



From Data to Decisions

# How IT Leaders Establish Clarity

A resource for corporate IT leaders managing  
Microsoft and cloud complexity



# What you can't see will eventually hurt you

Corporate IT leadership has never been more demanding. The environments IT leaders are responsible for have grown more complex, more distributed, and more expensive, often without a proportional increase in the resources, headcount, or time needed to manage them well. Microsoft 365 licensing has expanded across dozens of SKUs, cloud deployments may span multiple providers, and renewal dates hit the calendar before anyone has had time to scrutinize the last one.

In such an environment, a particular kind of problem takes root. License renewals feel high, but are approved without further investigation. Cloud bills are larger than expected, but are close enough to last time that nobody worries about it. Projects stall because the budget isn't there, but nobody can explain exactly where the money went.

Most IT leaders have dashboards, reports, renewal calendars, vendor contacts, and a team of people who each own a piece of the picture. Most organizations also have access to their cloud spend data, but having access to the numbers is different from understanding them. What's typically missing is clarity on why spend is trending the way it is, whether increases reflect genuine business need, and where the real waste can be found.

The cost of standing still compounds over time. Three realities now define the environment in which most corporate IT leaders are operating:

## 1. Inaction in Microsoft environments.

Microsoft 365 complexity grows, whether you pay attention to it or not. Licenses accumulate, assignments drift, and SKUs that made sense two renewals ago persist because nobody has time to audit them. Research consistently shows that more than 40% of organizations are overspending on Microsoft licenses. Not because they've made bad decisions, but because they didn't make any decisions. The environment changed, but their contracts did not, and tech debt keeps accumulating.

## 2. Support is not strategy.

Roughly 75% of IT organizations pay for advisory relationships that are, in practice, reactive support desks. What's missing is the proactive analysis that identifies waste before the contract renews, the governance structure that keeps spend predictable, and the strategic layer that connects licensing decisions to business objectives.

## 3. The proof problem.

CIOs have heard enough vendor promises to be skeptical. The market is full of providers claiming they'll reduce cloud spend by a percentage that sounds credible but is never verified until after you've signed. Such skepticism is rational, but it also can be addressed with specific, data-grounded answers to straightforward questions:

**What are we actually spending? • Where is the waste? • What would it cost us to fix it?**

# What clarity actually means for IT leaders

Clarity allows an IT leader to make a confident decision about cost, capacity, or direction without first spending two weeks assembling data from four different systems. That may sound like a baseline, but for most organizations, clarity is genuinely rare. IT leaders may have a dashboard, or maybe a report emailed before a QBR, but many decisions are made based on incomplete information, governance remains reactive, and spending is justified by last year's numbers, not a current analysis.

The lack of clarity is revealed in the small delays and workarounds that seem reasonable in isolation: the renewal that gets pushed through because there wasn't time to question it, the cloud bill reviewed as a line-item but never interrogated against actual business need, the strategic initiative deferred because budget couldn't be found. Each instance is manageable, but taken together, they represent a structural gap between what's happening in an IT environment and what the leadership team actually knows about it.

The consequence is decision-making by approximation, even though most IT organizations have plenty of tools. The problem is structural: the analysis that would connect raw data to confident decisions isn't happening on a regular, governed basis. The full picture exists in pieces across systems, teams, and vendors. Nobody owns assembling it, so it doesn't get assembled, or it gets assembled once for a specific decision and then goes stale.

Getting to clarity requires:

- **True visibility.**

Before you can improve anything, you need an accurate read on what exists. That means a real analysis of your Microsoft 365 environment, covering active versus inactive licenses, sizing, duplication, and SKU appropriateness, and the same level of scrutiny applied to your cloud spend. The goal is a specific accounting of where money is going and where it doesn't need to be going, not a high-level summary.

- **Proof before purchase.**

The right partner doesn't ask you to take their word for it. They show you the savings potential with a no-cost review before you make a commitment. The Momentum Sneak Peek delivers a concrete projection based on what's actually in your environment, not an industry benchmark applied to your seat count.

- **A system that maintains it.**

Visibility achieved once is not clarity. Microsoft environments change. Cloud usage shifts. Renewals cycle through. Clarity requires ongoing governance, a structured and recurring process that keeps the picture accurate and grounds decisions in current data.

The organizations that operate this way treat IT governance as a strategic discipline. Cost control is a function of their leadership team, not just a finance problem delegated to IT.

## Moving from insight to action

Insight only pays off when it connects to action. Most IT organizations have no shortage of data points. What's missing is the translation layer: someone who takes what the data shows and maps it to specific priorities, renewal timelines, and roadmap decisions, rather than handing off a report for the internal team to interpret independently.

That translation is also what makes savings durable. Without a structured mechanism connecting identified waste to deliberate reinvestment, recovered budget tends to dissolve back into the base. The bill gets a little smaller, but nothing changes. The same decisions are then made the same way next year.

With the right model, that doesn't happen. Savings turn into real investment in the work that actually advances an organization: cloud modernization, workplace AI, security improvements, application services. Organizations stop auditing losses and start making choices.

Support answers questions. Strategy asks better ones before the contract renews, the bill arrives, or the budget is already committed.

## Clarity as a continuous discipline

Most IT leaders have experienced moments of clarity, usually in the weeks after a major audit or ahead of a significant renewal. The picture comes into focus, decisions get made, and then the moment passes. Within a quarter or two, the environment has shifted, new licenses have been assigned, cloud usage has drifted, and the clear picture becomes murky once again.

An ongoing governance model is designed to break this pattern. Clarity isn't a state you arrive at once, but a discipline that requires recurring analysis, consistent oversight, and a structured process for translating what the data shows into what the organization does. The IT leaders who operate with sustained clarity aren't doing something dramatically different. They've simply built the conditions that make it possible to keep doing it.

Those conditions share a few common characteristics. The analysis happens on a regular cadence, not just when something goes wrong or a renewal is imminent. Questions get answered on the timeline the business operates on, not on a vendor's account management schedule. And savings, when identified, don't disappear into a reduced line item. They are redirected deliberately toward the initiatives that matter.

When those conditions are in place, governance stops feeling like overhead. It becomes the mechanism by which IT leadership earns and maintains credibility with the business, demonstrating that technology spending is understood, controlled, and connected to organizational priorities.

# How Momentum makes it possible

Momentum is a continuous operating model built around four capabilities: Optimization Assessments, License Advisory, Essential Microsoft Licensing Services, and Innovation Credits. Together, they cover the full scope of what sustained clarity requires, from annual deep-dive analyses of Microsoft 365 and cloud environments, to ongoing licensing guidance, contract and enrollment management, and a structured mechanism for converting savings into funded strategic work.

A confident decision requires confident data. Before committing to anything, Momentum starts with a no-cost Sneak Peek: a secure snapshot of two environments you choose, a rapid analysis of waste and savings opportunities, and a concrete projection of Year 1 savings based on your actual environment. The assessment takes 30 minutes. Typical findings include 70-90 potential license downgrades, 20-40 inactive accounts, and cloud savings potential in the 18-23% range, with total first-year savings typically falling between \$60,000 and \$80,000 for a mid-size organization.

For IT leaders who have spent years listening to vendors describe savings they couldn't verify, this is a different kind of conversation. The number is real, it's yours, and it's in hand before any decision is made.

Next steps:

## Clarity begins with Momentum

When you book a [Momentum Sneak Peek](#), we'll analyze your Microsoft 365 and cloud environment, show you what we find, and give you a real projection of what's recoverable. If the numbers make sense, we can discuss next steps. If they don't, you've lost nothing but 30 minutes.

Organizations that ground cost decisions in data, keep governance continuous rather than reactive, and fund progress from recovered savings don't get there by accident. They have to start somewhere. With the right guide, IT leaders don't just manage complexity. They master it.

That's how IT leaders become IT Legends. Momentum is where the journey begins.

Book your [Momentum Sneak Peek](#) today.

[Momentum](#) is a continuous IT cost savings and innovation subscription from SoftwareOne and Crayon that is built for corporate IT leaders managing Microsoft 365 and cloud complexity.

**Contact  
us today.**

Find out more at

[softwareone.com](https://softwareone.com)

SoftwareOne AG | Headquarters

**T +41 44 832 4169**

**E [info@softwareone.com](mailto:info@softwareone.com)**