The intY guide to Microsoft Azure success

Why you should be selling the cloud to your customers
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At intY, we’re here to support you every step of the way. Whether you’ve just started exploring your cloud offering or have already built a cloud practice.

Our Established Azure Practice can support you through your Azure readiness:

**intY Azure Practice offering**

- Training and Enablement
- Environment Optimisation
- Go-To-Market Strategy and Execution
- Azure Virtual Desktop
- Pre-Sales and Solution Development
- Building Repeatable Solutions
- Commercialisation of Azure Solutions
- Access to Microsoft Programmes

“We have seen huge success with Managed Service Providers (MSPs) who have successfully built repeatable and scalable Azure solutions, an almost ‘out of the box’ service, which is not disruptive to end user customer environments. Repeatable and scalable solutions also give the Cloud Solution Provider the opportunity to build fixed cost models to offer their customers, which overcomes the common objection of cost uncertainty.

Emily Whelan, Azure Practice Lead & Account Director
The Microsoft Azure Opportunity

Microsoft's public cloud offering, Microsoft Azure, is today's key business enabler. The cloud platform is comprised of over 600 products and cloud services. These are designed to help solve problems for end customers of all sizes. It allows you to evolve their businesses in-line with modern work environments and future-proof with greater efficiency and security enhancements.

According to Gartner, the research company, public cloud services will see a modest growth of 8.1% in 2020.

However, from 2021 through to 2024, organisations looking to support digital business are set to increase investment in the cloud. This will see the market excel with a four-year compound annual growth rate of 24.6%.

At intY, we have seen a significant shift in this approach, with MSPs (Managed Service Providers) now proactively building repeatable and scalable cloud offerings to take to their customers, and not surprisingly, moving into high growth and hyper growth revenue categories.

In some cases, we have seen MSPs growing triple digits year on year. This eBook is a guide for MSPs to help you understand Microsoft Azure fundamentals around solution development and pricing models and take the first simple steps towards building a successful Azure Practice. It will cover:

- An overview of Microsoft Azure, the benefits and opportunity
- A brief overview of Azure billing models and cost management
- Fundamental assessment for repeatable and scalable solution development
- 5 Top Tips for Microsoft Azure success
An Overview of Microsoft Azure

Microsoft Azure offers organisations IT options with more flexibility and less complexity and cost than traditional on-premises technology. Azure services are scalable and can be consumed through a pay-as-you-go model, with an industry leading commitment to data protection and privacy.

Microsoft built Azure to be the enterprise data centre of the future, comprising of the three main pillars of cloud computing:

**Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) - servers and storage.**

**Platform as a Service (PaaS) - a framework for developing apps and services.**

**Software as a Service (SaaS) - software delivered via the internet.**

End user benefits

By selling Microsoft Azure, Managed Service Providers can deliver these pillars of cloud services to their customers, allowing these businesses to:

- Reduce technology over-heads and overall business expenditure.
- Scale their IT infrastructure in-line with demand, whilst still controlling costs.
- Support intelligent applications to get work done more efficiently.
- Work from anywhere, on any device and securely with Azure Virtual Desktop.
- Ensure business continuity in unforeseen circumstances.
- And much more.
Microsoft Cloud Adoption Framework

**Define Strategy**
- Understand motivations
- Business outcomes
- Business justification
- First adoption project

**Plan**
- Rationalise digital estate
- Initial organization alignment
- Skills readiness plan
- Cloud adoption plan

**Ready**
- Azure readiness guide
- First landing zone
- Expand the blueprint
- Best practice validation

**Govern**
- Methodology
- Benchmark
- Initial best practice
- Governance maturity

**Manage**
- Business commitments
- Operations baseline
- Ops maturity

**Adopt**
- First workload migration
- Expanded scenarios
- Best practice
- Process improvements

**Innovate**
- Innovation guide
- Expanded scenarios
- Best practice validation
- Process improvements
Understanding the benefits of Azure

Here we have highlighted the benefits your customers will want to know about:

Operational expenditure vs capital expenditure
(OPEX vs CAPEX)

One of the primary differences between an on-premises and cloud infrastructure is the actual cost model. The traditional on-premises server, as a permanent fixture, is classified as capital expenditure (CAPEX) – an up-front investment which depreciates over time both in value and viability. It cannot be scaled to meet exact requirements to save costs.

Microsoft Azure, on the other hand, is a monthly subscription service, which is classified as operational expenditure (OPEX). This shifts IT spending to a pay-as-you-go model, meaning companies only pay for what they use. It is also continually updated with new features and services and can be scaled up and down to meet the customers’ exact requirements. This means cost saving and cost control opportunities.

Improved infrastructure

Adopting Microsoft Azure means a reduction in IT maintenance. Time spent maintaining hardware and upgrading software is significantly reduced – eliminating headaches with it. An IT team can focus on advancing an organisation’s technology roadmap, rather than spending time on maintenance and repairs.

For a Managed Service Provider, this means adding significant value through demonstrating use of the latest, up-to-date technologies available and playing a critical role in the technological future proofing of the customers’ business. In simple terms, less time on outages and downtime and more time on cutting-edge innovation.

Improved infrastructure

When using Microsoft Azure applications, you’re always working with the most up-to-date and powerful features of that application. Microsoft continuously monitors and improves all its applications to make sure the customer gets the best experience possible, every time.

Mobile ready

Cloud-based applications provide employees with access to their workloads anywhere and on any device. This promotes enhanced flexibility, enables remote working and business continuity.
Choosing the right Azure billing model

Adopting Microsoft Azure means flexibility when it comes to billing models, and this means there are options for you and your customers.

Consumption (PAYG):

A consumption billing model is essentially a monthly pay-as-you-go (PAYG) model where a customer will pay based on the utilisation of their workloads. This is a simple model, and with the Azure Modern Commerce platform by Microsoft, Managed Service Provider always has complete visibility of the most up to date usage and cost information.

Reserved Instances:

Reserved Instances are virtual machines which are reserved for dedicated use on Microsoft Azure. Reserved Instances come with the benefit of cost savings, as they are typically a 1 or 3-year commitment. One of the key benefits of using a Reserved Instance virtual machine is the significant cost savings versus the PAYG model. Utilising Azure Reserved Instances also allows Managed Service Providers the ability to offer an almost fixed cost solution to their customers.

We understand that navigating the Microsoft Azure pricing models and calculators can be challenging. If you need help with creating a quote or understanding best practices, our intY Azure Practice has experts on hand who specialise in all Azure pricing models.
The key to building a successful Azure Practice is planning. Here are our five top tips when in the planning phase of building your Azure solutions:

**Five top tips for Microsoft Azure success**

1. **Become a specialist**
   Focus on specific areas of Microsoft Azure, and become experts at it. Then scale your team and level of expertise as you scale your business.

2. **Build solutions that solve a specific, but common business problem**
   A common business problem is not customer specific, rather it is a problem often experienced by many businesses within a particular segment or size.

3. **Build a repeatable solution**
   A repeatable solution is one which can be deployed across multiple customers without or with minimal customisation.

4. **Build a scalable solution**
   A scalable solution is one which is still viable and robust, when there is a significant increase or decrease on load. This could be from a user, data, or any other load factor.

5. **Build a solution with a predictable cost model**
   A cost that scales directly in line with an increase or decrease in load, that can be presented as a fixed, per user or per GB cost.
Advanced cost management support from intY Azure Practice

Cost optimization
An in-depth look at what you’re spending money on and how you can optimise that spend. This value can be passed on to your cloud customers.

Governance Planning
A governance plan helps you better understand, browse, and interact with your resources and estimate the cost of resources. Make inventories of your subscriptions, resource groups and resources and show you how to use tags to manage cost.

Fixed Cost Modelling
Building fixed price models to offer your customers overcomes the common objection of cost uncertainty.

Cost Management Portal Training
We provide comprehensive training of the Azure cost management portal. This gives you advanced visibility over consumption and pricing and demonstrates how to set sort orders so you can fully understand how workloads are being used in a customer environment.
As we've seen, the opportunity presented by Microsoft Azure is significant. We hope this eBook has helped you understand the fundamentals of Azure solution development and pricing models so that you can take the first steps towards building a successful Azure practice. And remember, we're here to help you with every step.

To get started on your Azure journey, get in touch with our team today.

Contact the Azure Practice Team

www.inty.com