

# BT TO MAKE OFFICE 2000 APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE TO BUSINESSES THROUGH MICROSOFT OFFICE ONLINE

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BT will soon offer UK businesses the world's leading desktop productivity suite, Microsoft Office, through a new Office Online pilot programme. BT's service will enable small to mid-sized business customers to use Office Online as an applications service that provides a flexible long or short-term alternative to purchasing and deploying the application themselves.

The application service provision market is growing rapidly as businesses realise the benefits to be gained from services that come without the ownership of associated IT resource and software which was previously required. Customers can now benefit from using Microsoft Office over the Internet, while the Application Service Provider (ASP) takes care of the day-to-day maintenance of the infrastructure, including upgrades and monitoring.

Jerry Thompson, general manager of corporate business at BT Internet and Multimedia, said: "BT is delighted to be working with Microsoft in this new and exciting field. It combines the capabilities of both companies and is in response to market demand.

"BT and Microsoft are developing services that will allow customers to benefit from world-class business software, using a flexible, rented service that they can access via robust communication links. This is the shape of things to come in the new world of software distribution and usage."

Steven Sinofsky, vice president of Microsoft Office, said: "We're pleased to be working with BT to provide Microsoft Office Online in the UK. BT has demonstrated that it has the infrastructure to host applications with rapid access, and robust, flexible service. Our relationship with our customers is very important to Microsoft and we're confident BT will provide great levels of service to Office users in the UK."

The services will complement BT's existing applications hosting portfolio, which provides customers with secure online services from BT's Internet Data Centre.

Inquiries about this news release should be made to the BT Corporate Newsroom on its 24-hour number: 0171 356 5369, or David Pincott, PR Manager, BT Internet & Multimedia Services, 0171 492 8470, e-mail [david.pincott@bt.com](mailto:david.pincott@bt.com)

For further information, visit the BT Intranet Services web site at:  
<http://www.btintranet.com> or call 0800 306 305.