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Corporate Counsel Business Journal

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SharePoint Isn't a Legal DMS—Until You Make It One

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Keith Vallely

Keith Vallely is a graduate of the University of Chicago, completing his studies in the late 1980s. With over twenty-five years of experience in the document management industry, Keith has built his expertise in sales, marketing, and consulting. Over the course of his career, he has broadened his skill set to include design, architecture, and solution-based consulting, especially within the Microsoft 365 ecosystem. His primary focus has centered on SharePoint and the Power Platform.

Subscription Overload is Everywhere. At home, we juggle Hulu, Paramount+, Disney+, Netflix, Peacock, Max, Amazon Prime—the list never ends—because each one has that one show we can't miss. So, we add another subscription... and another. Businesses and law firms are falling into the same trap—only with software.

The rise of SaaS changed everything. In the early 2000s, software came as a one-time purchase—with a few updates sprinkled in until it eventually became outdated. Then SaaS arrived and flipped the model. Instead of a heavy upfront cost, we were offered smaller, predictable monthly payments and the promise of always-updated software without the hassle of installing new versions. For users, it felt like freedom. For software companies, it was a goldmine—steady, recurring revenue that allowed them to focus on rolling out new features and supporting existing customers rather than constantly chasing new ones. In many ways, SaaS applied the car-leasing model to software: lower monthly payments, continuous upgrades, and most importantly a cycle you never truly exit.

SaaS, 20 years later, looks very different. By 2026, many software providers have been swept up by private-equity firms or taken public, and the pressure to sustain recurring revenue has intensified. The result? Fewer updates, thinner support, and steadily rising subscription fees. And the increases aren't slowing down. Gartner's "[CIO's Guide to Effectively Negotiating GenAI with Enterprise Software Vendors](#)" warns that the near-universal addition of AI agents across SaaS platforms will push costs up to 40 percent higher by the end of 2027—with price hikes accelerating, not stabilizing. In other words, the subscription model that once promised predictability is now driving an escalating cost curve that every business will feel.

Why SaaS costs are spiking. The surge in subscription pricing isn't just a money grab—it's driven by the hidden economics of AI. Modern AI models demand massive computing power, and only a handful of companies control that infrastructure. SaaS vendors now must rent that power to run the AI agents they're baking into every



product. And like any tenant, they pass the premiums straight to you. Nearly every solution your business subscribes to will absorb these rising costs, funneling more of your budget to the major cloud providers behind the scenes—often the same companies you already buy from, with Microsoft being the most obvious example. The bottom line? As AI becomes embedded into every SaaS product, higher costs are unavoidable. You won't be able to "opt out," because AI features are no longer optional—they're becoming the new baseline for modern software.

Single-point solutions have created a new kind of bloat.

As SaaS vendors work to justify never-ending subscription fees—separate from the constant updates required by Windows or Mac—they've responded by stuffing their products with more features, more modules, and more complexity. Over time, the original reason you purchased the software gets buried under layers of functionality you never asked for. You might adopt a single-point solution to solve one specific business task... and find yourself staring at a cockpit of controls no one understands. Most users end up saying some version of, "I have no idea what any

of this is. I just click here to do the one thing I need.” In effect, Many organizations pay for a Boeing 747 worth of capability, yet only use it to drive to the grocery store.

The long-term cost of the SaaS model is becoming impossible to ignore. Yes, AI agents can increase efficiency and reduce the need for certain staff roles—but that’s only half the story. The other half is far less glamorous: the “affordable” subscription you once justified is now consuming a larger share of your IT budget every year.

And with every workflow automated and every action logged, SaaS platforms generate mountains of new data (your data)—data that must be stored, secured, integrated, and ultimately accounted for in the ever-increasing costs of storage and security.

To keep pace with rising subscription costs, firms and businesses often face the same pressure point: reducing staff or absorbing the cost. This cycle is already becoming unsustainable. Software companies, in order to justify the ever-increasing costs of their SaaS or single-point solutions, must now do more than the original intended task. With AI agents, the expectation has grown into the notion that the software will soon do what humans currently do.

These SaaS costs can never be paid off and thus are systems you can never truly own. You’re leasing the car forever. And meanwhile, your company’s departments find themselves trapped on a treadmill of rising expenses and increasingly complex, rarely used features—a rat wheel no organization can afford to stay on.

Does any of this sound familiar?

The old way is becoming the new way again. For decades,

American businesses and law firms have purchased software to streamline processes and improve efficiency. Yet today, many organizations find themselves repeating the same pattern: buying a new subscription for a specific department or practice area—even when they already subscribe to multiple tools that do nearly the same thing. Why?

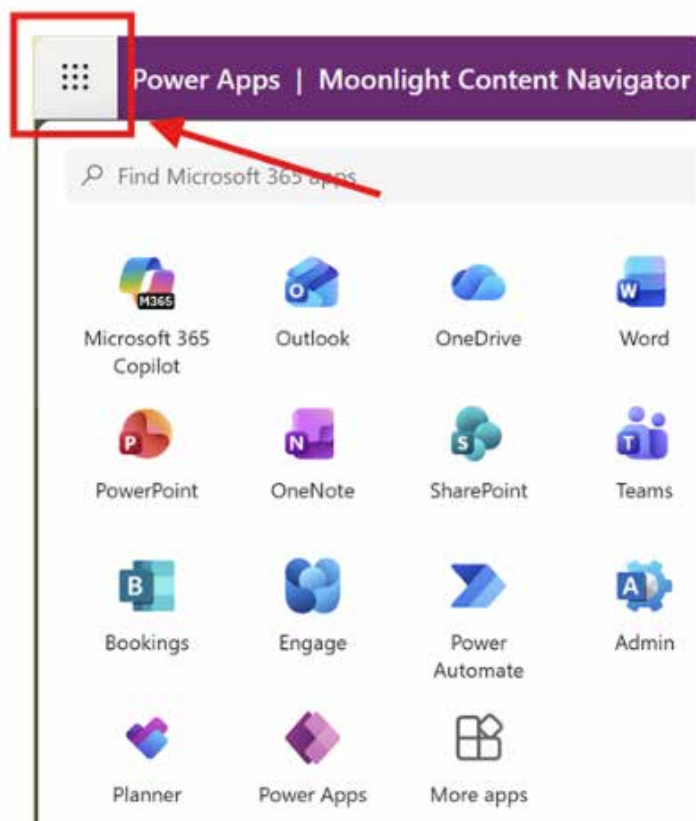
Because they don’t want their operations dictated by software. They want the software to conform to their business or legal process – typically a process they believe has already been refined and optimized over time. And that’s a fair point. However, it can also lead to subscription sprawl unless a solution can meet these three critical criteria:

- It must fit the existing business process perfectly.
- It must cost less—and perform better—than adding more staff.
- It must be simple, intuitive, and easy to use.

There is a platform that meets those criteria, and most organizations already subscribe to it: Microsoft 365. Companies and firms that build solutions on Microsoft’s platform gain immediate advantages—a lower IT operational cost, a single, unified layer of security, and centralized content storage. Even more importantly, because Microsoft 365 already houses your email, documents, files, images, PDFs, and videos, it positions your organization to execute long-term AI strategies using your own data—not someone else’s third-party learning model.

Secure. Private. Cost-efficient. That is the Microsoft 365 model. And you’re already paying for it.

Microsoft 365's "Waffle." After signing in to Office.com, you'll find a small grid of nine dots in the upper-left corner—the Microsoft 365 "Waffle." Most people have clicked it at least once, often without realizing just how much power lives behind that simple icon.



Open it, and you're greeted with a suite of applications that come bundled with your subscription—many of which are underused or never considered at all. Familiar names like OneNote, SharePoint, Teams, and OneDrive sit alongside powerful yet often overlooked tools such as Planner, Power Apps, Power Automate, and Bookings. What most organizations don't realize is that Microsoft's

strategy mirrors that of a utility company. Just like electricity, water, or gas, Microsoft aims to be a permanent, essential part of your operational infrastructure.

Every Microsoft 365 subscriber receives storage, email management, content management, task and calendar tools, and—most importantly—the ability to integrate all of them. Taken together, these capabilities, combined with *your own private data* and the AI layer provided by Copilot, form a potent, cost-effective foundation for your business or firm. The tools are already there. The value is already paid for. The opportunity is simply waiting to be unlocked.

Moonlight 365 Technologies.

With more than 50 years of combined experience in business and legal process management across a wide range of technologies, Moonlight 365 Technologies, Inc. delivers what Microsoft experts call the "final mile." After years of working closely with Microsoft professionals, one reality has become clear: when Microsoft looks at industry verticals—finance, insurance, legal, and others—they see markets that are too narrow for them to build bespoke solutions for. Their mission is broader. Microsoft aims to be the foundational technology infrastructure for every organization, large or small, public or private—not a point-solution vendor. That's why Microsoft relies on experts within each vertical to build tailored solutions on top of the Microsoft 365 platform. Moonlight 365 is one of those experts. We design and deliver customized solutions for businesses, finance organizations, legal departments, and law firms—solutions built using SharePoint, Power Automate, Power Apps, Microsoft Forms, Planner, Power BI, Exchange, and more. Moonlight 365 doesn't just implement Microsoft tools, we orchestrate them into cohesive, intuitive, business-specific systems that solve real operational challenges and drive measurable efficiency.

Moonlight 365 Solutions.

Developing Microsoft-based solutions is an art—and it starts with listening. Moonlight 365 professionals take the time to understand the real needs of your business, department or law firm, then assemble the right mix of Microsoft technologies to meet those requirements with precision. Consider one example. An accounting department at a major firm was overwhelmed by internal requests. What they needed resembled a matter-intake system—but tailored for accounting. Moonlight 365 delivered a streamlined, web-based request form that allowed the firm's professionals to submit exactly what they needed. Each submission automatically generated a "ticket," notified accounting by email, and fed into a centralized dashboard built with Power Automate and Power Apps. From that dashboard, accounting staff could view priorities, assignments, deadlines, and task details, closing items with a click - once completed. Every task was logged, stored, and fully auditable, with reporting available for management. And throughout the entire process, requesters received automatic status updates without anyone lifting a finger. This is just one example of how Moonlight 365 leverages the Microsoft 365 platform to solve real operational challenges—combining deep process expertise with Microsoft's ecosystem to deliver intuitive, reliable, perfectly-fitted solutions.

Moonlight 365 Products.

Now let's start cooking with gasoline. Moonlight 365 has built a suite of powerful, turnkey solutions—including contract management, document management, and knowledge management (aka Content Management)—using the full strength of Microsoft SharePoint. And for organizations already storing content on SharePoint, we've developed a range of tools that dramatically enhance the Microsoft experience: Software that gives users the power to file email and documents directly

to SharePoint with ease, metadata correction engines for when your documents have the wrong metadata, SharePoint security repair tools, business intelligence dashboards, Teams-integrated search, full-content business insight reporting, Word templates that can add SharePoint document ids, and much more. Many Moonlight 365 customers come to us with specific business requirements, assuming they need a custom-built solution—only to discover we've already engineered a product that meets or exceeds those needs. And in most cases, there is no subscription fee, because you own the solution upon delivery. In short, Moonlight 365 Technologies, Inc. is the Microsoft 365 expert your business, department, or law firm has been searching for. We help you fully leverage the platform you already own—so you can reduce reliance on overpriced point solutions and finally start lowering your IT spending.

The Microsoft Conclusion.

The SaaS spiral isn't slowing down—but your spending doesn't have to follow it. The tools, the platform, and the power to take back control of your technology costs are already sitting inside your Microsoft 365 subscription. The only missing piece is a partner who knows how to unlock it. Moonlight 365 Technologies turns Microsoft's ecosystem into a streamlined, tailored, cost-cutting engine for your business or law firm—no bloated subscriptions, no runaway expenses, no flying a 747 to pick up groceries.

If your goal is to reduce software spend, simplify your technology stack and get more value from Microsoft 365, the next step is to rethink how the platform is structured and governed. With the right approach, the tools many organizations already own can begin to function as a coherent legal document environment rather than a collection of disconnected systems. To learn more about how this model works in practice, visit moonlight365.com. ■

Illuminating your path through the technology darkness.



Already pay for Microsoft 365?

Moonlight 365 Technologies, Inc. builds custom Microsoft solutions you need without another monthly subscription.



Document Management

SharePoint-based document, contract, & knowledge management with doc IDs, metadata, security, and workflows.



Moonlight Navigator

Your web-based dashboard to access all your SharePoint and Microsoft 365 files and data, securely.



Moonlight Filer

Save emails, attachments, and documents from Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint directly to SharePoint.



Moonlight WordTemplate

Generate consistent Word files, managed through a centralized database for easy updates, while maintaining your Word Styles.



Moonlight CleanUp

Tired of messy document metadata? Automatically keep your SharePoint files tagged correctly without the manual cleanup.



Moonlight Creator

Effortless creation and maintenance of SharePoint sites, groups, libraries, metadata, security - all designed by your organization.

Moonlight 365 solutions solve problems without software subscriptions.
Including: Matter Intake, Business Process Automation, Admin Utilities, and other solutions.