microsoft 365 administrators** - to understand what's involved in deploying Places and (where applicable) potential migration paths from an existing system.
- **Facilities management professionals** - to assess Places' ability to meet operational and space management needs.
- **HR & business decision makers** – to evaluate how Places can enhance employee workplace experience and align with your strategic goals.

What our services include:

The services may include:

- Workshops
- Configuration activities & POCs
- Documentation
- Scripts
- Knowledge transfer sessions
- Implementation support.

Activities are agreed in advance based on customer requirements and licensing, and all services start with a free 1 hour advisory session.

What the service does not include

The services do not include Microsoft licensing, third-party software licensing, hardware procurement, building management systems, or physical sensor installation unless explicitly agreed as a separate engagement.

Service delivery

The service is delivered remotely. Onsite delivery is not included unless separately agreed. The service can be delivered as a standalone engagement or alongside Microsoft Places Discovery, Advisory or Proof of Concept services.

Customer responsibilities

Customers are responsible for providing appropriate access to Microsoft 365 and Exchange Online, supplying accurate information about current booking processes, and making relevant stakeholders available for workshops and reviews.

Support and escalation

Support arrangements, response times and escalation paths are agreed at the start of the engagement and documented as part of the service output.

Service outcomes

At the end of the service, customers will have a clearly defined and supported approach to room and desk booking using Microsoft Exchange and or Microsoft Places, with documented configuration, clear operational ownership and guidance for ongoing management.

A link to wider expertise

Our initial role will be to plan, implement and help you orchestrate a successful rollout.

We're also able to support you in other areas that facilitate infrastructure modernisation and underpin smarter ways of working. For example, over the longer term you may benefit from our experience in:

- Power BI and bespoke reporting.
- Delivering platforms for learning management, policy updates (e.g. health and safety advice) and training that are integrated in your Microsoft 365 environment.
- Migration and modernisation of legacy repositories including calendar content, email archives and file stores.
- Delivering cloud-based infrastructure including backup, archiving, journaling and general, long-term storage along with retention management and eDiscovery.

***Following our migration advisory service, Essential offers a range of service options including:**

- **Resource Analysis & Prep**

We'll start by reviewing the bookable resources defined in your current third-party booking system and/or your existing resource mailboxes. From there, we can help you configure all resources to ensure they're accurately represented within the Places data hierarchy with the correct mailbox types, properties, naming conventions, permissions, booking policies, metadata, and room list configurations.

- **Floor Plan Conversion**

We can convert existing floor plans into IMDF format for seamless upload into Places - or create new floor plans, following which they can be maintained by you or our team.

- **Wider Environment Readiness**

We'll review your Entra ID (Azure AD) management hierarchy, along with Microsoft 365 Groups and Teams structures, to ensure they support optimal Space Plan analytics, including 'insights into workplace adoption by leaders'. We'll also work with your preferred Teams Rooms (MTR) and sensor providers to highlight any upgrade requirements or opportunities, such as enabling auto-release functionality and occupancy counting.

- **Migration of Existing Bookings**

Where a legacy system is in use, we can import future workspace bookings into Places, helping to ensure a smooth transition.

- **Coexistence Planning**

Our team will give you guidance on configuring Places to run seamlessly alongside third-party workspace booking tools or native Outlook Room Finder, to support pilot groups or phased adoption - e.g., where some users can't immediately switch to using new Outlook or Teams, or are still hosted on-premises.

- **Communication & Adoption**

We can advise on communications and user adoption strategies to support a successful rollout. We also offer an ongoing support service to help keep you prepared as Places evolves. Where needed, our bespoke video service delivers engaging, professional training and guidance content using your own systems, branding, and messaging.

WHO WE ARE

Partnering with Essential

What we do



Since 1994 Essential has been helping enterprises of all sizes across the UK and Europe to adopt and adapt to evolving Microsoft-based workplaces, and to thrive as a result.

As the modern workplace is evolving at lightning speed, we continue to support organisations transition their legacy data and infrastructure to the cloud and then build on their investment to deliver successful outcomes for their workforce and organisation.

Examples include:

Enabling modern, more efficient ways of working:

- Portsmouth City Council uses one of our workspace booking systems to facilitate room and desk booking across Council buildings.
- A UK police force uses our Teams and SharePoint based LMS to deliver tailored learning experiences for staff securely across desktop and mobile devices.
- NHS Informatics Merseyside uses our LMS combined with External User Manager to securely manage learning for internal and external agency staff, all contained within their M365 tenant.

Accelerating cloud adoption:

- A large drinks manufacturer is working with Essential to deliver SharePoint management and governance to control the sprawl of SharePoint and Teams sites and document versions, ensuring content is maintained and accessible, while rarely used content is archived to manage storage costs.
- UK Media company used our data migration service to support migration from a legacy email archive, to reduce costs and consolidate data into Microsoft 365.
- Organisations across the UK and Europe work with Essential to support collaboration across ring-fenced and secure Microsoft environments, enabling people to find each other within separate Microsoft Global Address lists.

We value deep relationships with our customer base, many of whom have been working with us for well over a decade.

- Being a small, specialist service provider means we focus on fewer, larger and more complex projects. It means you get a personal service from a team that truly wants to add value to your business for many years to come.
- Strong partnerships with software vendors and service providers means we can bring the best options to our customers and provide that extra layer of support and service to our customers in the UK. We love partnering to achieve more together.
- Our people are knowledgeable and passionate about getting things right. We're not afraid of big technical challenges, setting realistic expectations or dealing with 'softer issues' where new technology meets your people, processes and real life.

Workspace management expertise

Over the last 10 years Essential has helped enterprises select and implement best-of-breed solutions to help them manage their workspace and other resources more effectively by building on their existing IT investment.

We offer a **holistic service** that includes working with all stakeholders within your organisation including your IT team, facilities staff and key 'end users' to make sure your implementation is a success. Key value-add services include:

- Deep expertise, bringing 'lessons learned' from 100+ implementations meaning low risk, a smoother roll-out and increased user uptake
- Realistic, meaning we will say what can (and can't!) be done, quickly leading you to a design that works for your environment, people and processes

Focused on empowering you to manage the solution in-house via training, informal knowledge transfer, documentation, and a helpful support team

Organisations using workspace management solutions from Essential include Arun District Council, BAE Systems, British Land, Canal & River Trust, CMS, Edwin Coe, Glencore, global Media Group, Harrods, Hawksford, Man Group, Meath County Council, Merlin Entertainment, NATS, Portsmouth County Council, RICS, Wates, and Wessex Water.



"Working with Essential we have been able to make Microsoft Outlook the single portal via which we can book everything required for visitors to NATs' offices. At the same time as scheduling a visit in Outlook calendar we can request meeting rooms, seating layouts, AV equipment, catering, Wifi codes, security arrangements, and so on."

Jane Jennings, Business System Analyst for Supply Chain and FM at NATS



The workspace booking system implemented at RICS is helping support neurodiverse people in the workplace. [See the interview with Mark Southwell.](#)



"As a customer with a large multi-level, multi-core building, we were initially concerned about the complexities of navigation. Essential exceeded our expectations by placing a strong emphasis on floor plan design and navigation to deliver the best UX. They also delivered a branded instructional video which has become an invaluable resource".

Jeremy Underdown, Operational Property Manager at Portsmouth City Council

