



10 most important issues and how to solve them when migrating to SharePoint Online

Netwoven

Overview

Migrating to SharePoint Online can provide organizations with many benefits, including improved collaboration and productivity, access to new features and capabilities, and the ability to work from anywhere with an internet connection. However, enterprise level migration projects are complex and can run into unanticipated challenges. According to Gartner, over 80% of data migration projects exceed their deadline and/or budget. The list below describes some issues that aren't always anticipated when planning these types of projects.



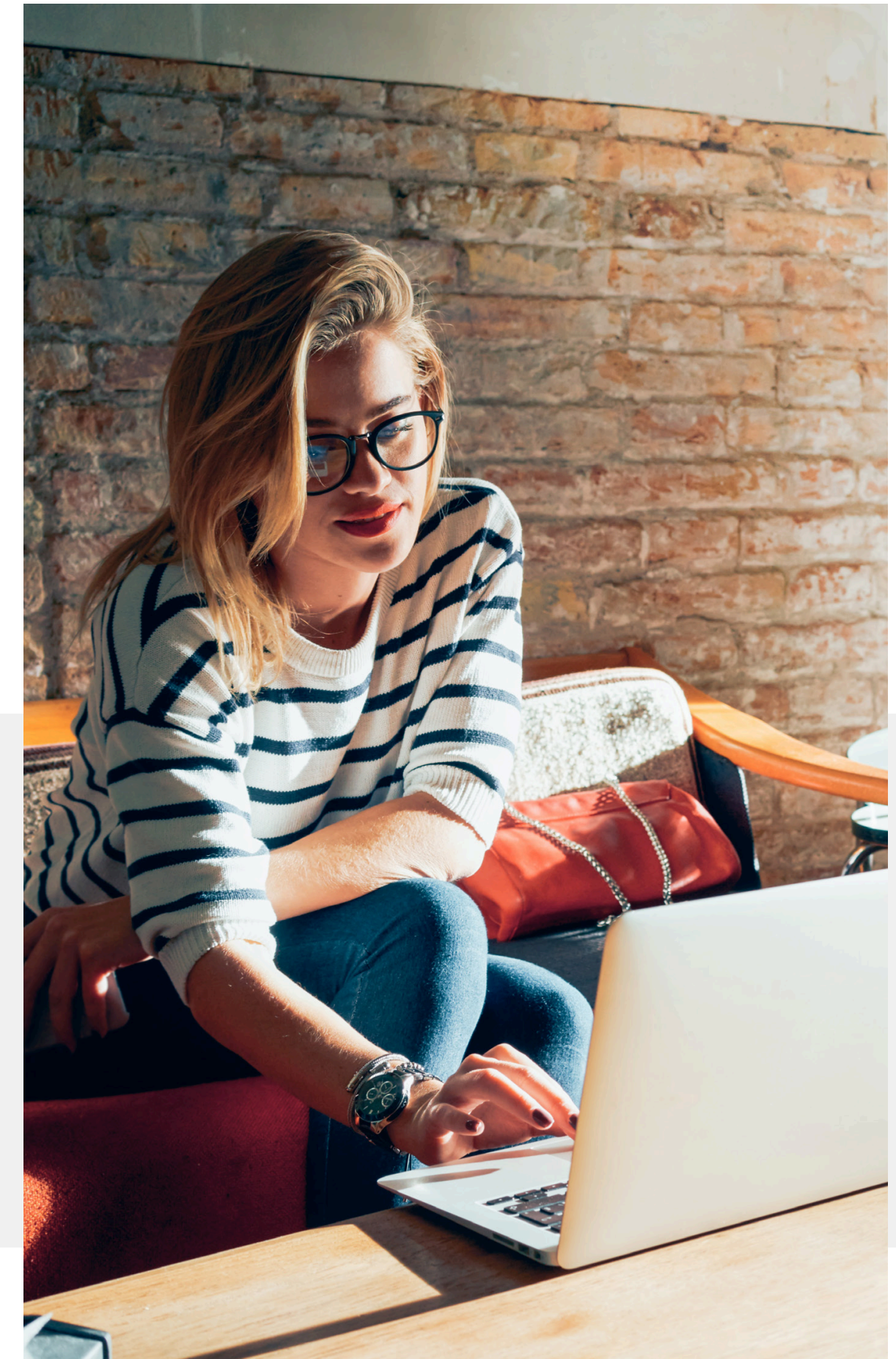
1 Inbound links and links in documents

Challenge

If your organization has other applications in use that link to content in SharePoint, then these links will not work post migration. Also, links embedded in Microsoft Office files and PDFs will be broken.

Our Solution

Netwoven has built custom tools using various application APIs to automatically update links. We also have custom redirect solutions that can be used for applications that lack any kind of API. Additionally, we work with 3rd party tools for updating links in files after they are migrated.



2 Long URLs and invalid characters

Challenge

According to Microsoft, the entire decoded URL, including the file name, can't contain more than 400 characters. This seems like a lot, but there are other limitations besides this 400-character length. Microsoft Office (Excel and Word) files have limitations shorter than the 400-character limit.

Additionally for migrations from SharePoint 2013 to SharePoint online, there are some special characters that could be used in file names in SP 2013 that are not allowed in SharePoint Online.



Our Solution

During the assessment phase of a migration project, Netwoven will identify where these issues occur and provide suggestions for shortening URLs and renaming files. We have developed a custom URL mapping tool to manage and keep track of these changes.

③ InfoPath is out of mainstream support

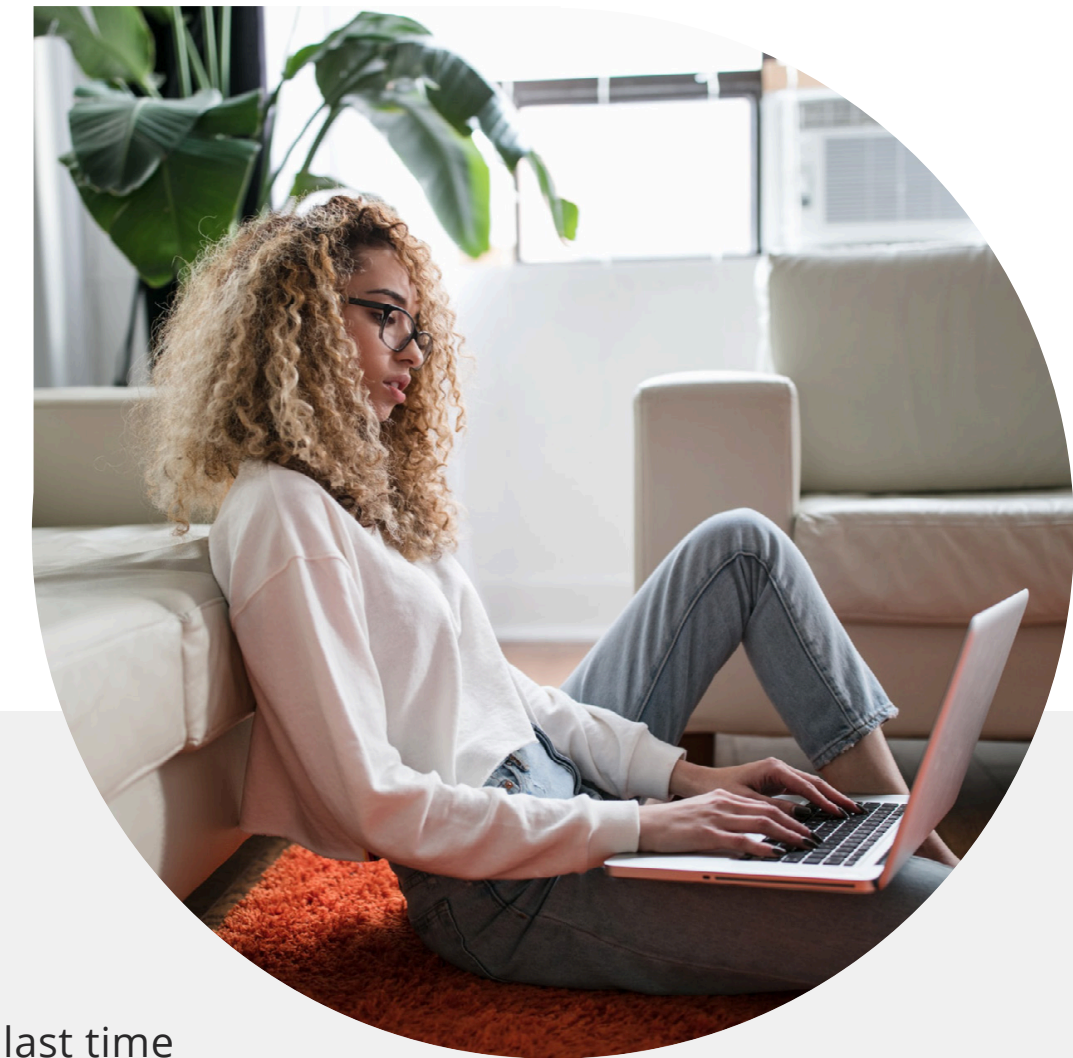
Challenge

Mainstream support for InfoPath ended in July of 2021 and Microsoft does not recommend its usage in SharePoint Online. You may also have connections to external data sources in your InfoPath forms which may not be reachable from SharePoint Online.

Our Solution

Netwoven will provide you with a report of all your current InfoPath forms including information on the last time they were used. This will allow you to determine which ones can be retired and which ones still need a solution going forward.

Microsoft recommends PowerApps as a replacement for InfoPath for SharePoint Online and this is our recommendation for most InfoPath forms, but depending on the use-case, there may be other options we can advise on.



4 Converting classic team sites to MS Teams

Challenge

Microsoft Teams is the natural choice for a lot of classic team collaboration sites. Migrating the original site content to a new MS Team is not a straightforward process. There are significant differences in the permissions and structure of an MS Team vs a Classic Team Site. A proper strategy is required to avoid lowering user productivity and to aid user adoption.

Our Solution

A complete inventory analysis of your existing team sites is step one in formulating a plan to migrate to Microsoft Teams. Netwoven can create the analysis and then provide guidance on best practices for moving to Microsoft Teams. Netwoven also offers a governance solution for MS Teams called [Govern365](#) which can further aid in securing sensitive content and it provides reporting on MS Teams plus additional M365 objects.



5 Email enabled lists

Challenge

SharePoint on-premises supports lists that can accept incoming email. This feature is not available for SharePoint Online. The contents of these lists or libraries will migrate, but new emails sent to the library will no longer automatically show up as the library will no longer accept incoming emails.

Our Solution

We will provide a report of all lists and libraries in your current farm that have this feature enabled. In some cases, this feature is no longer being used, but if your users are still expecting this functionality, we can review with them their specific needs and the available options. Options can be as simple as a shared mailbox all the way to complex Azure or Power Platform applications with the needed logic to support your business needs.



6 Deeply nested site structures

Challenge

Many organizations use subsites to model the hierarchical structure of the organization within their intranet. Microsoft however has made two important changes to SharePoint Online that change the way sites should be structured.

- ✓ The Modern SharePoint Experience
- ✓ Microsoft 365 Groups

Existing nested site structures must be flattened to take advantage of all the features that SharePoint Online and Microsoft 365 have to offer, this can be a daunting task that most organizations aren't willing to take on by themselves.

Our Solution

During a migration project, as part of the inventory assessment, Netwoven will provide a complete picture of your current hierarchy. Microsoft introduced "hub sites" to maintain a virtual hierarchy and relationships between sites where needed. This has even been expanded to allow virtual nesting of hub sites. Netwoven can guide you through this and our tools and processes ensure that all the original content and permissions are transferred so that your intranet users maintain access and stay productive.



7 Branding & customization

Challenge

The new “modern” SharePoint experience has brought many significant improvements to the end user experience including a responsive, mobile friendly design out-of-the-box. However, gone are the days of beating SharePoint into submission with custom CSS and JavaScript until it looks like the pixel perfect concept built by your marketing team. SharePoint Online is an “evergreen” platform which means that Microsoft keeps it up to date and secure with regular patches and improvements. These can break attempts at branding if you don’t stay “inside the lines”.



Our Solution

Our team of experienced designers understand the branding and customization options made available by Microsoft and can assist you to work within the modern framework while still achieving a company branded look and feel for your intranet. We can assist with best practices and in the end provide your end users with a productive environment for collaboration and effective work.

8 Web application policies

Challenge

In SharePoint on-prem, there are typically multiple web applications for Team, Portal, My Sites, and sometimes Search. SharePoint Server allows for the creation of web application policies that can grant or deny blanket-level permissions to entire web applications. These permissions override any that are set at the site collection, site, list/library, or item level. SharePoint Online uses a single web application to host all SharePoint content. Additionally, there is no permission feature that allows for granting blanket permissions over content the way you can in SharePoint Server on-premises.



Our Solution

We can provide detailed analysis of all the permissions used by web application policies and provide guidance how best to transition into the improved and enhanced security available in SharePoint Online. Netwoven has an entire security practice with a focus on Microsoft 365 and we can walk you through best practices and help you understand the options that are available to you.

9 SP 2010/2013 workflows

Challenge

Most enterprise organizations using SharePoint Server have put a large amount of effort into workflows in SharePoint for their various business processes. Moving to the cloud will require transitioning to a different solution because SharePoint 2010 workflows have been retired since August 1, 2020 for new tenants and removed from existing tenants on November 1, 2020. SharePoint 2013 Workflows are still supported but are disabled by default for new tenants. SharePoint Designer however was disabled for all tenants in August of 2020 which would make migrated workflows difficult to maintain.



Our Solution

Microsoft recommends Power Automate as a replacement for classic workflows. The Power Platform is a completely different platform and migration of the 2010/2013 workflows to Power Automate is a manual process. At Netwoven we have assisted many enterprise organizations make this transition. There are many factors to consider including adoption, change management, and licensing, all of which we can help you plan for and implement.

10 Content editor / script editor web parts

Challenge

Content Editor and Script Editor web parts are commonly used in SharePoint on-premises to add custom code to a single page. In some cases, they have been used to host entire single page applications in SharePoint. SharePoint Online does not include these web parts out of the box because of the security risks involved. The client-side JavaScript APIs for SharePoint Online have features that were not available in SharePoint 2010, 2013, 2016, etc. Some of these expanded capabilities include functions which can delete data so to prevent accidental issues, Microsoft removed these two web parts.

Additionally, these web parts have been the favorite tool of the “citizen developer”. Enterprise IT is not always aware of the use of these web parts for one-off customizations.

Our Solution

For enterprise developers, Microsoft has provided the SharePoint Framework (SPFx) for building client-side applications. These could be custom web parts, single page applications, SharePoint extensions, and even applications for Microsoft Teams. Power Users can take advantage of Power Apps for building one-off applications. Netwoven has extensive experience converting classic SharePoint client-side applications to the SharePoint Framework. We can run scripts to find instances of Script Editor web parts and Content Editor web parts throughout your SharePoint farm and provide analysis of their functionality and put together a plan for migrating these apps to SPFx or other solutions.





About Netwoven

Netwoven is a trusted Microsoft Solutions Partner who unravels complex business problems leveraging Microsoft technologies. We create and implement digital transformation strategies around secure collaboration, modern software applications, deeper insights from data, modern infrastructure, and security.

Netwoven is a global company headquartered in the San Francisco Bay area, founded in 2001 by senior-level executives from Microsoft, Oracle, and Intel.

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