

The Ultimate SharePoint Server Architecture guide

How to design a secure and highly available SharePoint environment which doesn't require downtime at all.

David Sass

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The Ultimate SharePoint Server Architecture Guide

Companies, universities, and even the UN are getting hacked. Some of the affected companies are able to recover but some cannot, and have to shutdown their operations. I know that probably no one wants to be next. And knowing that a cyber attack could destroy the SharePoint environment what we built is not helping to sleep any better.

In this book we'll try to go through all the architectural options which could be leveraged to protect our SharePoint farms and the intellectual property we stored in SharePoint.

What do we want from SharePoint?

Every part of the company wants different things out of SharePoint.

The business wants it to be available, fast and just be there running preferably always. The Cyber Security team wants from SharePoint to be patched and preferably “battle hardened”. And of course some parts of the organization want Backup and Disaster Recovery included, and maybe have everything fully automated so the service owner could sleep like a baby knowing that we can recover.

I bet that all teams responsible for SharePoint would like to meet these requirements but they're quite hard to meet.

What do you want from SharePoint?

I'll be honest, I want SharePoint to be sexy again, I mean I want to be proud of my SharePoint environment, and I never want to do a late night maintenance job, or work on a weekend to implement a change. Nor I want to wake up 3 AM during the night for a phone call because the company was hacked and SharePoint is gone. *Why would I want less? I want to have a simple life, do the job once, but with high quality, I'm efficiently lazy as they say :)*

What can we do?

Please allow me to think outside of the box and try to meet all these requirements with the ultimate SharePoint architecture.

With the architecture described in this book I hope we can build a cyber-resilient, and truly highly-available SharePoint environment where patching and maintenance can be part of the everyday work without disruption of the service. And of course sleep like a baby because we did everything to protect our SharePoint environment.

In the rest of the book, we'll walk through these concepts and explain why are they good for the business and for us SharePoint folks (but probably not in this order):

- Network segregation / DMZ
- Dedicated Active Directory as a “resource domain”
- Zero-trust
- ADFS and/or Azure AD
- Single sign-on
- SQL Always-On
- Failover Clustering
- Privileged Admin Workstations
- Least Privileges / Just Enough Administration
- Role Based Access Control
- Azure Stack
- Assume breach
- Active-Passive Farms

Let's jump into the details!