

# A deep dive into the Microsoft 365 Audit Trail

A Gravity Union Webinar

## Housekeeping

- 1. Use the Q/A panel to ask questions or share comments
- 2. The recording will be posted on our YouTube channel: (Gravity Union YouTube)



## What we'll cover today

- A brief history of auditing in SharePoint (and the broader ecosystem)
- What M365 offers in terms of audit trails
- What kind of information can we get from the audit trail?
- How do we get it?
- Why is it important?
- Gaps and issues
- Compliance considerations
- Overview of Gravity MOAT
- Questions



## Introductions





## Jas Shukla

**Director of Business Development** 

- 15 years experience in enterprise technology consulting
- Previously with Microsoft on the SharePoint product team
- UX designer in a previous life





## Michael Schweitzer

**President and CEO** 

- 20 years of enterprise technology experience
- Microsoft and Collabware certified
- Collabware MVP recipient
- Vancouver Office 365 user group board member
- ARMA Canada guest speaker
- Collabware User Group Board Member
- SharePoint Saturdays guest speaker
- Over 100 SharePoint ECM projects completed



## Who we are

A boutique compliance-inspired services firm helping organization in their digital transformation journey

Gold

## Microsoft Partner



**Gold Certified** 

### Collabware Partner











# **Content Services Microsoft Partner**

- Recognized by Microsoft for the success we deliver to customers with Microsoft Content Services technology
- Partner with Microsoft, providing feedback on the product functionality and roadmap
- Special support from Microsoft for our project work



Content Services
Partner Program
Charter Member

## **Experience Overview**

**50**+

Years of combined Collabware experience 10,000+

Users using our SharePoint and M365 solutions

40+

Microsoft certifications

25+

Collabware and Collabspace projects

250+

Years of SharePoint experience across our team

18

Collabware certified consultants

**50**+

Million documents migrated and managed in our solutions 100%

Project success rate



## What is an audit trail?

Let's level set!



## What is an audit trail?

- A log of events in an application, examples:
  - Logging in
  - Viewing a file
  - Deleting a file
- Metadata (descriptions) about the event
  - Who, what, where, when, how



```
1
2
         "creationtime": "2020-12-01t01:18:27",
3
         "id": "5bccfed8-827e-43ab-aec6-183d91362700",
         "operation": "userloggedin",
          "organizationid": "02c5ecf0-1cec-4a5b-8ded-cd12a3052900",
 5
 6
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         "resultstatus": "succeeded",
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          "usertype": 0,
10
          "version": 1,
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11
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14
         "azureactivedirectoryeventtype": 1,
15
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17
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18
                 "value": "microsoft office/16.0 (windows nt 10.0; microsoft outlook 16.0.12527: pro)"
19
20
             },
21
                 "name": "userauthenticationmethod",
22
                 "value": "1"
23
24
25
26
                 "name": "requesttype",
27
                 "value": "oauth2:token"
28
29
                 "name": "resultstatusdetail",
30
                 "value": "success"
31
32
33
                 "name": "keepmesignedin",
34
                 "value": "false"
35
36
37
```

# Why are audit trails important?



## Why we need to keep it

- Meet certain regulatory compliance standards
- Provide evidence in litigation or investigations
- Understand what happened with comprised accounts
- Provide insight into adoption
  - How heavily are our systems being used?
- Provide insight into compliance
  - How much of our content is being classified?





Computers & Security Vol.20, No.5, pp.409-421, 2001 Copyright © 2000 Elsevier Science Limited Printed in Great Britain. All rights reserved 0167-4048/01520.00

### Information Systems Audit Trails in Legal Proceedings as Evidence

#### Caroline Allinson

Information Security Section, Information Management Division, Queensland Police Service, GPO Box 1440, BRISBANE Qld 4001, Australia.

Research Student, Information Security Research Centre (ISRC), Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane. Queensland. Australia.

**Keywords:** Law enforcement, audit trails, evidence, investigation, expert witness, information security, policy, court, survey, computer.

#### Abstract

Australian State and Commonwealth Governments are interested in the collection, storage and presentation of audit trail information, particularly within a legal framework. Law enforcement agencies have a legal obligation to keep audit records of all activity on information systems used within their operations. Little to no research has been identified in relation to the use of internal audit systems for evidentiary purpose.

A brief history of audit trails is given with requirements for such audit trails beyond the year 2000.

The Queensland Police Service (QPS), Australia, is used as a major case study. Information on principles, techniques and processes used, and the reason for the recording, storing and releasing of audit information for evidentiary purposes have been studied.

To assist in determining current practice in the Australian Commonwealth and State Governments the results of an Australia wide survey of all government departments are given and contrasted to the major study for QPS.

Reference is also made to the legal obligations for authorization of audit analysis, expert witnessing and legal precedence in relation to court acceptance or rejection of audit information used in evidence.

It is shown that most organizations studied generate and retain audit trails but the approach is not consistent nor is it comprehensive. It is suggested that these materials would not withstand a serious legal challenge.

#### Introduction

This paper examines the status of computer based information systems audit trails in relationship to their presentation in legal proceedings as evidence.

Over the past few decades audit has developed more than one meaning. Traditionally it was used in **Forbes** 

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### **Microsoft Office 365 Accounts** Under Attack -- What You **Need To Know**



Davey Winder Senior Contributor ① ①

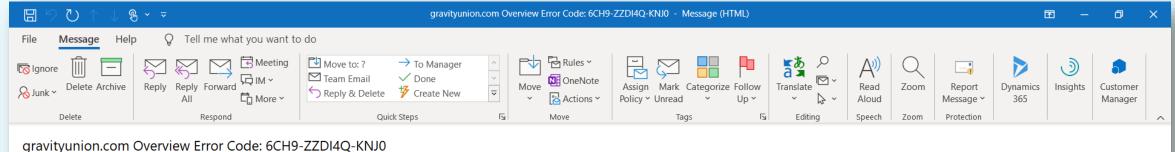
I report and analyse breaking cybersecurity and privacy stories





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i This message was sent with High importance. If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.



Hello mschweitzer@gravityunion.com,

This is an overview with the activity of your account for Tuesday, February 23, 2021

In this period 7 message(s) have been put to a stop to deliver inbox.

Error Code: 6CH9-ZZDI4Q-KNJ0

View Message

\*\*This is an automated message please do not reply\*\*.

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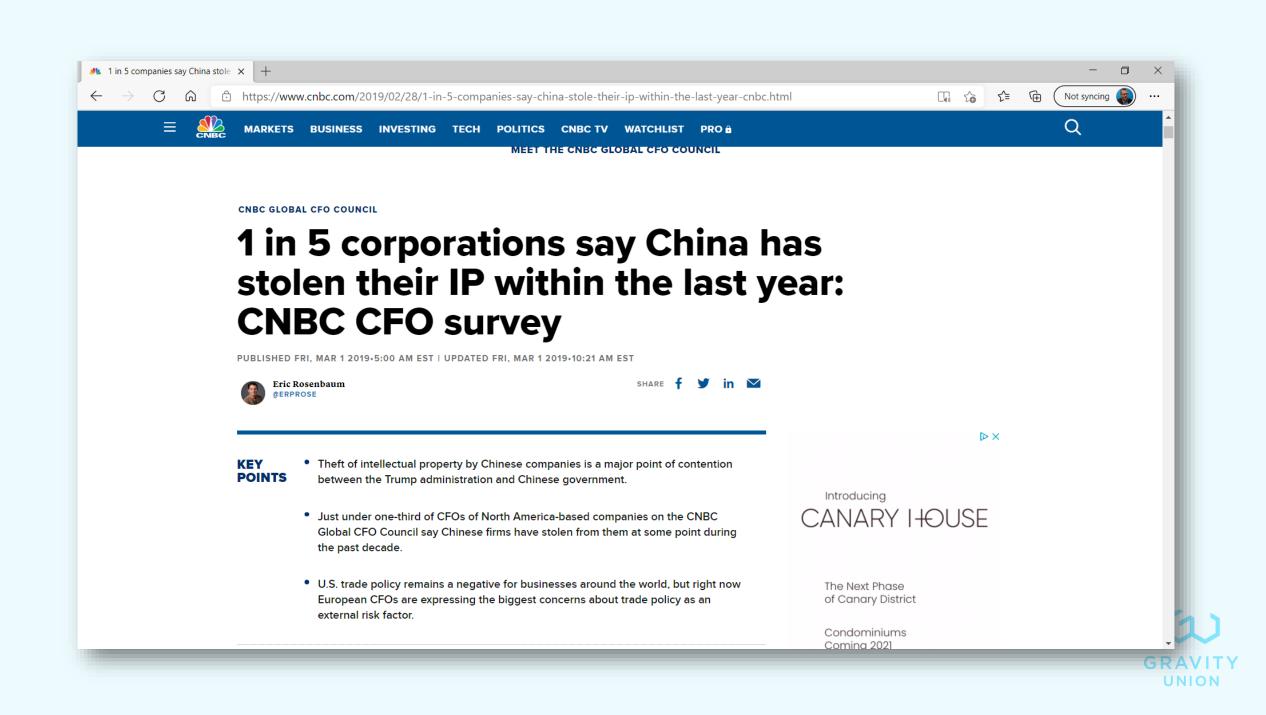
≪ Reply All

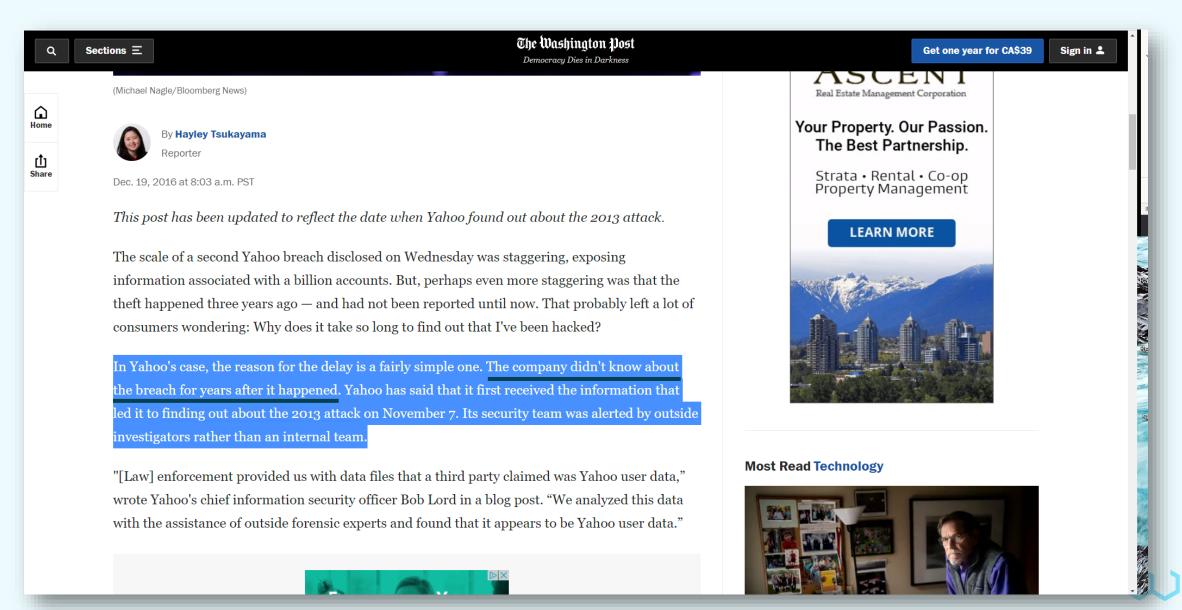
→ Forward

Tue 2021-02-23 10:28 AM

...

Reply





## Other real world examples

- Found **suspicious** deletions user was deleting SharePoint synced folder on desktop
- Lead researcher quit a job was able to determine which files they looked at and **downloaded** before leaving
- Where files are viewed determine if files were being viewed outside of the country (nuclear non-proliferation act)
- Lawsuit evidence prove if an employee had read the overtime policy
- Accidental death investigation was the current procedure being followed?



# A brief history of auditing in SharePoint (and ecosystem)

Back when I was a SharePoint Admin, we had to back up our content databases uphill, both ways.



## Audit trails in SharePoint and onpremises ecosystem

- Needed to be turned on for a given Site Collection
- Limited (add, edit, delete, view)
- Turning on "View" could slow things down
- Other information was available in other various locations
  - Search Central Admin
  - Authorization and Authentication Windows, Exchange and IIS logs
  - Other events cryptically buried in SharePoint log files
  - Third party applications for web analytics
  - Solutions like Collabware added a custom Audit Trail to compensate



## Issues with on-premises

- Hard to consolidate across site collections, other sources
- Audit trails **disappeared** on content when moved (i.e. record centers)
- Could be turned on and off (lack of integrity)
- Needed several **add-ons** to complete the picture of the audit



# How does M365 approach audit trails?

You get an audit, and you get an audit, and you get an audit...everyone gets an a-u-d-i-t!



## Microsoft 365 audit trail

- Microsoft 365 offers a **centralized** location for
  - all sources (SharePoint, Teams, One Drive etc. Active Directory)
  - all activities (view, edit, download, create folder etc.)
- 100s of different types of metadata (user name, IP address, browse etc.)



## **Gaining Access**

- With **enough** permissions:
  - https://compliance.microsoft.com/

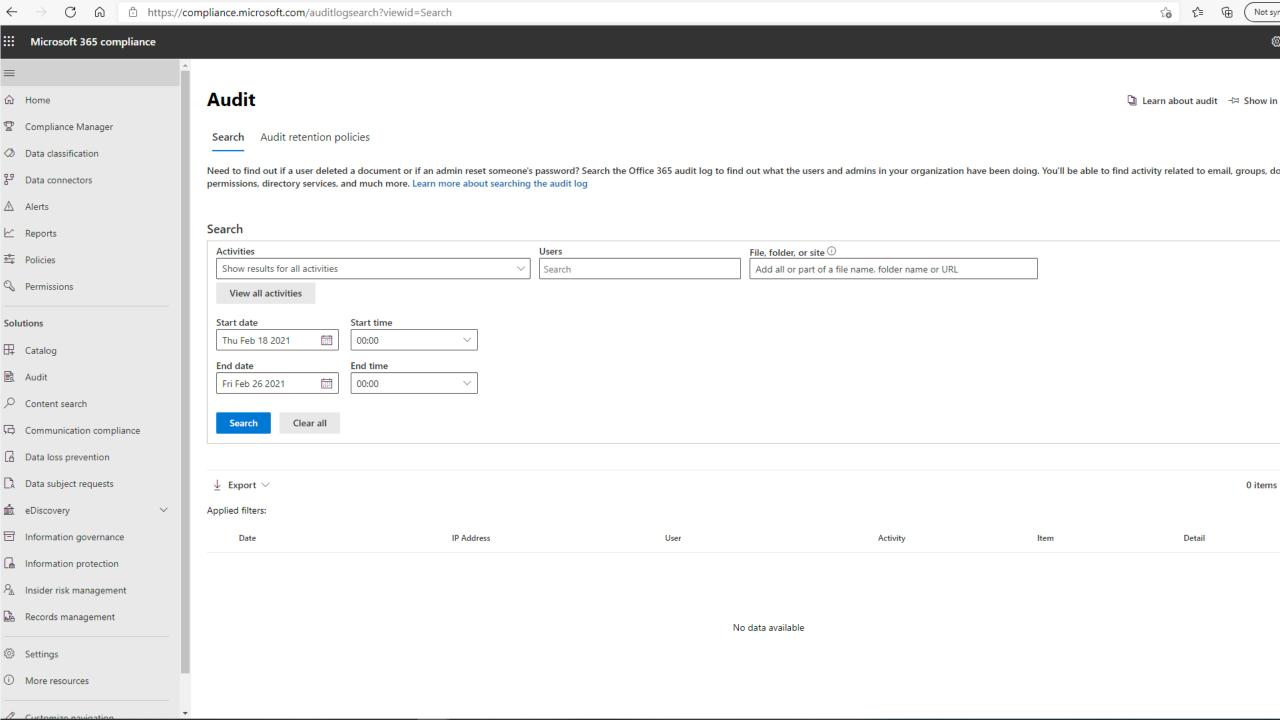


### **Microsoft 365 compliance** $\equiv$ ▼ Compliance Manager Data classification ₽ Data connectors ∧ Alerts ∠ Reports Policies Permissions Solutions ☐ Catalog Audit Ocontent search Communication compliance Data loss prevention Data subject requests eDiscovery ☐ Information governance Information protection P<sub>∆</sub> Insider risk management Records management Privacy management Settings

## **Gaining Access**

- With **enough** permissions:
  - https://compliance.microsoft.com/





# What kind of information can we capture?

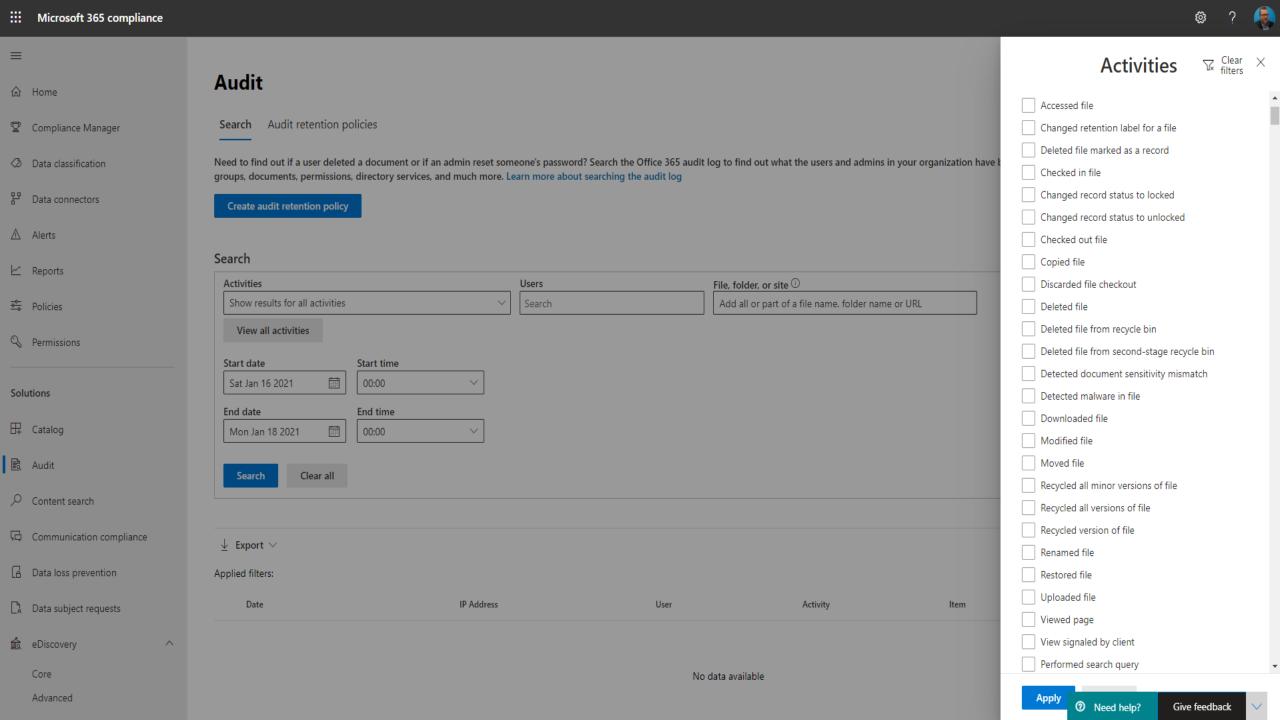
Give me all the datas



## **Everything**

Source	<b>Example Events</b>		
Azure Active Directory	Login, failed log in attempts		
SharePoint	File Added, File Viewed, File Deleted		
One Drive	File Added, File Viewed, File Deleted		
Microsoft Teams	Meeting Started		
Exchange	Email sent, Email Received, Attachment Opened		
Power BI	Report viewed, data refreshed		
Power Automate	Workflow started		
And more	•••••		





## **Exports**

- Max 50,000 events per download
- Excel with embedded | SON format



₽ Data connectors

⚠ Alerts

∠ Reports

Q Permissions

Solutions

🖹 Audit

☐ Catalog

Content search

Communication compliance

Data loss prevention

Data subject requests

☐ Information governance

Information protection

P<sub>M</sub> Insider risk management

Records management

Settings

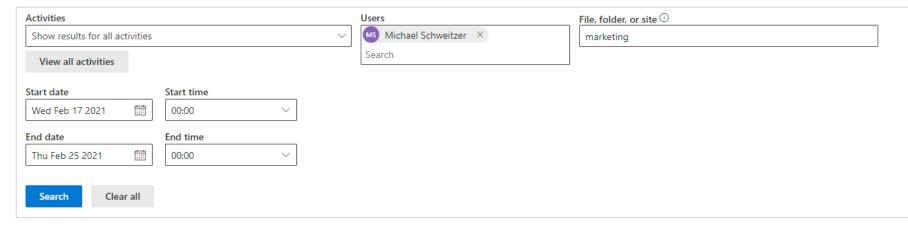
### Audit

Learn about audit

Search Audit retention policies

Need to find out if a user deleted a document or if an admin reset someone's password? Search the Office 365 audit log to find out what the users and admins in your organization have been doing. You'll be able to find activity related to emapermissions, directory services, and much more. Learn more about searching the audit log

#### Search

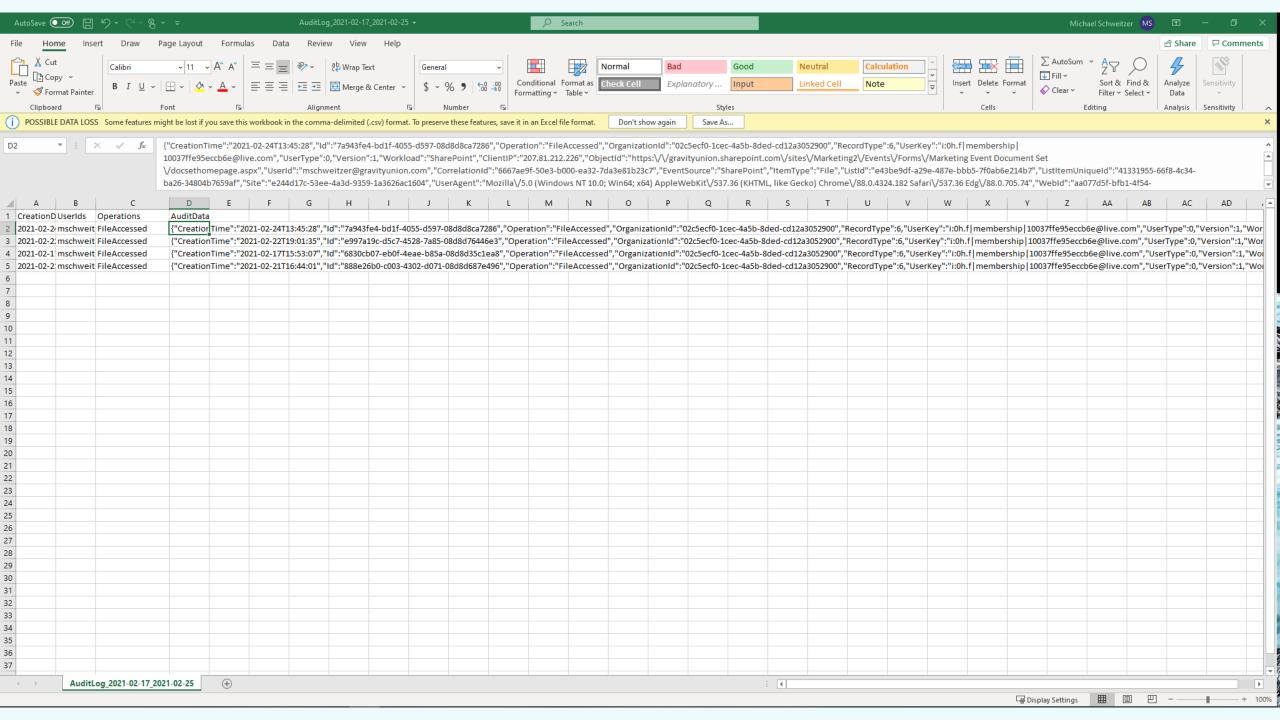


<u>↓</u> Export ∨

#### Applied filters:

Date	IP Address	User	Activity	Item	Detail
Feb 24, 2021 5:45 AM	207.81.212.226	mschweitzer@gravityunion.com	Accessed file	docsethomepage.aspx	Accessed fro
Feb 22, 2021 11:01 AM	207.81.212.226	mschweitzer@gravityunion.com	Accessed file	docsethomepage.aspx	Accessed fro
Feb 17, 2021 7:53 AM	207.81.212.226	mschweitzer@gravityunion.com	Accessed file	docsethomepage.aspx	Accessed fro
Feb 21, 2021 8:44 AM	70.36.51.25	mschweitzer@gravityunion.com	Accessed file	docsethomepage.aspx	Accessed fro

More resources



```
"creationtime": "2020-12-01t01:18:27",
          "id": "5bccfed8-827e-43ab-aec6-183d91362700",
 3
          "operation": "userloggedin",
          "organizationid": "02c5ecf0-1cec-4a5b-8ded-cd12a3052900",
          "recordtype": 15,
          "resultstatus": "succeeded",
          "userkey": "mshimada@gravityunion.com",
 9
          "usertype": 0,
10
          "version": 1,
11
          "workload": "azureactivedirectory".
12
         "clientip": "64.52.27.140",
13
          "objectid": "00000002-0000-0ff1-ce00-000000000000",
          "userid": "mshimada@gravityunion.com",
14
15
          "azureactivedirectoryeventtype": 1,
16
          "extendedproperties": [
17
                  "name": "useragent",
18
                  "value": "microsoft office/16.0 (windows nt 10.0; microsoft outlook 16.0.12527; pro)"
19
20
              },
21
                  "name": "userauthenticationmethod",
22
                  "value": "1"
23
24
25
26
                  "name": "requesttype",
                  "value": "oauth2:token"
27
28
29
                  "name": "resultstatusdetail",
30
                  "value": "success"
31
32
33
                  "name": "keepmesignedin",
34
                  "value": "false"
35
36
37
```

## How else can we use it?

What is it good for?



#### Governance Examples

- Identify and manage the creation of sites, lists, libraries, folders not inline with standards, patterns and practices
- Identify unused or under-used applications\sites\libraries\groups\teams
- Identify where security protocols are not followed (external sharing, breaking inheritance)



siteurl	actioncount	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/proposals/	4048	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/####-meradiscovery/	2479	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/marketing2/	1935	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/presentations/	1643	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/	1505	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/recruiting/	1360	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/#####-spoandcollabspacerollout/	1341	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/####-collaborationsites/	1299	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/delivery-therelaunch/	1220	
https://gravityunion-my.sharepoint.com/	1028	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/####-collabspaceimplementation/	852	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/branding/	713	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/skylab/	608	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/#######documentmanagement/	569	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/#####-spoandcollabspacerollout/	473	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/operations/	438	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/receivables/	372	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/draftcontracts/	355	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/administration/	319	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/######harepointandcollabwarerollout-guprivatechannel/	313	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/proposals	293	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/proposals/b57f85ce-2feb-4f04-85b9-40eaecc137d1	234	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/-sp2019modernization/	231	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/testingsandbox/	184	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/recruiting	182	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/townshipof####/	178	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/signedcontracts/	170	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/_layouts/15/officeextensionmanager.aspx	161	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/projecthub/	160	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/partners/	146	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/skylab	141	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/recruiting/143b99dc-b66b-4f64-8e9a-414e7bc2ee37	140	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/moat/	127	
https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/ocm/	103	

#### **Security Examples**

- Identify external user activity
- Report on access to sensitive information
- See if people are accessing data outside of regional jurisdiction (data sovereignty)
- Help identify compromised accounts



userkey	failedlogincount
dspeers@gravityunion.com	28
mschweitzer@gravityunion.com	12
dchan@gravityunion.com	12
jchin@gravityunion.com	11
shoff@gravityunion.com	8
jbotelho@gravityunion.com	4
acrandall@gravityunion.com	3
dsaini@gravityunion.com	3
kcreswell@gravityunion.com	3
dhelmer@gravityunion.com	2
rgaron@gravityunion.com	2
rtishenko@gravityunion.com	1
mmarchetto@gravityunion.com	1
ske@gravityunion.com	1
jshukla@gravityunion.com	1



#### **Compliance Examples**

- Identify content that is not classified
- Identify content that should be declared as a record but is not
- Identify content that should have been disposed of but is not
- Identify content that was deleted, that should have been kept





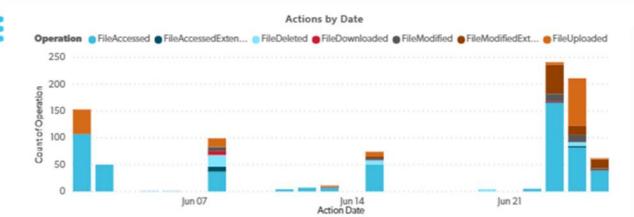
#### **Adoption Examples**

- Identify usage of applications, sites, lists, libraries
  - Is the new group leveraging the solution as expected?
- Observe is email traffic decreases down after a Teams or Yammer deployment
- See if people are sharing links instead of emailing documents

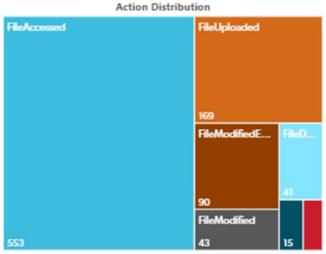


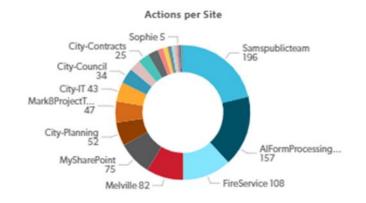
#### Audit Log - Actions By User





User	Site Name	Operation	Action Cour
		FileAccessed	
		Total	
	☐ City-Contracts	FileAccessed	
		Total	
	☐ City-Finance	FileAccessed	
		Total	
	□ City-HR	FileAccessed	
		Total	
	☐ City-IT	FileAccessed	
		Total	
	☐ City-Planning	FileAccessed	
		Total	
	<ul> <li>FireSafetyCommittee</li> </ul>	FileAccessed	
		Total	
		FileAccessed	
		Total	
	Melville	FileAccessed	
<			,





Have questions? We can help! Contact Gravity Union at contact@gravityunion.com



# Compliance considerations?

Right! Time to get serious.



# Archive audit trails for longer than what Microsoft offers

- Many compliance standards require that the audit trail is kept for the life of the document
- 90 days/1 year is likely not enough and there are limitations with audit retention policies
- Many companies will need to extract the audit trail entries and store them outside of M365



#### Place into a discoverable format

- Excel downloads are not easily consumable
- Need to pull into a database



#### Place audit trail entries on hold

- Protecting audit trails from disappearing while the content is involved in:
  - Litigation
  - FOI\FOIA (Freedom of Information)
  - ATIP (Access to Information and Privacy)
  - Investigations
  - Regulatory requirements (depending on the governing body)



#### Anonymize or destroy the audit trail

- You may want to keep the data for documents that have been deleted or disposed for analytics, be remove any personally identifiable information (PII)
  - i.e. remove usernames



# Gaps and issues in the M365 Audit Trail

Now the bad news



#### Disappearing audit

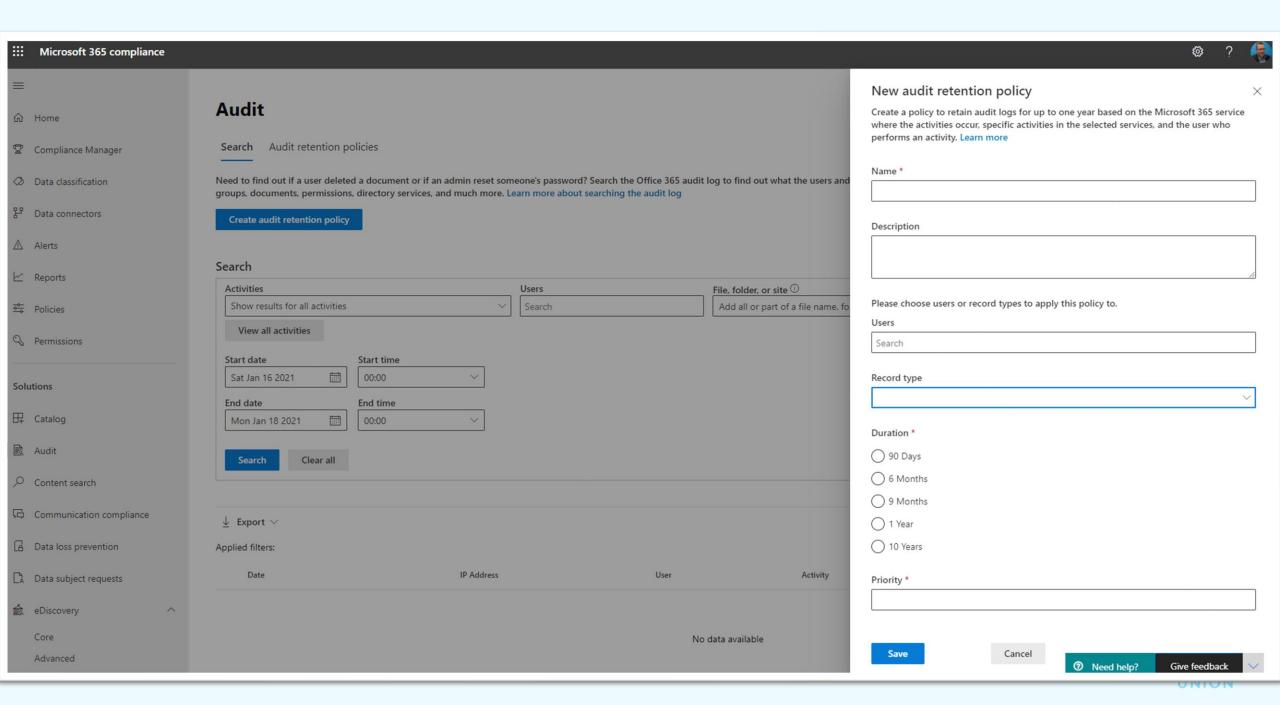
- E3/E1 saves 3 months of audit data (per user)
- E5 saves 1 year of audit data (per user)
- Audit retention rules to store some audit data longer (requires E5 + additional license per user)

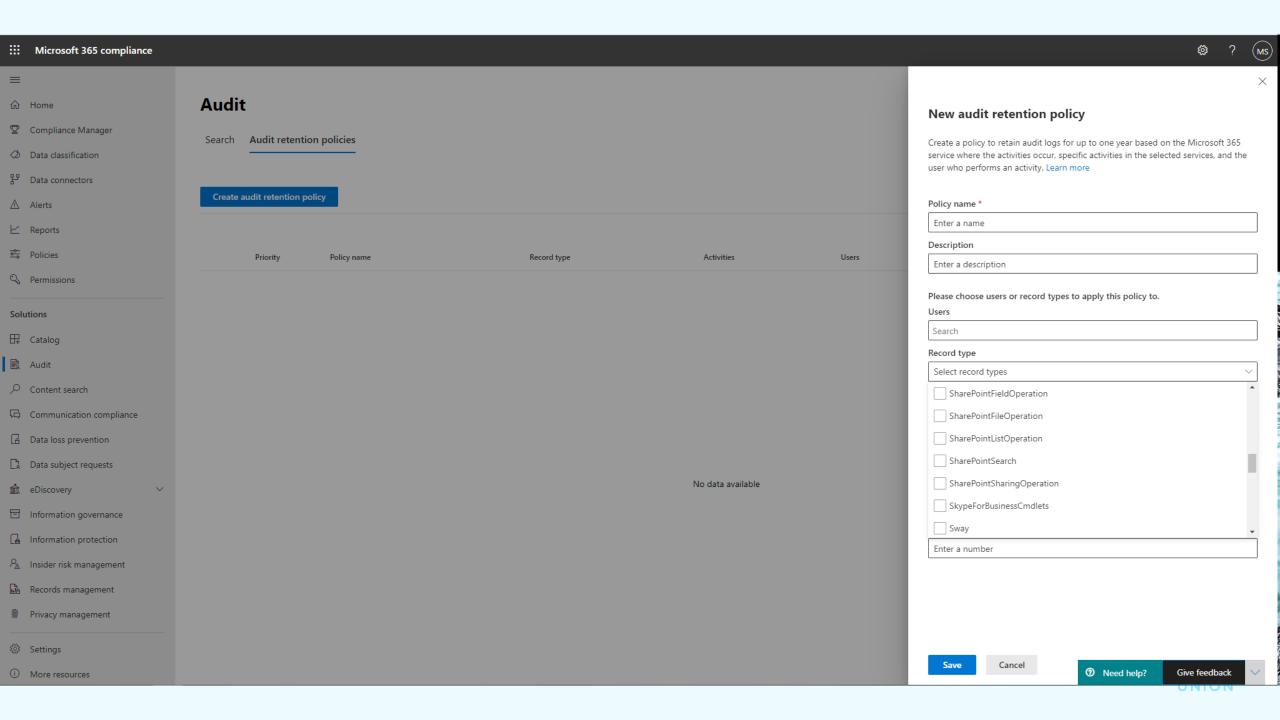


#### Retention policies

- You can have a maximum of 50 audit log retention policies in your organization
- To retain an audit log for longer than 90 days, the user who generated the audit log **must** be assigned an **E5** license or have an E5 Compliance or E5 eDiscovery and Audit add-on
- Shortest rule wins if you create an audit log retention policy for Exchange mailbox activity that has a retention period that's shorter than one year, audit records for Exchange mailbox activities will be retained for the shorter duration specified by the custom policy
- Advanced Audit License is **required** (additional **cost** above E5?) \$ per user

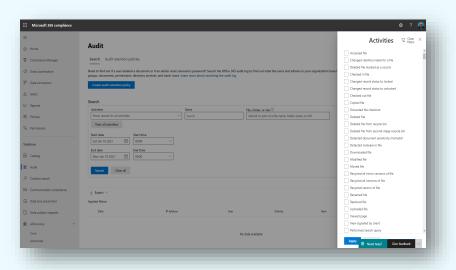






#### **Download limit**

- 50,000 audit entries per download
- Average user creates 300-400 events per day





#### Example

- Company with 1000 users will produce:
  - 400,000 daily audit events
  - Require 8 downloads
- It's not easy to slice and dice the audit in order to download (recall: 50k Limit)
  - How to split up effectively into 50k chunks? (time is the easiest)



₽ Data connectors

⚠ Alerts

∠ Reports

Q Permissions

Solutions

🖹 Audit

☐ Catalog

Content search

Communication compliance

Data loss prevention

Data subject requests

☐ Information governance

Information protection

P<sub>M</sub> Insider risk management

Records management

Settings

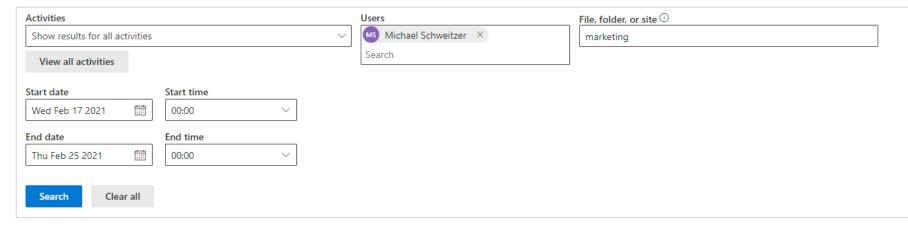
#### Audit

Learn about audit

Search Audit retention policies

Need to find out if a user deleted a document or if an admin reset someone's password? Search the Office 365 audit log to find out what the users and admins in your organization have been doing. You'll be able to find activity related to emapermissions, directory services, and much more. Learn more about searching the audit log

#### Search



<u>↓</u> Export ∨

#### Applied filters:

Date	IP Address	User	Activity	Item	Detail
Feb 24, 2021 5:45 AM	207.81.212.226	mschweitzer@gravityunion.com	Accessed file	docsethomepage.aspx	Accessed fro
Feb 22, 2021 11:01 AM	207.81.212.226	mschweitzer@gravityunion.com	Accessed file	docsethomepage.aspx	Accessed fro
Feb 17, 2021 7:53 AM	207.81.212.226	mschweitzer@gravityunion.com	Accessed file	docsethomepage.aspx	Accessed fro
Feb 21, 2021 8:44 AM	70.36.51.25	mschweitzer@gravityunion.com	Accessed file	docsethomepage.aspx	Accessed fro

More resources

#### Inability to create custom reports

Not in a format that supports creating custom reports for the organization



#### Not everyone has access

Most end users do not have access to the compliance center and have to go through IT



## Introducing Gravity MOAT

A compliance focussed audit trail management solution



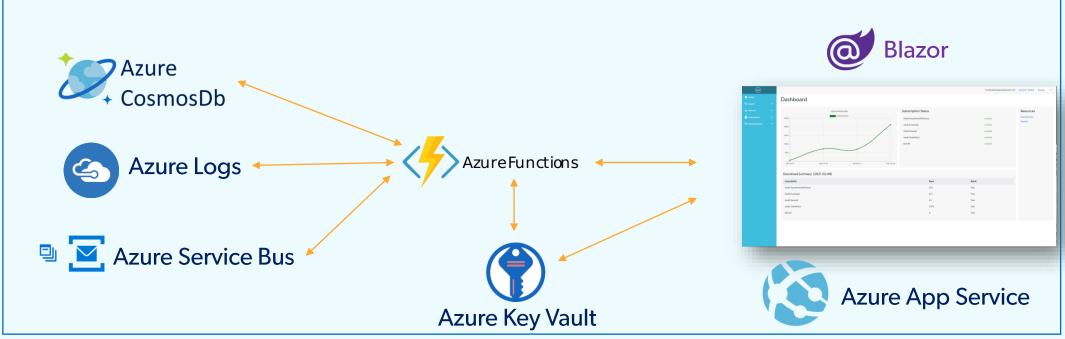
#### **Gravity MOAT**

- Compliance focussed Microsoft Office 365 Audit Trail archiving
- Stored in your Azure environment (complete ownership of data)
- Allows custom reports
- Allows for complete control over the audit
- Multi lingual
- Allows access to the audit trail without needing access to the compliance center in Microsoft 365



#### **Solution architecture**







#### Search, reporting and export

- Quick searches (user, IP, document, list, site)
- Advanced search
- Reporting
  - 100's of prebuilt reports in application and Power Bl
- Export results into JSON, XML or Excel



#### Compliance

- Auto-delete audit trail based on source application (workload)
- Delete or anonymize audit trail entries upon record disposition
- Place audit trail entries on legal hold



```
"creationtime": "2020-12-01t00:52:03",
"id": "aa0e659d-23df-4b52-809d-08d8959351b3",
"operation": "fileaccessed ",
"organizationid": "02c5ecf0-1cec-4a5b-8ded-cd12a3052900",
"recordtype": 6,
"userkey": "ANONOMYZED",
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"version": 1,
"workload": "sharepoint",
"clientip": "40.82.191.74",
"objectid": "https://gravityunion.sharepoint.com/sites/.../siteassets/open notebook.onetoc2",
"userid": " ANONOMYZED",
"correlationid": "5cdf929f-60d7-b000-0986-b02c9839c382",
"eventsource": "sharepoint",
"itemtype": "file",
"listid": "ade49883-0a0f-4fab-8f62-ba1749ee678d",
"listitemuniqueid": "7cb1a5f7-9925-4388-ac11-5376e2052d40",
"site": "820df841-5e3d-4d18-a63c-07716a787166",
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```

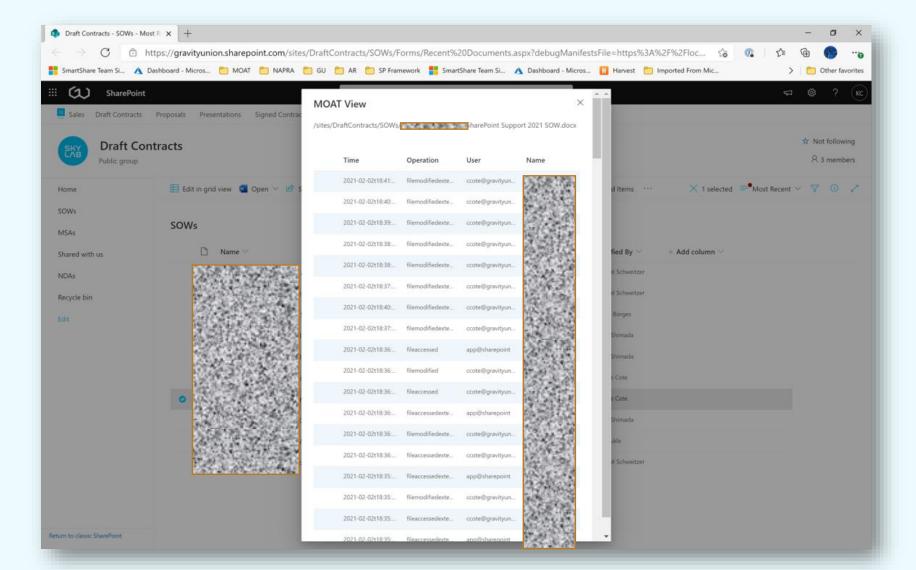


#### **API**

- Place audit trail entries on hold
- Delete or anonymize audit trail entries
- Custom sources



### **Surfacing in SharePoint**





#### **Surfacing in SharePoint**

- Document Activity
- List Activity
- Site Activity
- Deleted Items List
- Deleted Items Library



#### **Extensible**

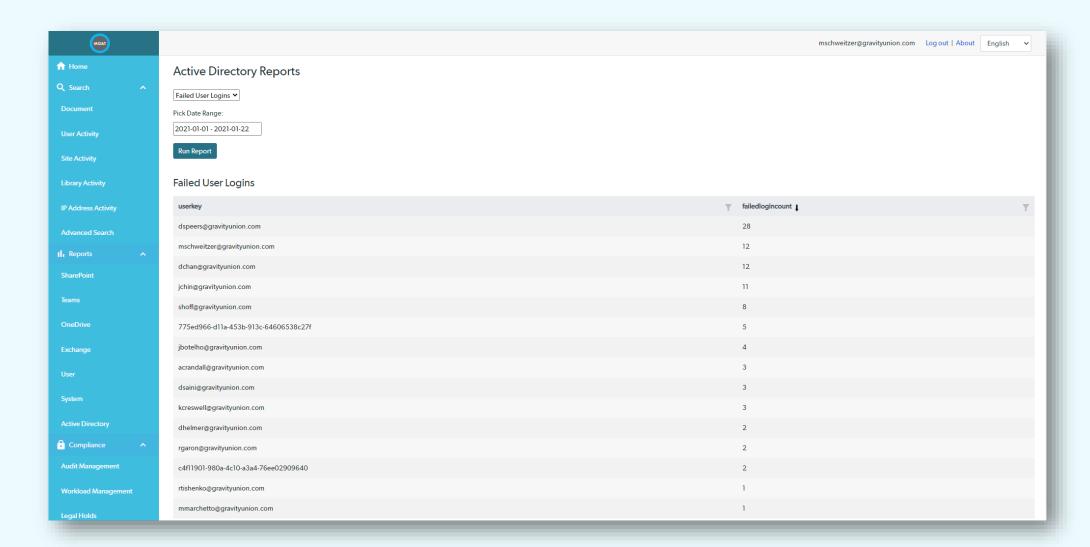
- Custom reports
- Adding additional data sources
- Custom SharePoint integration (think automated governance)



## DEMO

A quick tour of Gravity MOAT

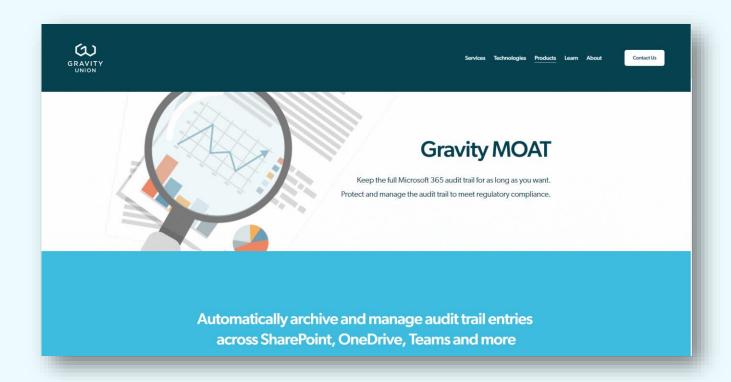






#### **Learn more**

https://www.gravityunion.com/moat









#### **Next webinar**

- Problems with adoption?
- People hate SharePoint or Teams?
- Messy SharePoint solution requiring too much maintenance?
- Spending too much time fixing things instead of adding value to your implementation?



#### **Next webinar**







# Thankyou for joining!

mschweitzer@gravityunion.com



#### Compliance Inspired Digital Transformation

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