OFFICE 365 AND XINK

The purpose of this document is to illustrate the unique offering that Xink provides Office 365 customers. When it comes to email signature management, there is perhaps no better application for this purpose than Xink. Let's dive into the details!

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OFFICE 365 AT A GLANCE

OFFICE 365 IS A CLOUD-BASED EMAIL TOOL, ESSENTIALLY CONSISTING OF THREE DIFFERENT COMPONENTS:

1   **Outlook** (the main email program for Windows or Mac)

2   **Outlook Web App** (the web version of Outlook)

3   **Mobile Emailing** (the mobile version of Outlook, along with various other email apps connecting to Office 365)

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#1 OUTLOOK FOR DESKTOP

Outlook is the main email program used by Office 365 users. It is typically installed on Mac and Windows devices. It enables the user to read and compose emails, maintain their calendar, take notes, and other common tasks. At the same time, it is one of the oldest email programs in the world today. This means it can have its limitations.

In Outlook you can create your own email signature and this email signature is visible while composing an email. You can also create and choose optional email signatures which can be used for different purposes. These email signatures are chosen by the user him or herself. Outlook also supports different signatures when replying to an email, rather than when composing a new email.

OUTLOOK WEB APP (OWA)

In plain terms, OWA is a web-accessible version of Outlook, hence the name. When accessing OWA through a browser, users will find that it offers the same basic features as Outlook but in a simpler, stripped-down version. You can open OWA from any browser, from anywhere in the world, as long as it is connected to the Internet. And that is because OWA is not installed anywhere – it works in the browser itself.

OWA, like Outlook, also allows the user to create an email signature, and this signature is visible while composing the email. However, OWA does not offer optional email signatures, as Outlook does, and it is not possible to have a different reply signature either (this is possible in Outlook).

#3

MOBILE EMAILING

Mobile devices make it possible to sync a built-in email app (such as Apple Mail) with an Office 365 email account. Of course, the email app that you use will impact your experience. The main mail apps are Outlook for iPhone, Apple Mail (the iPhone's default mail application) and Google's Android Mail. Each email app behaves differently and has different properties.

What's important to remember about mobile email apps is that they are closed. This means it is not possible to interact with them through the Xink platform. You can add your own email signature manually but you can't use optional signatures or have different signatures for replies. There is only space for one signature.

WHAT ARE OFFICE 365 USERS STRUGGLING WITH?

Most Office 365 customers are using all three platforms to send and receive emails: Outlook, OWA, and Mobile. Unfortunately, *the inability to centrally manage email signatures across programs and devices* leads to users *updating and managing email signature themselves*, on an individual basis. This is an issue that is very difficult to solve; in fact, it is so difficult that it is rarely done. Instead, companies essentially embrace a free-for-all approach, which inevitably leads to emails that are inconsistent and unprofessional being sent out to customers, clients, and peers.

Office 365 customers must look to third-party vendors for a solution – like Xink.

WHAT DOES XINK OFFER TO MANAGE EMAIL SIGNATURES IN OFFICE 365?

Xink offers a solution to all of the challenges facing modern email users via the Xink platform.

✓ We fully support the integration to OWA – *we let customers integrate signatures stored in Xink with the OWA platform.*

✓ There is no interaction between the end user (the sender) and Xink – *the signature simply appears.*

✓ The user can see the email signature *as they are composing the email.*

✓ The integration between Xink and Office 365 works in the cloud – *nothing needs to be updated on your PC or Mac.*

WE SUPPORT THE OUTLOOK EMAIL PROGRAM

We support the Outlook email program fully by offering an app which is easily deployed to all PCs and Mac computers. This app is the glue between Outlook and Xink for each user. It will automatically pull the signatures from Xink based on who the user is. And best of all, all standard Outlook features are available as usual. Not only will the user see their email signature as they are composing the email, they can choose between additional signatures by right-clicking the signature field. Just as they're used to!

OUR SERVER-SIDE SOLUTION FOR MOBILE

As it is not possible to directly interact with any email app on a smartphone or tablet, we offer a server-side solution*. This server-side solution reroutes the email over Xink's servers, where the email signatures are added and routed back to the customer's Office 365 account. Then the email is sent with the appropriate signature attached. As the signature is added after the user sends the email, they will not see the signature while they are composing their message on the smartphone. However, the recipient will see the signature as if it was sent from any other email program.

The server-side solution can be used across programs and devices – not merely mobile – if a business chooses to.

WHERE DOES THE EMPLOYEE DATA COME FROM?

The employee contact details found in the email signature (e.g., name, phone number, email address) can be pulled directly from the directory where this information is stored. This is most likely an Active Directory (AD), which is a cornerstone of the internal IT infrastructure. The AD will likely contain the contact details of all users and be kept up-to-date by IT.

Another commonly used directory is the Azure Active Directory (AAD), which is an Active Directory in the cloud hosted by Microsoft.

Xink can integrate with both systems. A synchronization with Xink is set up so that employee details are pushed to Xink, where the email signatures are being generated, stored and made available for OWA, Outlook, and mobile devices via the methods described. When employee contact details change, or new employees are added or removed, the email signatures will update automatically to reflect changes made to your directory.

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