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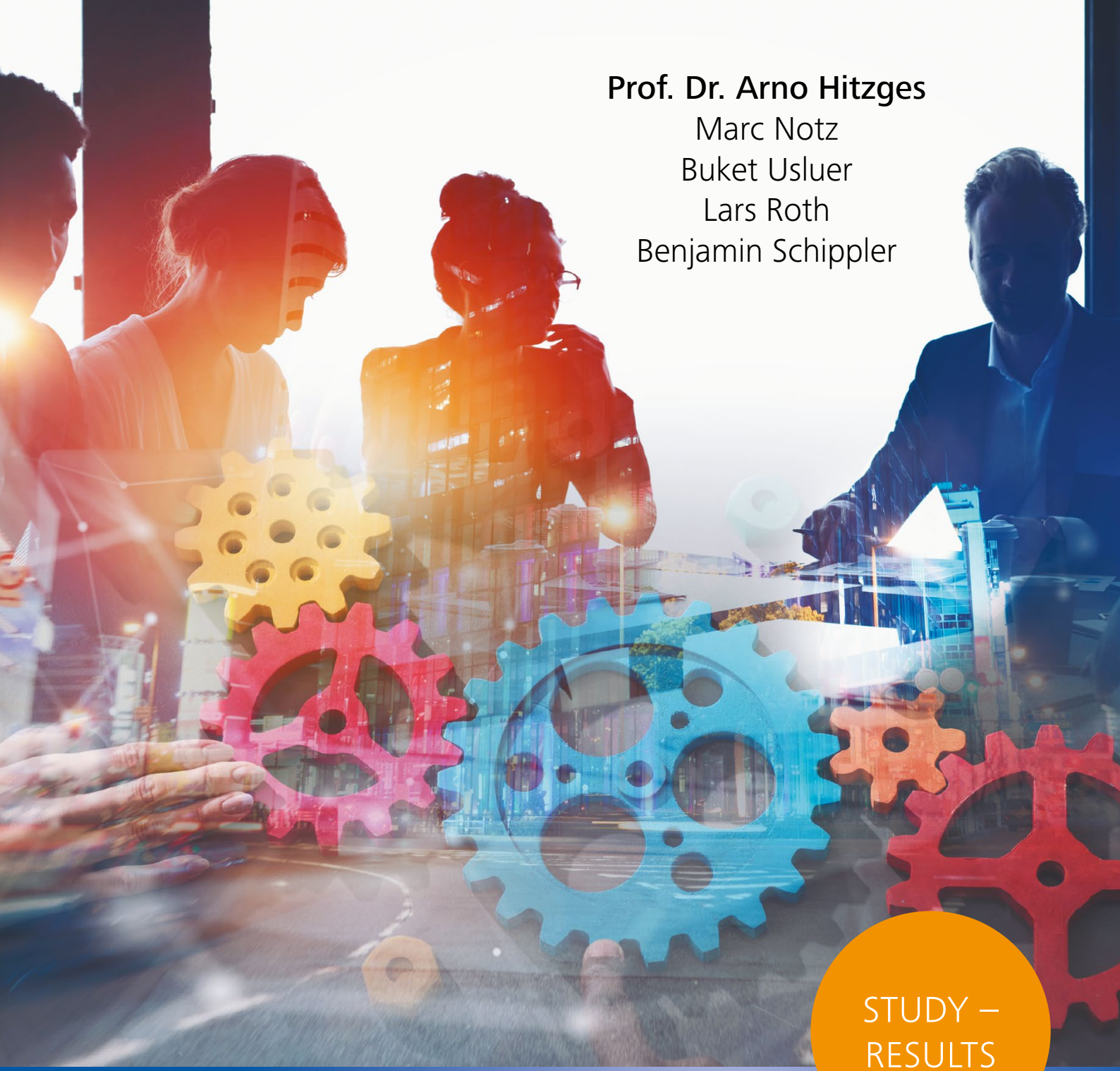

STUDY – RESULTS

MS 365 Governance Technology Study 2023

Comparison of providers

Prof. Dr. Arno Hitzges
Marc Notz
Buket Usluer
Lars Roth
Benjamin Schippler

MS 365 Governance Technology Study 2023 – Comparison of providers

Study – Results

HOCHSCHULE DER MEDIEN
SharePointForum Stuttgart
Microsoft Business User Forum e.V. mbuf

In this book, gender-specific terms (e. g. “the user”) are used only in one form for better readability. At this point, it should be noted that these refer in any case and explicitly to male, female and diverse persons.

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Prof. Dr. Arno Hitzges has been Professor of Content Management Systems at Stuttgart Media University (HdM) since May 2011. He began his professional career in 1992 at Fraunhofer IAO, where he was responsible for the Information Engineering department. Until his move to the HdM, he was active in leading management positions at various Microsoft Gold Partners and supported more than 100 projects in the area of content management. He is co-editor of the SharePoint user studies and initiator of the Stuttgart SharePointForum, the central SharePoint user conference in southern Germany.

Marc Notz

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Marc Notz is assistant to the head of the Industrial Engineering and Management program at the Stuttgart Media University and is responsible for various IT projects and digitalization topics. His main focus include Microsoft 365 as well as the implementation of online lectures and other technical projects. In addition, he is a speaker at the Stuttgart SharePointForum.

Buket Usluer

Stuttgart University of Media

Buket Usluer is a bachelor's graduate in industrial engineering and Media. Within the framework of the research group of the Stuttgart SharePointForum and the Stuttgart Media University, she has gained several years of experience with MS 365, especially MS Teams and SharePoint.

Lars Roth

BLANC & FISCHER Corporate Services/
Blanc and Fischer IT Services GmbH

Working for many years for Communication and Collaboration in Blanc and Fischer IT Services. Responsible as Microsoft Teams Service Administrator and for other Office 365 Service (OneDrive, SharePoint Online, Outlook, Office etc.).

Supports users on the Office 365 platform for successful and effective collaboration. We offer in-house consulting, change and Trouble Management, digital workshops/meetings and streaming events. Since 2017, Blanc und Fischer IT Services has been a member of the Microsoft Business User Forum e.V. (mbuf) and Lars Roth is active in the working group AG Collaboration.

His motto “Collaboration starts in the head!”.

Benjamin Schippler

Microsoft Business User Forum e.V.

Since 2014, Benjamin Schippler has been involved in various roles in the Microsoft Business User Forum e.V. He is currently the head of the Collaboration working group. The Digital Workplace is one of his focal points.

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Preliminary note

27 different providers demonstrate the relevance of team governance on the market – a comparison is worthwhile!

The rapid introduction of teams during the Corona pandemic has highlighted the need for a clear governance strategy in many companies: Too little regulation leads to an enormous proliferation and increasingly confusing structures and the initial enthusiasm eventually turns into frustration. Too much regulation at the beginning, on the other hand, also inhibits user acceptance, since cumbersome and complex processes are not much fun. How can you find the best way for your organization that promotes simplicity of use and at the same time provides important rules to avoid a possible information chaos?

The study presented here by the Stuttgart SharePointForum in cooperation with University of the Media and the Microsoft Business User Forum (mbuf) on the topic of Teams governance identified 27 providers worldwide in the area of MS 365. Of these, 11 providers operate exclusively in the German-speaking region. 6 companies additionally serve the entire European region and a further 10 are active worldwide, i. e. also in the USA, Australia or Asia.

The study compares the systems according to more than 30 criteria and aims to support the reader in recording their own requirements and to help them decide which tool/service partner is best suited to their individual needs. It was found that some of the providers have very different areas of focus. While almost all companies offer a practical solution in the area of lifecycle management and team provisioning, the companies differ in some cases considerably in the areas of:

- Integration with the intranet,
- Provision of reporting,
- Security and hosting of the governance solution,
- Governance of SharePoint artifacts,
- and management of external users.

The maturity of the products ranges from a few customers for whom a customized solution has been created to highly standardized applications with user numbers in the millions.

A comparison is also worthwhile from an economic point of view: for licenses for employees with more than 500 employees, price differences of more than € 100,000 could be determined between providers for three years of software use. In the

case of companies with more than 10,000 employees, the differences between the cheapest and most expensive variant were already > € 700,000.

In addition to the text format presented here, the study is supplemented by an interactive XLS document in which all 80 criteria included are documented and the 30 core criteria prioritized by the team of experts are supplemented by the providers' self-assessments. This interactive XLS document can now be provided by each user/reader with their own priorities and also supplemented with their own assessments of fulfillment. An automatic evaluation within the framework of a utility value analysis can make the decision-making process stringent and transparent for the organization and thus save extensive consulting and process costs for the user company.

We wish the reader a useful read and much success in selecting the appropriate governance system for their own company.

Stuttgart, March 2023,
Expert team: Arno Hitzges, Marc Notz, Buket Usluer,
Lars Roth, Benjamin Schippler

1. Initial situation and objectives of the study

MS Teams has established itself as the tool of choice in recent years when companies are looking for collaboration tools. More and more companies are reaching the limits of the control capabilities of MS Teams and therefore want a governance tool that can be sold on the market.

When searching for the right governance tool, companies are faced with a multitude of different vendors and functionalities, all of which promise easier administration and massive time savings. But which product is the right one for the needs of your own company without breaking the budget? And which products deliver what they promise? In order to answer these questions, intensive familiarization with the subject is necessary. However, the time and resources to conduct an extensive market analysis are lacking in most cases, so products are purchased that do not meet the requirements.

1.1 Governance in the MS 365 context

The introduction of MS 365 and working in the cloud will change the way many employees work creating new opportunities, for the use of tools, for example. But also for IT governance, new rules and guidelines become more important and a new framework is set.

For the management of groups, governance rules are the central building block in the MS 365 context, because they can be created quickly and easily by users. A clear representation of rights and participants is important here. Challenges can include the lifecycle of groups, the rights of external parties or the implementation of governance policies.

1.2 Governance in the MS Teams context

The implementation of governance rules in the standard for MS Teams can be difficult. Advanced features that are not part of the standard can be implemented using a PowerShell script or by selecting a governance tool that provides a structure and promises to bundle all central governance topics in one place.

In their concrete implementation, the tools are intended to help guide employees in their use of MS Teams and to provide them with rules which help achieve business goals (e. g., a certain level of productivity or security).

Issues that companies can get past when implementing governance for MS teams in their own organizations – are similar to those for MS 365 – for example, the lifecycle of individual teams, dealing with externals and guests, handling documents or managing naming rules.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objective of the study is to provide an informative market overview of the vendors in the area of governance tools in the MS Teams environment.

With the study, companies receive an overview of the multitude of governance tools with their respective specifications in detail and can use these as a basis for decision-making for the selection of a suitable tool in the company. The study compares the prevailing providers of governance tools on the basis of defined criteria and functionalities.

2. Methodology

This study shows the results of a market analysis, which was carried out between September 2022 to March 2023 and is divided into 5 main steps *(see Fig. 1)*.

In the first step, all providers offering a team governance tool were reviewed, regardless of size and functionality. In the process, 27 possible providers were found – from small startups to well-known corporate groups – and used as the basis for the study.

In the second step, a catalog of criteria including ranking was drawn up with approx. 80 requirements. After comparison with members of the Microsoft Business User Forum, who already have experience in the search for a suitable tool, the criteria catalog was modified for the survey and limited to approx. 30 high-priority requirements which were sent to the companies for self-disclosure in the third step (without ranking).

In fixed appointments with predefined scenarios, the companies were given in the fourth step the opportunity to present their tools in a live demo. and to show the range of functions in detail, as well as to highlight the advantage compared to MS Teams Standard & other tools.

In the fifth and final step, the most important systems were evaluated by the experts in a comparable form and the experiences were documented in an expert assessment.

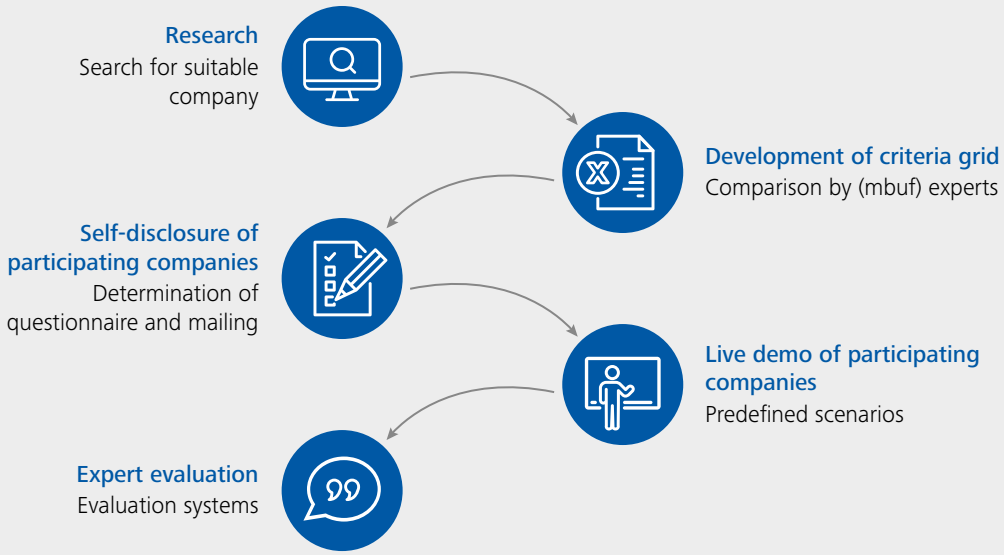

Fig. 1: Procedure

3. 27 tool providers at a glance

In this study, 27 governance tool providers were considered: 11 of them are based in German-speaking countries, 6 in Europe and 10 worldwide.This study primarily takes a look at the German-speaking vendors.

The largest and best-known provider is certainly AvePoint, and the solutions from Valprovia and Solutions2Share have also already achieved a higher level of awareness on the market. However, this study also aims to highlight smaller and as yet unknown providers, which run under the radar, in order to obtain as diverse and broad an overview as possible.

All providers were contacted by mail or phone and asked for a self-disclosure of the of the adapted questionnaire.

Table 1: Tool providers

Provider	Tool	Country	Webseite
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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Provider	Tool	Country	Webseite
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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

4. Trends and Technologies

4.1 Arvato Systems: "Teams and SharePoint Governance – A Must-Have for the AI Era!"

An article by Björn Nettingsmeier,
Product Owner and Microsoft 365 Senior Consultant
at Arvato Systems

Microsoft Teams has redefined the way, we work together over the last few years. The next big thing is just around the corner and has the potential to significantly change our daily business. In the following, I would like to explain why the topics of AI and the governance strategy in Microsoft 365 are directly connected to each other.

Fig. 2: Advertising Arvato Systems

The evolution of sharing

Like Microsoft SharePoint, our Microsoft 365 governance solution NAVOO has a history that began in the on-premises days. When SharePoint was still Microsoft's only solution for collaboration in project teams and departments, structures and permissions of storage locations already played a central role. However, unlike with Microsoft 365, it was easier those days to technically guide users in the structured storage of content. Because the options were limited.

With the introduction of Teams and the deeper integration of collaboration features into the operating system and the entire Office products family, users suddenly had a variety of additional options for sharing documents quickly and easily. Sharing scenarios that SharePoint or other DMS solutions had already regulated and had well under control through clear policies, once again took on a life of their own.

Different versions and duplicates of documents in different storage locations such as Teams Channels, OneDrive, SharePoint document libraries and, to make things worse, with differing permissions, are due to a common problem.

We share information
but we do not "un-share" it.

Over-sharing

In our private life, especially when using social media tools such as Instagram or Facebook, the term "over-sharing" was coined some time ago. It refers to the careless and excessive sharing of information. Microsoft has now also established this word in the corporate context. At the expense of security and relevance, content is shared with many employees across different channels and locations.

Some reasons for this are:

- Lack of governance strategy and guidelines for sharing and storage content
- Direct shares and permissions at file or directory level
- Use of organization-wide shares, e. g. in public teams
- No strategy or synchronization for shared groups within SharePoint
- Incorrect use of dynamic Microsoft 365 groups
- No defined lifecycle for permissions

Why do the terms "Over-Sharing" and "Data Privacy" suddenly play such an important role?

The answer is simple. The vendor is not concerned with a structured form of collaboration. According to Microsoft, that has always been the responsibility of the user. Rather, it is about the provision of content in the so-called "semantic index". It's about the **game changer**, the big thing of the next decade, it's about artificial intelligence and it's about **Microsoft 365 Copilot**.

Microsoft 365 Copilot can understand content, interpret it and identify relationships. Since there is a lot of sensitive data in the own organization that "should" not be fully available to all employees, there is a risk of "over-sharing" information falling into the wrong hands, internally or externally.

In this context, the sensitivity of the information can no longer be determined by a single document. For a request for the customer's sales figures, the bonuses of a sales employee or a forecast of the development of company key figures, Copilot only needs fragments, puzzle pieces, distributed over a wide variety of documents and content, in order to come to a result.

Are you ready for Copilot?

This is the central question that Microsoft is currently asking their customers. However, the manufacturer does not mean the general corporate culture, the possible added value or the full wallet for the necessary licenses. Rather, the question should be:

> Is your governance, collaboration and associated data structure ready for Copilot?

AI doesn't care where exactly corporate data is stored. However, this should by no means tempt you to ignore a clean structuring of storage locations and workgroups. Even in the AI age, users want to find their documents as efficiently as possible and have easy access to them. The solution lies in the right interaction of storage structures and permissions because Microsoft 365 Copilot only has access to the data to which the logged-in user has access. Whether via sharing a Teams membership, a channel, a connected SharePoint site, a document library, or directly on the directory/document.

Reading Sample

Get ready for the AI era with NAVOO

Microsoft Teams is the control center of daily collaboration in the company. Our Microsoft 365 governance solution, NAVOO, manages all key systems involved in the background, focusing on efficiency and security. From storage structures and permissions in OneDrive and SharePoint, to the protection and lifecycle of identities and groups in Microsoft Entra ID, to the close integration with security and compliance functions in Microsoft Purview.

To avoid over-sharing, NAVOO can help properly structure storage locations and teams, and provide users with a working environment they understand. In addition, NAVOO automatically manages the lifecycle of content and its permissions.

NAVOO is used by a lot of national and international companies. Sensitive and regulated content for specific target groups is part of our daily business and the topic of AI or Microsoft 365 Copilot is one of our focus subjects.

Our Microsoft 365 experts are happy to guide you on your journey to get the most out of your Digital Workplace. In addition to the transformation and integration of your content, we help you in the areas of change management, support and managed service for a wide range of applications.

Get ready for the Modern Work AI era with NAVOO and Arvato Systems.

Contact:
Björn Nettingsmeier
Email: Bjoern.Nettingsmeier@bertelsmann.de

Reading Sample

4.2 BCC Affirmatic: Govern your Digital Workplace – Maximise Employee Experience

In today's fast-paced digital landscape, achieving optimal productivity and fostering a seamless employee experience within Microsoft 365 can be a challenging endeavor.

At BCC, we understand the critical importance of harnessing the power of Microsoft 365, Teams, and Groups while maintaining control, security, and efficiency.

Our flagship solution, BCC Affirmatic, made its debut in 2001, initially designed for the prominent groupware platform, Lotus Notes. Over the years, our commitment to innovation led us to expand our support to include a variety of collaborative systems and Directory Services, such as Active Directory, Cisco WebEx, Exchange, and Office 365.

Fig. 3: Advertising BCC Affirmatic

In 2019, at Ignite2019 in Orlando, we proudly introduced one of the industry's first "Teams management" solutions, specifically tailored to prevent sprawl within this dynamic platform. We quickly recognized the parallels between Lotus Notes and Teams, prompting us to deliver essential principles of life cycle management, business ownership, and minimal access rights via self-services to this powerful and versatile platform.

BCC Affirmatic is your ultimate solution, designed to empower organizations to govern their digital workplaces effectively and maximize employee satisfaction.

BCC Affirmatic enables your organisation to delegate administration and provide self-service capabilities within the Microsoft 365 ecosystem. By doing so, you not only streamline processes but also give your employees the autonomy they need to thrive.

But that's not all. With BCC Affirmatic, you can establish robust governance for Microsoft 365, Teams, and Groups, ensuring that your organization operates within compliance and security parameters while optimizing collaboration and communication.

BCC Affirmatic for Microsoft 365 and Teams Life Cycle Management and Governance

Delegating management tasks for M365 is made easy with BCC Affirmatic. You can delegate Teams management tasks to helpdesk or users themselves via "Self Service Portals" without compromising security. Our profile-driven approach ensures that each new M365 resource is created consistently with the organization's required features and capabilities.

You can define which tasks non-technical users or geographically delegated Local Service Desks are allowed to perform. Our platform provides a single point of administration, easy-to-use self-service requests with integrated approval workflows, and delegate administration according to your organizational structures. You can also segment tenant administration according to your organizational requirements and remove required technical access rights for standard administration.

Managing Microsoft Teams can be a time-consuming task that requires high-level access and delegation to helpdesk or support staff, which can be challenging due to the detailed admin rights required. BCC Affirmatic for Microsoft Teams simplifies this process by providing corporate standards beyond the Teams template, controlling Teams sprawl, lifecycle management, ensuring Teams ownerships, and detailed audit trails.

Microsoft 365 Groups serve as the foundation for controlling access and security to your M365 resources. BCC Affirmatic provides essential tools for **M365 Group and Shared Mailbox Management** to control access and security to M365 resources, including approval workflows, automated processes, and expiration dates.

Managing external users in M365 is often a complex task that requires restricted access governed by responsible owners. BCC Affirmatic simplifies this task with easy forms to request external user accounts and approval workflows, automated processing to create Azure AD accounts and add users to Teams, Groups, and/or SharePoints, as well as monitoring expiration dates and grace periods to govern the lifecycle of external users.

For **security and compliance**, accurate audit trails of changes made to electronic systems are required. BCC Affirmatic offers comprehensive logging, giving you a complete record of all admin changes made within the M365 resources. Lastly, our **customizable web interface** allows you to adapt to your corporate design and integrate M365 management into your existing corporate IT portals.

Administrative workflow automation is made easy with BCC Affirmatic. You can create standard solutions for administration tasks, automate manual workflows with custom PowerShell Scripts, and securely and centrally execute custom PowerShell Scripts.

Summary

With BCC Affirmatic, organizations can ensure thorough lifecycle management and establish clear ownership for all Microsoft 365 resources. This encompasses every resource within the Microsoft 365 ecosystem, be it a Team, Group, document, or individual account, which is assigned a responsible owner and actively monitored throughout its lifecycle. This meticulous approach guarantees efficient resource utilization, fosters accountability for their utilization, and ensures proper archival or decommissioning when they are no longer needed. Effective lifecycle management serves as a cornerstone in maintaining an organized, secure, and cost-effective digital workspace.

Moreover, our platform equips you to manage Teams and M365 Groups effortlessly, ensuring that they align with your organization's goals and policies. It's about taking control without sacrificing agility.

With BCC Affirmatic, you're not just managing your digital workplace; you're orchestrating a symphony of productivity, security, and employee satisfaction. Stay tuned to learn more about how BCC Affirmatic is transforming the way organizations govern their digital workplaces and elevate employee experiences.

Reading Sample

More information: www.bcchub.com/affirmatic

Why use BCC Affirmatic for Microsoft Teams?

- Management of the entire Teams life cycle.
- Simple Integration into existing management procedures.
- Configure processes and workflows.
- Delegate tasks to help-desk staff or enable users self service.
- Comprehensive logging and traceability.
- Customisable web portal to adapt and integrate in your internal admin portals.

Contact:
Thorsten Wilm/Digital Marketing Manager
Email: thorsten.wilm@bcc.de

Reading Sample

5. Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria were divided into 3 categories for better structure and clarity: economic factors, functional factors and technical factors, whereby the division cannot always be clearly defined. After several rounds of evaluation, approximately 80 evaluation criteria were recorded. To ensure that the participating companies are not overwhelmed by this number and to guarantee a high level of participation in the self-disclosure process 30 high-priority criteria were selected, which are considered essential when purchasing governance tools.

5.1 Economic factors

The 5 economic factors include all criteria which are not primarily related to the use of the software, but are relevant for many companies for the selection. Here, for example, the price model, the distribution of the software or the support possibilities play a supporting role.

Table 2: Economic factors

Requirements / Criteria	Explanation / Description
Acquisition costs / Operating costs	What are the acquisition costs or monthly / annual operating costs?
Service provider / Support	Is support offered by the service provider?
License model / Runtime	What is the license model and are there specified runtimes?
Operating expenses	What does the customer's IT have to do to operate the SW?
Compliance / Monitoring of costs / Usage	How is cost transparency and usage ensured? What does the reporting look like?

5.2 Functional factors

The about 15 functional factors make up the largest share and summarize all the requirements that companies place on a governance tool and which specifically serve as a solution, such as the management of user rights or the archiving of inactive teams. In this area, companies should primarily explain the added value of their software compared to the MS Teams standard.

Table 3: Functional factors

Requirements / Criteria	Explanation / Description
Added value compared to standard solution	What is the added value of the tool compared to the MS standard functionality?
Lifecycle management	
Creation of teams	What is the creation process for a new team?
Archiving of inactive teams	After which period of time are teams archived? Which criteria are defined as "inactive"? What does access look like with the status "archived"?
Automatic creation of teams	Can team rooms be created automatically? How does the approval process work? Which rules can be set (e. g. owner regulation, 4-eyes principle)?
Archiving chat messages	According to which criteria are chat messages archived?
Lifecycle of shared files / directories	How are shared files managed regarding lifecycle?
Naming conventions / General naming rules	
Management of naming rules	Which naming rules can be created / used when creating a team?
Reporting	
Scope of standard reports	What is included in the standard reports in terms of added value compared to teams report?
Export of reports	Export of reports in case of rule violations / DSGVO requests etc.
User management	
Roles / rights management	Creation process, recertification of authorizations, licenses management. Can roles be assigned / split within the Governance App?
User accounts	How is the user lifecycle managed for users?
AVV / NDA for external Azure AD guests	Process for creating guest accounts to ensure data protection for e. g. order processing contract or non-disclosure agreement.
Manage external users	How to renew guests? Is there an overview of access management for external users (teams, files, ...)?
Document / media management	
Document / media library	How can the up / download of media be controlled?
Design / Layout	
Templates / Themes	Can templates be created for team types?

This and the following pages are included in the full version.

6. Expert evaluation of the most important tools

As part of a self-reporting exercise, all 27 vendors were asked to comment on the 30 high-priority requirements and to describe and evaluate the performance of their own tool in relation to the respective criterion. On the basis of this self-disclosure, intensive demo sessions were held with the tool vendors, in which the most important aspects were demonstrated and explained in live operation and in which our evaluators were also able to question specific aspects. The results of these live sessions are documented in the following as an expert evaluation and supplemented by the “scored self-assessment of the providers”.

6.1 Expert evaluation of Arvato Systems – NAVOO

Company, product focus and addressed market

Global IT specialist Arvato Systems supports major companies in Digital Transformation. About 3,300 staff in over 25 locations stand for in-depth technology expertise, industry knowledge, and focus on customer requirements. Working as a team, they develop innovative IT solutions, transition their clients into the Cloud, integrate digital processes, and take on IT systems operation and support. As a part of the Bertelsmann-owned Arvato Group network, Arvato Systems has the unique capability to work across the entire value chain. Through their strong strategic partner network with global top players such as AWS, Google, Microsoft, and SAP, Arvato Systems continuously strengthens its know-how and leverage the most advanced technology.

The following company is a customer of Arvato Systems in the NAVOO area:

B. BRAUN TERRITORY DOCKWEILER

Company evaluation:

Among other things, Arvato Systems is a Member of the Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program with 6 designations and 5 specializations and is excellent in Microsoft Azure, Microsoft 365 and Dynamics 365.

This and the following pages are included in the full version.
Here the tools are described and evaluated neutrally by the experts.

In addition, Avvato Systems has numerous ISO certifications, which can be viewed at the following link: https://avva.to/RDCnW

Economic framework

NAVOO is registered by a tenant administrator in the customer's tenant, authorized and then independently provides a best-practice configuration for governance settings and templates. All settings are stored on the customer's tenant within a central SharePoint site.

The product is offered on a sliding scale according to the number of employees. It is divided into 6 groups, starting with 100 – 999 employees at a cost of € 2.88 per user/month and ending with > 30,000 employees at a cost of € 0.36 per user/month. This is the catalogue price only.

Economic evaluation*	Basic functionality	Extended functionality	Comfort features
Acquisition costs/Operating costs	●	●	●
Service provider/Support	●	●	●
License model/Runtime	●	●	●
Operating expenses	●	●	●
Compliance/Monitoring of costs/Usage	●	●	●

Fig. 9: Economic evaluation Avvato Systems*

Functional framework

General approach

NAVOO is a governance solution to structure and simplify secure collaboration within Teams, SharePoint, OneDrive, Planner, Viva Engage (Yammer) and with guest users. It all starts with the creation of templates and use cases for Microsoft Teams and SharePoint. Here, almost all possibilities and artefacts of Microsoft 365 can be considered and in addition, an individual classification of the team can be made. Detailed control over the permissions of the user groups involved as well as the monitoring of governance and self-service processes to control the lifecycle of teams, channels, SharePoint, approvals, and content complement the Microsoft standard. This is done seamlessly through native integration with existing tools such as Teams or SharePoint, achieving broad user adoption.

7. 27 Tool providers in detail

365 Digital Consulting

365 Digital Consulting, headquartered in Sydney, Australia, was founded in 2018 and employs about 20 people. The company offers products such as Office 365, SharePoint, MS Teams or Dynamics365 and is active worldwide. Numerous partners from around the world support 365 Digital Consulting.

The website offers free downloads of “Free Whitepaper” and a “Free e-book”, and companies can take advantage of a free hour of Office 365 consulting. free of charge. Different license packages are available on the website viewable.

In addition, a support portal is provided through which companies can create support tickets.

Acoris

In 2012, Acoris was founded in Darmstadt, Hessen, and has since been headquartered there. The company employs about 20 people who help customers on issues related to the digital workplace, with a particular focus on SharePoint, MS 365 and MS Teams. Acoris works with several partners and supports numerous customers worldwide.

Arvato Systems

Arvato Systems is an internationally operating IT company headquartered in Gütersloh. The company is part of the service company Arvato and thus belongs to the Bertelsmann Group.

Arvato Systems formerly traded as “Bertelsmann mediaSystems”. In August 2000, “Bertelsmann mediaSystems” was incorporated into the then Arvato AG as a new division and renamed Arvato Systems in 2002. As one of the three so-called Arvato Solution Groups – largely independently operating units of Arvato – Arvato Systems focuses on IT solutions and services related to the digital transformation of companies (B2B). In the financial year 2022, the company generated revenues of € 414 million with more than 3,300 employees. In the MS environment, Arvato employs more than 500 experts and offers an extensive tool landscape.

AvePoint

Since 2001, AvePoint, Inc. has been headquartered in Jersey City, New Jersey, with an operational headquarters in Richmond, Virginia. The company has 26 offices and approximately 1,800 employees worldwide. AvePoint offers a SaaS platform and data management solutions to streamline SaaS operations and facilitate secure digital collaboration, and serves more than serves over 9 million cloud users. In addition, AvePoint is the only provider of a complete suite of SaaS solutions for migrating, managing and protection of data in Microsoft 365.

There are partner programs for Managed Service Providers, Value Added Resellers, Cloud Consultants and IP Co-Creators, and an extensive certification program is for partners offered. It is estimated that there are hundreds of partners of partners in numerous countries. The software is used by a wide range of industries, including local governments, higher education, financial services, healthcare, manufacturing, managed Services, retail, and the USA public sector.

AvePoint offers comprehensive training opportunities such as workshops and training programs, and the software is available for a 30-day free trial.

Three support options are available, including the Basic level with Web support ticket service, email messaging service, and minor releases and service packs. The Standard level expands on these features with personal telephone support and major releases and upgrades, and the Premier version provides 24/7 availability for all support components. Minor releases and Service Packs are offered in all three support options, while major releases and upgrades are only available in the Standard and Premier options.

BCC

BCC, has been in existence since 1996, with headquarters in Eschborn/Frankfurt am Main and an international office in London, and has approximately 40 employees. The company operates as a Microsoft and HCL business partner, offering a wide range of solutions for the management of Microsoft and HCL infrastructure. They work with more than 800 enterprises and SMBs around the world and have 3 million users who rely on BCC solutions.

Boddenberg IT Consultancy

Ulrich Boddenberg IT Consultancy is headquartered in Dortmund, Germany and provides tactical and strategic consulting focused on Microsoft 365/Office 365, SharePoint, Teams, the Power Platform, and SQL Server.

In addition, the company also offers proprietary developments such as. DragPad® and the CosyTrack® family of products that help administrators use with Microsoft 365/Office 365, SharePoint and Teams. In addition the IT consultancy also offers open online courses and training for users, Solution Support staff and admins.

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Cayosoft

Founded in 2013, Cayosoft is headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. There are 17 employees listed on LinkedIn, but the exact number is unknown. Cayosoft offers a wide range of products to manage and protect the Microsoft environment, including solutions for Active Directory, Azure AD, Microsoft 365 and Exchange Online, all integrated into a unified platform integrated. The company works with leading partners and offers free tools for testing as well as free demos. Cayosoft offers three licensing models – Administrator, Guardian and Guardian Forest Recovery – with Pricing available upon request.

All license models include upgrade support and a service day as well as standard support with a case-based online support and a response time of up to three hours. In addition, first-class support is also available, with a response time of 1– 2 hours and web-based support. Cayosoft's software is represented worldwide.

EasyLife 365 AG

EasyLife 365 AG established its headquarters in Naar, Switzerland in 2021 as a subsidiary of ExpertsInside and currently employs 5 people. The company offers a clearer presentation of Microsoft Teams and SharePoint sites, especially for customers in the HealthCare sector, banks and insurance companies. It has several partners in Switzerland, Germany and Belgium and is distributed in the DACH countries. Customers can book a one-hour demo, to get to know the products.

The base price per year is € 600 for 25 users, including free updates. An additional license costs € 24. Support is included in the subscription, but for premium support you have to pay additional € 256. Updates are included free of charge in the basic package.

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This and the following pages are included in the full version.

Hub Collab

In 2017, Hub Collab was founded with headquarters in Occitanie, France. The company specializes in Microsoft 365, productivity, bots and adoption and employs about 37 people who share its vision and mission. Although the company has not announced any official partners, it is active worldwide and has numerous customers in various industries.

Isolutions

Isolutions is a leading Swiss company founded in 1999 in Bern. With approximately 225 employees, it is active worldwide and has a broad range of customers. The company is specialized in as well as corporate resource planning. Thanks to its expertise and experience, Isolutions has received several awards, including the "Partner of the of the Year" award. In order to meet the needs of its customers, the company also offers a comprehensive online consulting service.

Marque360

Marque360 is a company based in New Jersey, USA. The company employs 17 people who work to support customers worldwide with innovative solutions. Marque360 offers a broad range of products and services, including the Microsoft Project Platform, the Microsoft Power Platform, the 360 App Suite and support services. In addition, the company offers various workshops such as Powerapps, Power BI, PMO Governance and Microsoft Work Management Envisioning. To convince its customers, Marque360 also offers a free trial.

Modality (now Navstar)

Modality was founded in 1998 in Poole, Dorset, United Kingdom, and now has an impressive 933 employees. They specialize in cloud services and work closely with several partners. Modality operates globally and has its focus on providing high quality cloud services.

MondayCoffee

MondayCoffee AG has its roots in 2000 in Uzdorf, Switzerland. The company now has 51 employees who focus on providing innovative solutions for businesses. With more than 400 customers worldwide MondayCoffee offers two main products: CoffeeNet 365, an enterprise software that helps companies adopt digital ways of working, as well as EspressoNet 365, a digital collaboration and communication solution designed specifically for small and medium-sized businesses. Through the combination of years of experience and deep industry knowledge has given

8. Self-assessment tool provider

In an extensive process, during the period November 2022 to February 2023, all 27 providers were asked for a self-assessment in accordance with the criteria grid. A total of 10 companies carefully completed this and were also willing to verify this in a demo session. Thereby it was on the one hand a textual explanation, in which form the respective criterion is fulfilled, on the other hand also for a point assessment on a scale of 1–10, where 10 is maximum fulfillment and 0 is no fulfillment.

In the following, these self-assessments are reproduced unedited. It should be noted that the manufacturers rated themselves very confidently with a high score for many criteria. For reasons of expense, it is not possible for us to set such a detailed expert assessment as a comparison, so we refer here to the "responsibility" of the supplier. Nevertheless, we didn't pass up the chance to reproduce the points rating, because it is possible to identify criteria that have not yet been given such a high weighting by the respective manufacturers. This point evaluation may be supplemented by an expert assessment in a later edition of the study.

8.1 Self-assessment Arvato Systems NAVOO

Table 5: Self-assessment of economic factors NAVOO

Requirements / Criteria	Explanation / Description	Self-assessment for degree of fulfillment (1–10)
Acquisition costs / Operating costs	The costs depend on the number of licensed users in the M365 tenant. Transparency is achieved through different license scales, which vary according to the customer size. The price range is from € 2.88 to € 0.36 per user. There are no additional acquisition costs, but a joint implementation project is recommended to ensure a seamless integration	8
Service provider / Support	Third level support / technical support via direct contact persons is included in the license price. Further chargeable support services and SLA's up to 24x7 can be agreed individually	10

This and the following pages are included in the full version.

Requirements/Criteria	Explanation/Description	Self-assessment for degree of fulfillment (1–10)
License model/Runtime	Licensing takes into account the customer's active, internal M365 users. Cost transparency is provided by different price scales. The minimum runtime is 1 year and there are discount opportunities for longer durations	10
Operating expenses	NAVOO is a SaaS product and is operated by Arvato Systems in Azure. There is a low initial configuration effort when setting up NAVOO in the M365 tenant together with the customer. NAVOO receives regular updates that also contain new features. If the customer needs to take action to activate a feature, he will be informed in advance via the roadmap and release notes	8
Compliance/Monitoring of costs/Usage	The costs are transparent and contractually fixed for the number of users and runtime. Billing takes place on a monthly basis. Should the number of licensed users change by more than 10 % during the runtime of the contract, the contract will be adjusted in cooperation with the customer	8

Table 6: Self-assessment of functional factors NAVOO

Requirements/Criteria	Explanation/Description	Self-assessment for degree of fulfillment (1–10)
Added value compared to the standard solution	NAVOO is a governance solution for structuring and simplifying secure collaboration within Teams, SharePoint, OneDrive, Planner, Viva Engage (Yammer) and with guest users. NAVOO extends the Microsoft standard with template / use case-based creation and classification of Teams and/or SharePoint that takes into account nearly all possible settings and artifacts. It also supports detailed settings for the permissions of the participating user groups and automatic governance and self-service processes that control the lifecycle of Teams, Channels, SharePoints, sharing and content. It integrates natively with existing tools such as Teams or SharePoint to ensure a high user adoption	10
Lifecycle management		
Creating teams	Users create or request new teams or SharePoints via a form/wizard directly within the Teams client. They only have access to the templates released for them, which can be confirmed via an optional approval process. The creation process includes, among other things, an customer-defined classification of the team, the usage of naming conventions, compliance settings such as external sharing, the usage of Purview Information Protection Labels, control of the owners assigned to the team, a duplicate check and the optional confirmation of different disclaimers	10

9. Further evaluation criteria

A total of 80 criteria were identified during the requirements analysis with the mbuf user companies. For capacity reasons, the self-reporting could only be carried out with 30 high-priority criteria. Without such a "reduction" to core criteria, the response would have been too weak. For the other user companies, however, the other criteria surveyed are also important. We have also listed these initially "low" priority criteria below. Then each user company can be inspired here and decide what its own "catalog of criteria" looks like. In the enclosed XLS these are also already in the criteria raster, however without "self information" of the asked tool manufacturers.

Economic factors

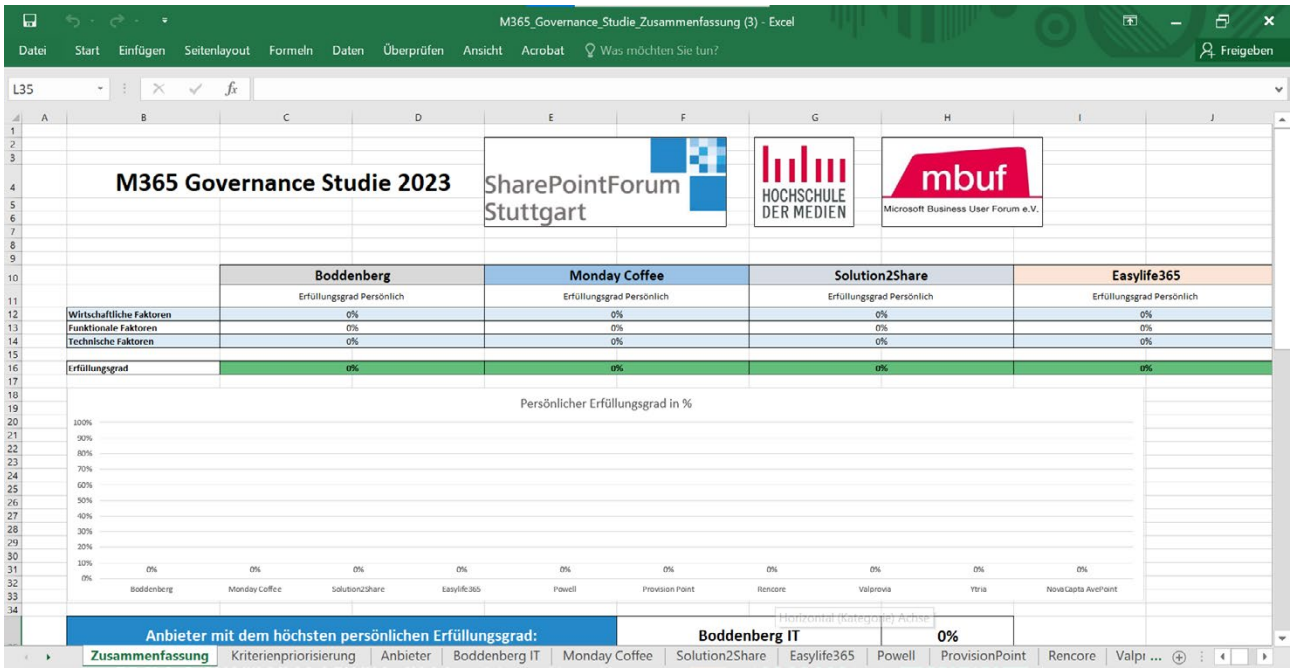
Table 26: Other economic factors

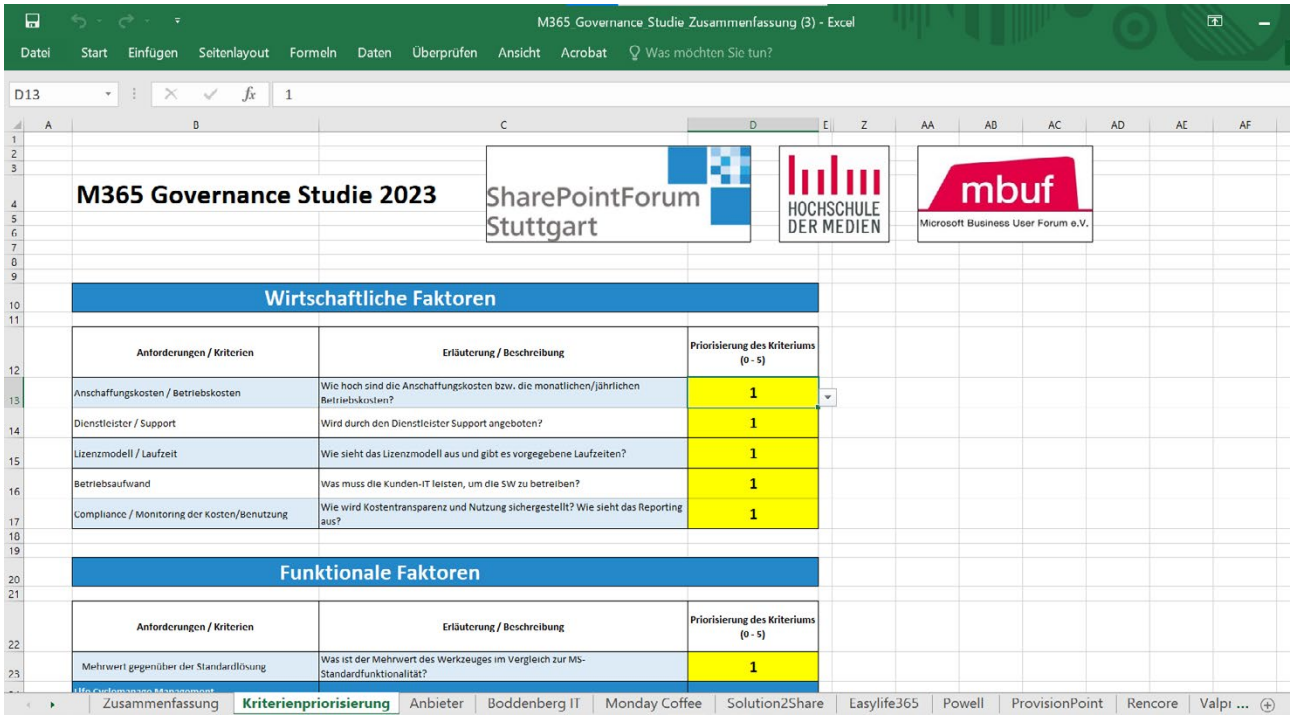
Requirements / Criteria	Explanation / Description
Service provider/Support	Is support offered by the service provider?
License model/Runtime	What does the license model look like and are there specified runtimes?
Operating expenses	What does the customer's IT have to do to operate the software?
Compliance/Monitoring of costs/Usage	How is cost transparency and usage ensured? What does the reporting look like?
Vendor (year established)	How long has the vendor been in the market?
Number of employees	How many employees (FT) as of 10/2021?
Service provider Support via partner	Support is offered by partner
Distribution of the software	Number of reference customers, further information on license distribution
Training offer	Is there a "standard training offer"?
Addressed market	
License cost per user	What is the cost of license for companies with 1–99 users. What is the cost of license for 100–1,000 users. What is the cost of license per user for > 1,000 users
Training costs	What is the training effort for introduction in the company in training days?
Support / maintenance costs	Annual costs for software update and basic services in % of the license costs
Support and service options	

This and the following pages are included in the full version.

10. Interactive XLS assessment tool

With the print/PDF version, an interactive XLS assessment tool is also purchased, in which the 30 high priority core criteria identified by the expert team have been supplemented and documented by the providers' self-reporting. This interactive XLS assessment tool can now be provided by each user/reader with their own priorities and also supplemented with their own assessments of fulfillment. An automatic evaluation in the context of a utility value analysis can make the decision-making process stringent and transparent for the organization and thus save extensive consulting or process costs for the user companies.





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