

SkyKick enables Compete366 to build a thriving cloud based IT services practice

When Jon Milward and Warren Duke co-founded Compete366 in 2014, they made a conscious decision to keep their business' focus very narrow. Instead of following the well-worn path used by most of their competitors and becoming a managed services provider (MSP), they opted to only work with clients who wanted to manage their own IT environments. In fact, Compete366 does not offer any managed services at all.

Compete366's mission is to help small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) in the U.K. market migrate all their information technology into the cloud. Compete366 then provides the ongoing Microsoft Office 365 licensing and Azure consumption on a month-to-month basis, with no long-term contracts. This is coupled with free, ongoing expert advice and mentoring on those technologies, to ensure customers get the best out of their solutions.

Unlike other IT providers, Compete366 is strictly a cloud-only, Microsoft-based firm. Their dual focus on Microsoft/Office 365 and Azure enables SMBs to do everything they need to do, with complete flexibility.

“All we do as a business is Microsoft 365 and Azure. Instead of doing everything for a smaller set of customers as an MSP, our strategic goal is to focus on volume and secure a larger number of customers where we just do Office 365 and Azure.”

-Jon Milward, Co-founder of Compete366

SkyKick was a core part of Compete366's business strategy from day one

While their business was still in the planning stages, Jon and Warren attended Microsoft's annual Worldwide Partner Conference (now MS Inspire). It was there that they were introduced to SkyKick and its Migration Suite product offering.

“We had a look at it,” Jon recalls, “and it made sense. We thought that since it looked good, we'd give it a go. If it worked, we'd keep using it.”

Compete366 launched in September 2014 and won their first email migration project, for which they used SkyKick Migration, at the end of 2014. They quickly discovered that SkyKick worked even better than anticipated.



Compete366 is a Microsoft Cloud specialist focusing on migrating customers into Microsoft 365 and Azure, and then helping them get the most out of their cloud capabilities with ongoing expert advice.

Website: www.compete366.com

Country: United Kingdom

Customers: Compete366 serves 250 active customers, most of them in the UK.

Compete366 - Key Success Metrics

Building their business exclusively on the SkyKick platform has enabled Compete366 to achieve impressive milestones since founding.



50%

Yearly topline revenue growth for last 4 years



85%

Portion of revenue that is recurring monthly



250

Growth in active customers since 2014



6,000

Office 365 seats currently under management

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-Jon Milward,
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SkyKick makes the migration easy

“We’ve done more than a hundred migrations since that first one,” Jon shares, “and have used SkyKick exclusively ever since. The ease of use and extensive capabilities of the migration tools, which is what attracted us to SkyKick in the first place, make it possible for us to automate this critical workload.”

There are a number of reasons why Compete366 continues to rely on the SkyKick Migration Suite for Office 365:

- ✓ **Standardized process** - “Using SkyKick Migration,” Jon says, “means that every project is the same. We’ve documented it. We have templates and procedures. It’s almost like a ‘sausage machine,’ because everyone on the team does it the same way. This simplifies things for us and reduces risk for our clients.”
- ✓ **Efficient use of consultant’s time** - The Compete366 team finds SkyKick’s automated tools and usability so compelling that they usually are able to multi-task during the migration. Since they know exactly what will happen each time, the migration doesn’t require their full, continuous attention.
- ✓ **Minimal use of customer’s time** - There is very little that the customer and their end users must do to help facilitate the migration.
- ✓ **Low Risk** - “A big benefit for the customer,” Jon points out, “is that you’re copying things rather than moving them. This makes the migration very low risk and provides an easy roll-back plan.”
- ✓ **Exceptional support** - “The quality of the support is fantastic!” Jon exclaims. “You’re never on your own. The people are friendly, respond quickly and have a high level of expertise. Plus, you can always escalate things to engineering if needed.”

Of course, the number one reason why Compete366 has remained so loyal to the SkyKick Migration Suite is that, from their customers’ perspective, they have never had anything go wrong during a migration. Given the fact that every migration is a “really big deal” to the customer, Jon feels that this is huge.

“The reality,” Jon admits, “is nothing is going to be seamless every time. Sometimes issues arise, and when they do, we really appreciate being backed by an extremely good support team.”

Compete366 has even used the SkyKick Migration Suite to complete 10 Office 365-to-Office 365 migrations, something they see becoming a more frequent requirement as businesses merge or divest. And these have gone smoothly as well.

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-Jon Milward,
Co-founder of Compete366

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, Compete366’s business is booming

When the pandemic first hit, Compete366’s business went quiet. But once companies realized that they would need to enable their team members to work remotely for the long term, they saw the advantages of moving more workloads to the cloud.

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Having a migration tool that creates an easy, “cookie cutter” automated process that can be completed 100% remotely has been key to Compete366’s ability to comfortably manage this influx of work.

Compete366’s customers use backup as more than just an “insurance policy”

Jon and Warren believe in picking one supplier and investing in that relationship. So when SkyKick introduced Cloud Backup, they naturally gave it a try.

“We’ve never looked elsewhere,” Jon concedes. “We have a good relationship. We like SkyKick’s support. We had a play with Cloud Backup, it seemed to work nicely, so why wouldn’t we use it?”

Specifically, the Compete366 team likes the fact that SkyKick Cloud Backup provides:

- ✓ **Recurring revenue** – This is at the core of Compete366’s business strategy.
- ✓ **Broad backup options** – SkyKick can back up all of the key categories of Office 365 content, including mailboxes, Teams, SharePoint and OneDrive.
- ✓ **Easy management and use** – “Our customers manage their own backups,” Jon notes. “As part of setting it up, which in itself is very easy, we offer a driving lesson around it. Only about 30% take us up on this, because once they look in there they see that this backup is so obvious and intuitive, they don’t need instruction.”

This ease of use has another benefit: Businesses don’t hesitate to use it even if just one file needs to be restored. Compete366 gets regular notifications that someone is restoring something. This shows Jon that customers are getting regular benefit from it and are therefore likely to look favorably at the monthly fee. “If it was a pain to use,” Jon points out, “they’d only restore something when they really, really had to.”

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SkyKick as a key business enabler

Jon appreciates the significant alignment between Compete366’s and SkyKick’s strategies and approaches. Both specialize in Microsoft offerings, are cloud-native companies, and are laser focused on providing excellent customer service. To this end, SkyKick has helped Compete366 succeed as a cloud services provider, while Compete366 has enabled their own customers to grow and thrive in the cloud.

Compete366’s growth has been enviable. Not only have they grown from 0 to 250 customers in six years, they’ve also grown top line revenue 50% year-over-year for the past four years in a row.

Not surprisingly, Compete366 has made SkyKick an integral part of their sales process. The easy and trouble-free nature of a SkyKick migration is emphasized in the initial sales calls. The tool’s migration process and many configuration options are on display in a screen share during the discovery and planning session. A printout of the SkyKick Discovery and Planning Tool’s output—as well as budgetary information for SkyKick Backup—are both included with the migration project proposal.

“When prospects ask us about other migration tools,” Jon relates, “we tell them that we only use SkyKick. We’ve done over a hundred of them, and they’ve all gone off without a hitch. This helps assure prospects that by hiring us their risk is very low.”

Although the SkyKick Migration Suite itself does not provide recurring revenue, it is a key enabler of the recurring revenue that is at the core of Compete366’s business strategy - customer acquisition. Once the engagement begins, SkyKick’s migration tools help Compete366 easily onboard customers. After that, Compete366 is well positioned for cross-sell opportunities, such as for SkyKick Backup. It’s a virtuous circle that has also helped with client retention.

“Since we don’t tie them in to long-term contracts,” Jon explains, “we want to be ‘sticky’ with the customer. The more services they’re getting from us, the stickier the relationship is.”

Conclusion

As a business, Compete366 has two key IT vendor relationships: Microsoft and SkyKick. The strong partnerships they’ve developed over the years with both have been pivotal not only to the company’s mission and strategy, but also in how it’s been able to efficiently execute on its goals.

“SkyKick in particular has been a core part of helping us grow and drive our business,” Jon says. “For me, using SkyKick has been all about making things easy, repeatable and low risk—and knowing that on the rare occasions that things get bumpy we can count on the incredible SkyKick support team to be there for us.”