# Merger Divestiture – An O365 perspective

Mergers and Divestures are strategic directions of organizations for business reasons which have considerable impact on their exiting IT and user workloads. Office 365 (O365) as the preferred modern workplace platform for global corporates is not immune and requires significant investment. Care should be taken to ensure that there are no user disruptions, loss of content and communication (especially legal/compliance/auditory) and zero loss to operating business. As O365 is primarily integrated with the organization's on-premise Active Directory, any transformation activity resulting from merger or divesture involves multiple teams (infra, O365, Security, procurement, management, compliance/risk) and a well-thought-out approach. The objective of this white paper is not to provide a comprehensive solution for the entire transformation process (since it is case specific) but to touch upon key aspects from an O365 perspective for important scenarios.

Key scenarios, Solutions

Below, we will highlight a couple of common scenarios and provide a perspective of the potential way forward. Do note that any O365 solution needs AD and a security solution/mechanism to be implemented first which is not considered. Every customer case will need to be validated per its own specification, but the example scenarios are meant as a guidance and can be used as a stepping stone for further understanding.

Scenario 1: Merger: Company-A is merging into Company-B wherein both the entities have their own sets of Active Directory (forest and domains), applications with a single Office 365(O365) tenant present in Company-A.

1. End State
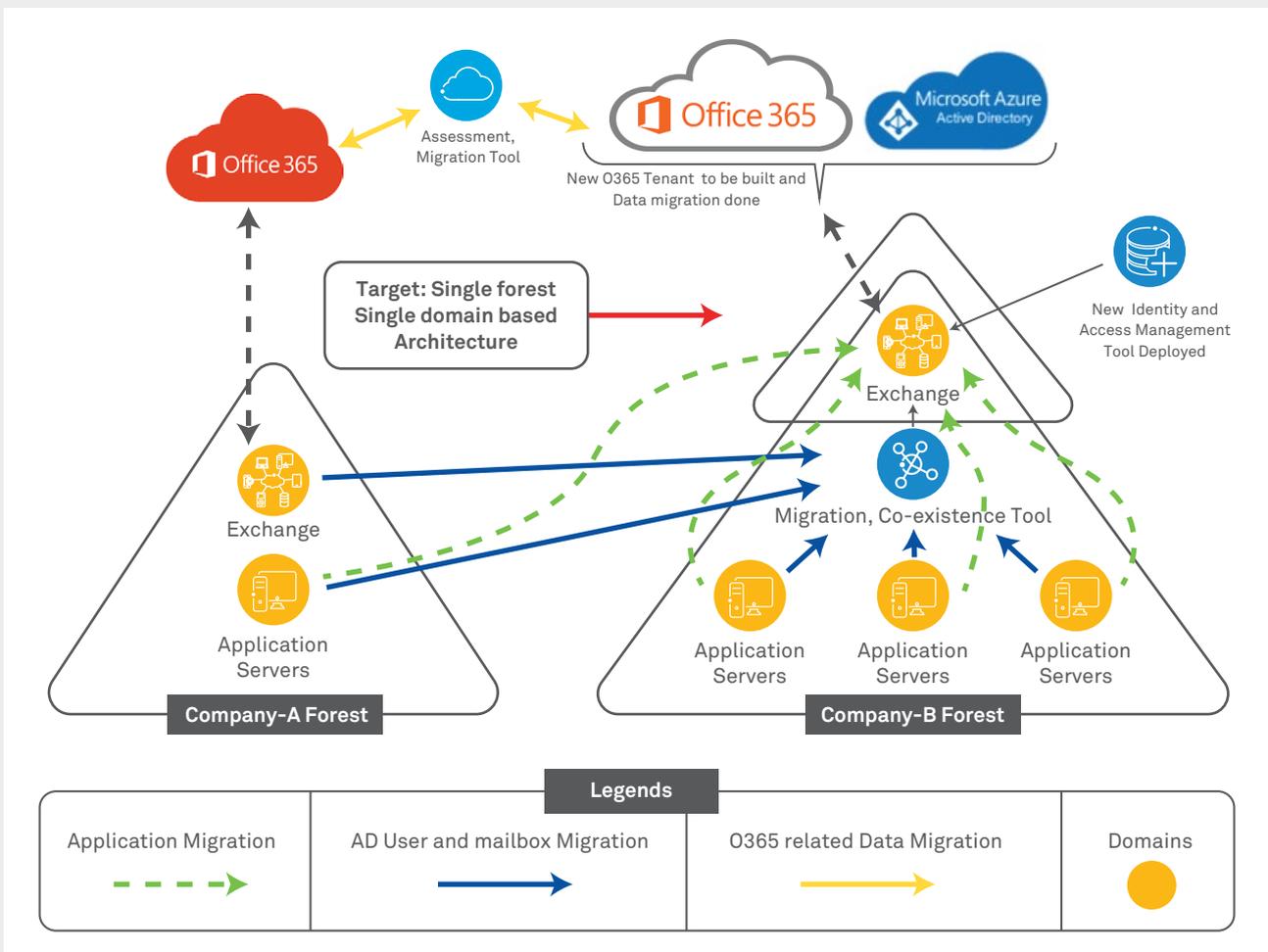
Any transformation activity resulting from merger or divesture of on-premise AD, involves multiple teams and a well-thought-out approach.
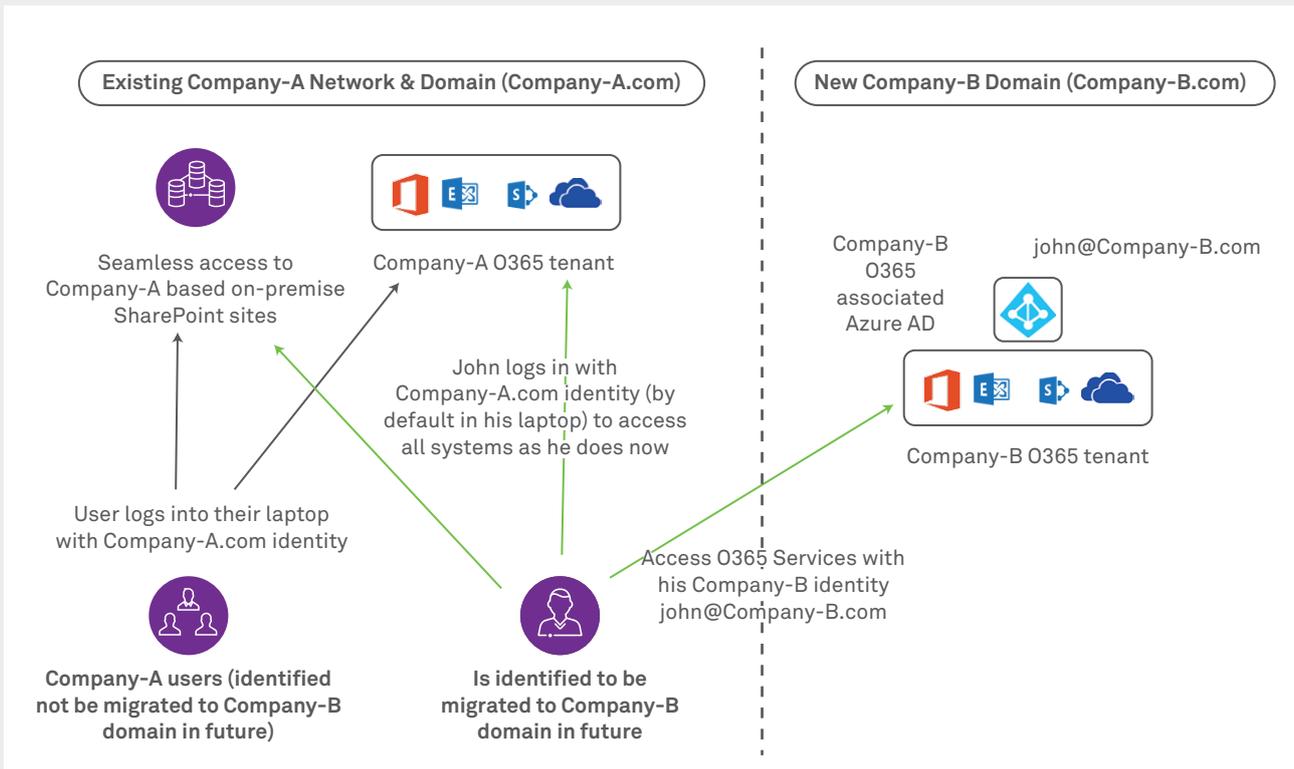
2. Solution Considerations:

Following is the suggested approach:

- Follow a phase-wise approach for the consolidation of the including domains into the existing Company-B Root Domain

- Assess the existing Active Directory Infrastructure as well the respective applications under the existing Active Directory domains which needs to be migrated to the Company-B domain in the assessment phase

- Perform a POC for the compatibility testing of the existing application with the new AD Forest and will plan for the same as well for a smooth migration

- Use 3rd party Migration Tool for AD and Exchange for the Migration of the AD Objects as well as mailboxes which reside on-premise (if any)

- Deploy the Virtual Directory Server which will help in the co-existence for the LDAP based applications during the migration

- Enable the new O365 tenant from the existing Azure Subscription, and use 3rd party tools to assess and migrate the O365 tenant based data to the newly deployed O365 tenant

- Configure the Company-B ADFS (sync) with the new O365 tenant with the help of the Azure AD connect and will configure the ADFS Servers for the SSO (Single Sign-On) requirement. Also deploy the IDAM Solution in the Company-B domain

- The existing applications under the respective source domains, once confirmed by the application owners and a sign-off on the migration of the applications and its related servers are provided by them, could be migrated to the target Company-B domain

Scenario 2: Divesture: As part of corporate strategy, a group of business units of Company-A is spinning-off into a newly formed Company-B. Identified users from Company-A users will migrate to Company-B into a new Active Directory structure, O365 tenant and users across the companies should continue to collaborate.

1. End State

Existing Company-A Network & Domain (Company-A.com)

Seamless access to Company-A based on-premise SharePoint sites

Company-A O365 tenant

John logs in with Company-A.com identity (by default in his laptop) to access all systems as he does now

User logs into their laptop with Company-A.com identity

Company-A users (identified not be migrated to Company-B domain in future)

Is identified to be migrated to Company-B domain in future

New Company-B Domain (Company-B.com)

Company-B O365 associated Azure AD

john@Company-B.com

Company-B O365 tenant

Access O365 Services with his Company-B identity john@Company-B.com

2. Solution Considerations:

Here is the suggested approach -

- Company-B will have all users created directly in Azure Active Directory (AD) associated with the O365 tenant. No on-premise Company-B Active Directory (forest, domain) server is needed for now

- New O365 tenant will be created for Company-B. In the associated Azure AD, for Company-A users who are targeted to be migrated to Company-B, new identities will be created in the Azure AD like John. Hence, for such users they will have two identities – default Company-A.com through which they log into their laptops and a cloud-only Company-B AD

- No user is migrated during the current phase. They will continue to use their existing laptops.

- Users like John will continue to have their default Outlook profile for Company-A.com configured in their laptop and a new profile for Company-B will be configured to access their Company-B mailboxes. They can access the same using the Outlook web app anyway

- Possibility of syncing dual OneDrive profile will be confirmed during POC

- SharePoint on-premise sites will anyways be accessed using Company-A.com identities. But for sites in Company-B O365 SharePoint online, John will need to access it over the browser

- In the next phase, when Company-B AD servers are setup, reverse user mapping from Azure to on-premise will be performed

- What will not work (need to be aware of):

- SSO for accessing Company-A and Company-B systems

- Accessing Company-A calendars, mails between Company-A and Company-B mailboxes/accounts

Conclusion

Mergers and Divestures are strategic directions of organizations and hence need careful assessment prior to any additional step. Example scenarios as mentioned earlier will be customer landscape specific but a pre-requisite step of on-premise Active Directory rationalization becomes a common thread.

Activity of such scale needs involvement of both customer and vendor teams (business sponsor, IT and networking Infra, Security and O365) and a global service provider like Wipro, with our exhaustive experience and best-in-class multi-skilled team, is well equipped to provide the same.

About the author

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Arindam has 15 years of experience in cloud and native technologies. He currently works with global clients to define their IT strategy, which helps them to align their business goals related to Office 365 and Azure. During his career, he has been involved in multiple delivery and presales activities spread across different domains such as knowledge management, supply chain management and industries such as IT, communication and energy.

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