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WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

A HEAD TO HEAD COMPARISON OF EXCEL, ON-PREMISE, AND CLOUD SOFTWARE.

EXCEL:

Upfront Investment	Small
Ongoing Costs	None
Deployment Ease and Speed	Easy and fast to deploy
Hardware Requirements	Own server/s and all related space and equipment. Software must be installed on devices.
Maintenance	All maintenance, backups, upgrades, and security managed in house, all server maintenance, too.
Customization	Minimal
Third-party Integrations	Possible, but complex, involving additional custom software to handle imports and exports.
Regulation Compliance	Must manage own compliance.
Availability	No Internet connection required when installed locally. Unaffected by Internet speeds. Must be installed on device to access data.
Scalability	Does not scale. Large files slow the program down and data storage is in house (see below).
Data Storage	Data storage is in house (servers and maintenance are costly). Data is not in one place and getting one 'truth' is difficult. Prone to human error, multiple versions, inaccurate data.
Overall Visibility of Data	Poor. Data is siloed and widespread.
Data Security	Vulnerable. Susceptible to fraud. Security handled in house. Big implications if device containing sensitive data is lost.
Backups and Recovery	Difficult to manage. Full recovery doubtful.
Ease of Use	Very easy. Very clear and mostly intuitive. Except collaboration.
Training	In-house. Most people already familiar.
Collaboration	Difficult. Collaboration tools not included. Prone to duplication and error except with Excel online.
Pricing Capabilities	Basic. Advanced pricing strategies not possible.
Analysis Tools	None. Analysis is manual.
Software Flexibility	Rigid. Barely customizable to specific needs.
Built-in Agility	None. Does not support agile working.
Innovation	No innovation from vendor, innovation purely driven by your employees

CLOUD:

Upfront Investment	None
Ongoing Costs	Monthly (or annual) payments. Regular and predictable. Cost efficient thanks to right sizing.
Deployment Ease and Speed	Very easy and fast. Usually faster than on-premise.
Hardware Requirements	None. Just an Internet connection.
Maintenance	All managed by vendor and performed automatically. Always on the latest version. Near-zero downtime risk.
Customization	Usually very good. Feedback is taken into account and the customer has a good chance to see their requests in future releases.
Third-party Integrations	Usually very good.
Regulation Compliance	Vendor's responsibility.
Availability	99% uptime. Access from anywhere at anytime via Internet. Near-zero downtime risk.
Scalability	Designed to scale effortlessly. Automatically responds to your needs in real time and scales up and down to maximize business but minimize costs.
Data Storage	Storage in the cloud, all in one place for one 'truth'.
Overall Visibility of Data	Excellent.
Data Security	Very good. Managed by vendor's cloud security experts. Usually far beyond affordability and capability of most businesses. Data stored in Cloud not on device.
Backups and Recovery	Managed by vendor. Usually excellent recovery plans.
Ease of Use	Usually very easy to use.
Training	Mostly in house. Reputable vendors will assist in training.
Collaboration	Usually good. Tools included to promote.
Pricing Capabilities	Good. Advance pricing strategies possible. Insight-driven pricing. Respond in real time to market. Watch real-time competitor pricing.
Analysis Tools	Good tools for analysis.
Software Flexibility	Very flexible and customizable. Vendor will usually assist in customization, often done by product configuration.
Built-in Agility	Excellent. Short and unobtrusive incrementation cycles.
Innovation	Innovation platform, no on premise baggage and all customers get latest innovations automatically at $0

ON-PREMISE

Upfront Investment	Large
Ongoing Costs	Light, but upgrades can be costly.
Deployment Ease and Speed	Varies, but often long deployment with much in-house management.
Hardware Requirements	Own server/s and all related space and equipment. Software must be installed on devices.
Maintenance	All maintenance, backups, upgrades, and security managed in house, all server maintenance too. Costly upgrades can mean staying on old under supported versions.
Customization	Varies, but usually some customization possible.
Third-party Integrations	Usually good, but integrations performed in house, and updates to either software or third-party tools may render incompatible.
Regulation Compliance	Vendor's responsibility.
Availability	No Internet connection required. Unaffected by Internet speeds. Must be installed on device to access data.
Scalability	Scaling is manual and usually requires more servers. Both time-consuming and costly.
Data Storage	Data storage is in house (servers and maintenance are costly). All data is stored in one repository for a common 'truth'.
Overall Visibility of Data	Excellent. But only when on a device with software installed.
Data Security	Managed in house. Complete visibility and control. Big implications if device containing sensitive data is lost.
Backups and Recovery	Managed in house.
Ease of Use	Varies. Some are intuitive, others so feature laden that confusing.
Training	Mostly in house. Some vendors offer training videos and sessions.
Collaboration	Usually good. Tools usually included to assist.
Pricing Capabilities	Good. Advance pricing strategies possible. Insight-driven pricing.
Analysis Tools	Good tools for analysis.
Software Flexibility	Somewhat flexible and customizable to own needs.
Built-in Agility	Not good. Testing and reaction to market slow. Vendor implementation cycles are very long.
Innovation	Innovation driven by employees and vendor but slow due to customer support of on premise deployments in different versions and infrastructure. Also difficult to deploy due to upgrade costs.

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