



# Scaling Effectively

When you manage multiple clients, the chaos will come.  
Now with Cloud User Hub, a new era begins.

As a growing Microsoft Cloud Service Provider, the bittersweet pains of business growth may be all too familiar. When your client base expands, your team will no doubt be spending more time managing operational tasks and challenges. Day-to-day processes such as license management and reporting may no longer be scaling at the speed required for today's 'always-on' businesses.

Customers are expecting more than ever from today's Microsoft Cloud Service Providers, and scaling up may leave you thin in areas, and not always able to meet your customers' increasingly high expectations. As you hire more service desk employees to support demand, the risk of human error increases, while profit margins begin to dilute. Coupled with time-zone challenges and the irregular working patterns of businesses today, it is certainly a challenging environment to navigate.

If not managed effectively, Microsoft Cloud Service Providers may gradually become less efficient and less profitable, which has an impact on customer loyalty and the longevity of your business.

## A day in the life of a Microsoft CSP

As a growing Microsoft CSP, day-to-day administration tasks may become repetitive and time-consuming.

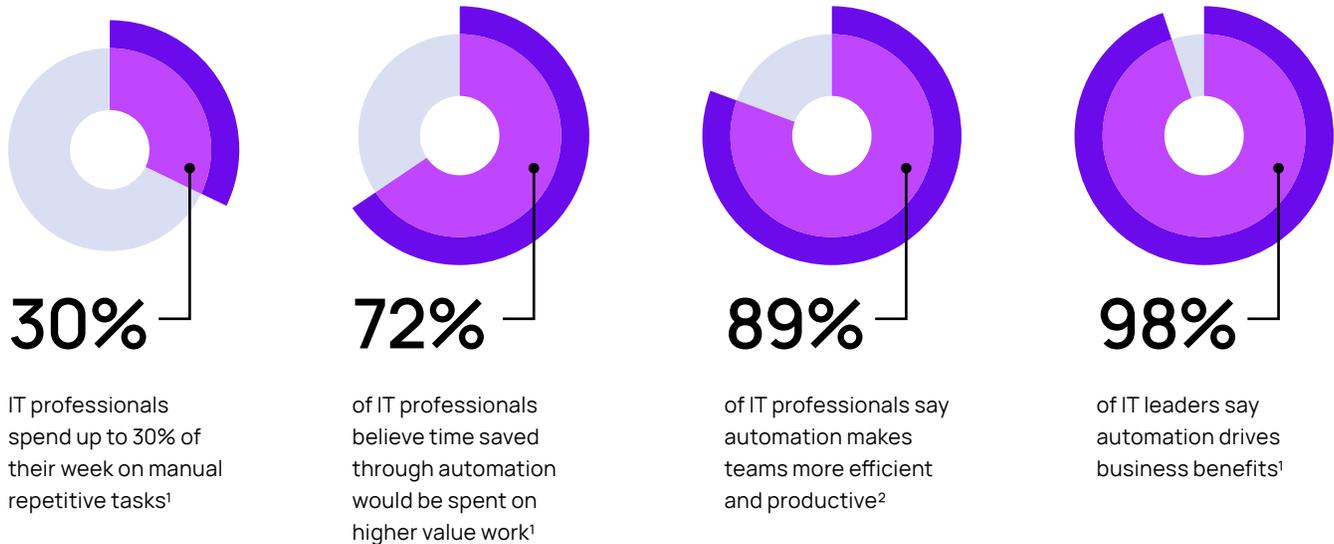
- Frequently logging in and out of customer admin portals to purchase and assign licenses
- Time-consuming end-of-month billing processes
- Manual processes such as password resets
- Manual data consolidation and reporting exercises



Helpdesk teams can easily become overloaded with these types of tasks, taking time away from more important and value-adding work. At the same time, managing multiple end-customers and multi-tenant environments can start to become complex and challenging from a management and reporting perspective.

# Automation: Key Facts

## Why automation is vital for Microsoft CSPs



Automation solves many process-related issues involving manual task repetition. According to recent statistics, 98% of IT business leaders say that automating processes is key to driving business benefits.<sup>1</sup>

In one study, 40% of workers surveyed were spending at least a quarter of their work week on manual, repetitive tasks<sup>2</sup>. In more process-heavy environments, including IT services management, helpdesk teams could be spending up to 30% of their time on simple, repetitive tasks which could easily be automated.<sup>1</sup>

74% of respondents, both business leaders and employees, believe that at least parts of their job could be automated.<sup>3</sup>

86% of respondents say automation makes teams more efficient and productive and 72% believe the time saved would be spent on higher value work.<sup>1</sup>

To put this in perspective, the opportunity for Microsoft CSPs lies in doing away with productivity-killing manual tasks, and instead, automating processes to improve efficiency. This will free up your team to focus on providing even more value to your customers.

“Automation technology can help reduce costs, increase accuracy, improve service delivery, help to maintain compliance, and improve customer experience.<sup>1</sup>”

# Improving efficiency

## 4 ways Microsoft Partners can automate day-to-day tasks and unlock efficiency

### Consolidate partner data into a single system

One of the most tedious aspects of managing multiple Microsoft customers is having to log in and out of multiple partner center environments. Invest in a platform that helps you manage your partner data from a single environment.

### Automate provisioning of Microsoft 365 resources

Don't repeat yourself! Adopting predefined templates for common Microsoft 365 configurations will help you migrate your customers to the cloud quicker and eliminate lots of repetitive setup tasks.

### Unify your reporting with a single analytics tool

When you're managing multiple tenants, end-of-month reporting can be a real pain. Leverage Reporting and Analytics tools to unify your partner center data to make sure you bill your customers correctly.

### Streamline and automate cloud billing processes

Creating invoices per customer is an absolute time-killer. Utilize purpose-built cloud billing tools to fully automate your billing processes and connect your own systems via APIs or exporting mechanisms.



# Getting started

A short checklist that will help get you on the right track

Task	Description
Map business processes	Create process maps for key business processes. For example, your 'as-is' process for purchasing and assigning a Microsoft license to an end-customer's user account. Determine the number of steps involved and identify potential opportunities for step reduction and automation.
Quantify the business opportunity	Allocate time to shadow a member of your helpdesk team. Build an understanding of how precisely they manage typical day-to-day tasks. Use the stopwatch on your mobile phone and time how long it takes for them to complete a task. Replicate a couple of times. Use this as a base and multiply it by how many tasks your team complete each day or in a given month. This will give you an estimate of what time could be saved through automation.
Create a systems architecture map	It may have been a while since you mapped out the number of systems or tools your business is using to manage day-to-day processes. Open PowerPoint or another preferred tool and draw out the various systems involved in, for example, license management, consumption and usage reporting, customer billing, and so on. Doing so will help you visualize data flows and where opportunities exist to streamline or consolidate systems.
Gather insights and conduct a survey	Today, getting insights from your customers is easy. Ask your marketing team to prepare a quick survey to ask customers which elements of your service offering could be improved. At the same time, review your support tickets and other customer feedback sources to validate your case for investing in a new tool.
Evaluate tools in the market	You're no doubt already very familiar with requirements gathering. Considering the above, prepare a list of your key business and functional requirements. Head online and search for available Microsoft Cloud automation tools. Don't forget to go straight to the AppSource to review available and approved third-party applications. Produce a quick comparison table and evaluate against your key needs, e.g., price, completeness of the solution, functional strengths, integrations etc.
Prepare a business case	Once you have gathered the above information, produce a simple business case presentation for your management team. This should be no more than 10 slides and should highlight the 'problem', backed up with evidence from customers and a quantifiable business benefit if a solution is put in place.

# Introducing Cloud User Hub

## The comprehensive cloud automation solution for growing Microsoft Partners

Cloud User Hub is a scalable cloud automation solution that enables Microsoft Partners to provision, manage, deploy, and report on Microsoft 365 services through a single, powerful, and intuitive user interface.

### Here's what you get with Cloud User Hub:

- One convenient dashboard
- Game-changing automation
- Predefined workflows
- Reporting and analytics

[Learn More](#)

And discover how Cloud User Hub can help you  
<https://www.n-able.com/products/cloud-user-hub>

#### About N-able

N-able fuels IT services providers with powerful software solutions to monitor, manage, and secure their customers' systems, data, and networks. Built on a scalable platform, we offer secure infrastructure and tools to simplify complex ecosystems, as well as resources to navigate evolving IT needs. We help partners excel at every stage of growth, protect their customers, and expand their offerings with an ever-increasing, flexible portfolio of integrations from leading technology providers. [n-able.com](https://www.n-able.com)

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<sup>1</sup>Towards data science, 2019, All the Robotic Process Automation (RPA) Stats You Need to Know <https://towards-datascience.com/all-the-robotic-process-automation-rpa-stats-you-need-to-know-bcec22eaaad9>

<sup>2</sup>Smartsheet Report, 2017, Automation in the Workplace 2017

<sup>3</sup>WorkMarket 2020 In(Sight) Report, 2017, What AI & Automation Really Mean For Work

