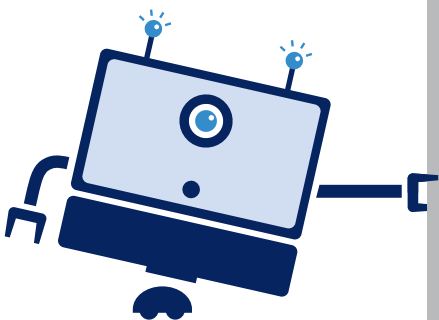


Getting Started

Address Skills Gaps

Govern/
Control Costs

The Essential
IT Leaders Starter Guide to
MICROSOFT AZURE



Welcome to The Essential **Executive Starter Guide** to Azure

All indicators suggest 2016 will be the biggest year ever for Microsoft Azure adoption in the Enterprise. If you've downloaded this guide, or someone on your team emailed it to you, chances are you're among the many business leaders contributing to this era-defining movement.

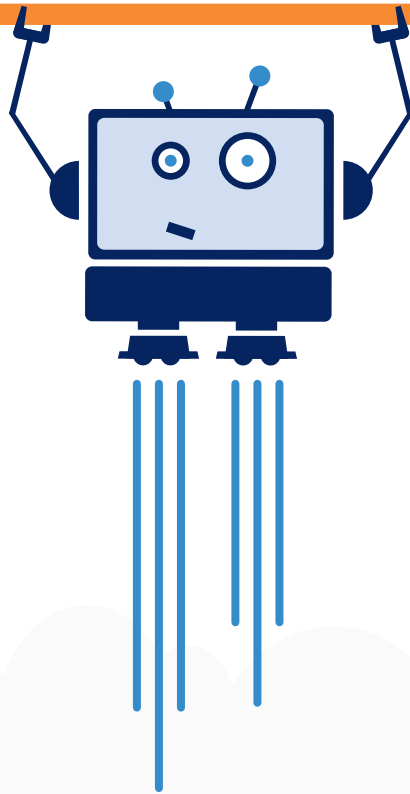
The Essential Executive Starter Guide to Azure takes you through the key obstacles organizations face in delivering Azure, and how to overcome them. We also provide best practices, tips and industry examples throughout.

Once you're done, you'll understand the five steps necessary to ensure a move to Azure succeeds.

The answers in this guide have been written by Softchoice's team of Microsoft experts. With over 40 locations throughout North America, Softchoice is a leading North American managed services and IT solutions provider, offering professional services, procurement and architecture excellence in all areas of the data center.

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STEP 1:

Spot Your Compelling Event

78%
of public cloud implementations are for new applications

#1
Driver of Azure and Cloud Infrastructure is Big Data

If you're considering Microsoft Azure, we have three quick questions for you:

1. Which business problems will Microsoft Azure solve?
2. What new considerations will it introduce?
3. What business outcomes will a move to Microsoft Azure deliver?

If you don't have good answers to these questions, your outlook for success in the public cloud, and specifically Azure, isn't so hot. Here's why.

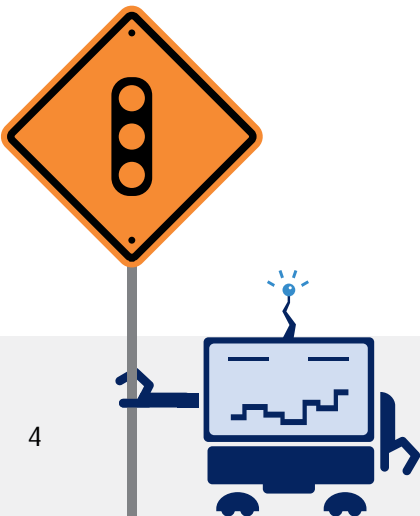
Knowing why you need a move to the public cloud is your foundation

Azure isn't like other technology products. It isn't something you buy off the shelf, or consume like traditional IT services. Launching Azure, or any cloud solution - be it hybrid, public or private - is a much larger, more significant conversation organizations are having.

A move to Azure is about keeping competitive, and building better business practices.

This is why it's so important to spot your Compelling Event - the primary reason - for a move to Azure for your organization. Big or small in impact, this "event" takes many forms - whether it's the arrival of a widespread industry trend (like Big Data), or set off by the obsolescence of a missioncritical technology (like Windows Server 2003). But once you set your sights on this starting point you'll be empowered to take the next steps with clarity and a reason. This lays the ground work for your business case, planning and eventual roll out of the technology solution.

Without a keen understanding of your compelling event, you've lost before you begin.



OUR EXPERTS SAY:

When you purchase Azure, what you are really doing is investing in your business. It's as much a conversation about the bottom line as it is about technology.

STEP 2:

Start Smart

Big and small:

Read case studies on how these world-renowned companies started smart With Microsoft Azure.

- ▶ **easyJet**
- ▶ **Mazda**
- ▶ **Marks & Spencer**
- ▶ **Lufthansa**

Many businesses are already sold on the idea of Microsoft Azure and its place in their Enterprise. Many may have even purchased it already with their Enterprise Agreement (EA). But all too often these organizations haven't taken the first step to actually implement it. Just think – buying something, and never using it. What is causing this?

Starting an Azure project may be supremely complex and difficult. This is why your second step is all about making the smartest most strategic entry point to jumpstart your cloud investments.

In general, we've found there are two approaches to doing this: start easy, or go big. Easy wins abound. It's just a matter of picking which one to dip your toes into Azure. The following shows the five most obvious starting points organizations take with their first Azure projects - typically low-impact undertakings to prove Azure will work without risking much disruption. before you begin.

Top Five Easy Wins:



Testing & Development



Enterprise Resource Planning



Production & Staging

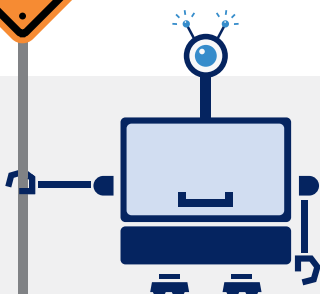


Windows Server 2003 Replacement



Bringing Mobility to Existing Apps

Easy isn't everything. While testing Azure on non-mission critical workloads is great, many organizations determine it's far more advantageous to put their time and money toward a more competitive, impactful approach. In these cases, this means using Azure resources to power and launch game-changing client-facing apps, or line of business processes. All at great speed and very low cost to entry to get going.



OUR EXPERTS SAY:

Many organizations have already purchased Azure within the context of their Enterprise Agreement. If you have Azure in your EA and aren't using it, read this article for a few ways Softchoice sees our clients adopt it for the first time.

STEP 3:

Know Your Key Obstacles

Every Azure project starts the same way: with hopes and concerns. And while it's true numerous obstacles get in the way of realizing all the dreams behind a new technology, it's our fears that often do the most damage before we even begin.

The strategy here is to properly understand the truth behind these hesitations and whether or not they merit a second look. This way, you'll have the tools to plan accordingly and gain the trust of key stakeholders throughout your business.

The two main barriers to public cloud adoption

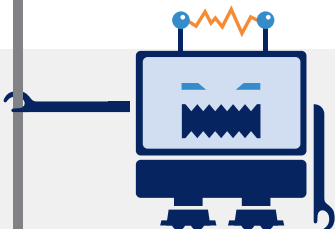


Security

Fear of security breaches and concerns over lack of control and data access are the key worry points for both executives and IT leaders looking at Azure. The reality is Microsoft offers robust, round the clock protection - both virtual and physical. Microsoft meets the strictest international security regulations and offers best in class directory and granular access control.

Compliance

A close second in the list of fears about Azure is compliance. Organizations in heavily-regulated industries always worry about this, and with good cause. Everything from credit card data to POS data is being siphoned to the public cloud, and all organizations must keep this in mind. As with Security, though, Microsoft has an enormous, vast approach to ensuring compliance including health, credit payments, government and more.



OUR EXPERTS SAY:

Microsoft Azure security, compliance fears are slowing adoption – should they be? One of our top Microsoft leaders weighs in on the matter.

STEP 4:

Provision like a Pro

You've determined "Why" you need Azure. You've done the hard work of determining where to start, and when.

When the rubber hits the road, provisioning your tenant is perhaps the most crucial to ensuring long term Azure success. Unfortunately, doing so is time consuming, complex and often outside of the expertise of most IT organizations. Which is why teaming up at this crucial stage is another key strategy for Azure pioneers in the Enterprise. In short, to succeed here you should find a technology partner.

Provision Precision

The right technology partner will have a deep understanding of the licensing and technology requirements, as well as the tools to offer you precise insight on what is needed (i.e. how many licenses, how much, how to purchase it, and how to estimate your consumption levels). The process should give you a good idea of what to expect in the future, saving you potential overage costs and reducing the complexity of mapping all this out, by using assessments, data driven tools and the valuable insight of hundreds of hours of old-fashioned professional experience.

Pro tip number one: Be mindful about consumption

If your Azure app is line of business and all of a sudden you have to throttle it because of unanticipated overages, you are NOT going to be popular around the office.

Pro tip number two: There are three ways to purchase Azure

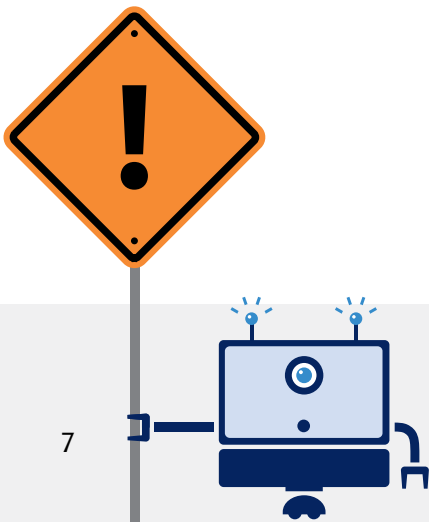
Option #1: Pay-As-You-Go Subscriptions: The most popular and flexible payment plan. There are no minimum purchases or commitments and you can cancel anytime. You may pay by credit-card, or by invoice.

Option #2: Open Licensing: You may now purchase Azure directly from partners like Softchoice with an Open License key. A strategic option, especially for clients that have a value-add partner like Softchoice who will assist in the planning, delivery and ongoing maintenance of a cloud project.

Option #3: Enterprise Agreements: Large organizations may purchase Azure directly through their Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA) and benefit from significant discounts. Make an upfront usage commitment to earn additional benefits—including flexible billing options and the best prices available.

OUR EXPERTS SAY:

Get a crash course in licensing and consuming Azure in this **free guide**. You'll learn five tips and tricks everyone in the enterprise needs to know if a move to Microsoft's cloud services is in the works.



STEP 5:

Don't Stop at Launch

The final step in ensuring a successful Azure implementation comes from understanding your team's work doesn't stop after Day One.

Once you've launched, your responsibilities for security, maintenance and management don't magically transfer over to the cloud provider. While your team's job is different - perhaps simpler - it doesn't disappear entirely.

The key is to stay focused and ensure Azure is delivering on the promises and plans you made back in the planning phase, and to steer its course for future benefits. There are three stages to accomplish this:

1. Consumption check-in:

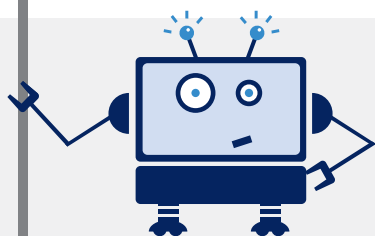
If you've done the hard work of budgeting and licensing with the help of a technology partner, you should have a good idea of what to expect for consumption. That said, things change. Usage patterns aren't always predictable, and business priorities and processes evolve. Refer back to your dashboards and compare consumption patterns with your budget on a regular basis.

2. Stay vigilant:

While Microsoft does ample work to protect and keep your data secure on its servers, you are still on the hook for what happens to data on your side, in transit and on the end-points. You've also got to actively manage and understand who has access to what data, from where and for how long with an encompassing directory management scheme.

3. Find more opportunity:

Are there other opportunities for your organization to go deeper into the public cloud? Use your first Azure projects as testing grounds, and then paint a picture for a deeper implementation in the months ahead. Find your next Compelling Event and repeat the five steps we've shared with you to ensure your properly set up for success!



OUR EXPERTS SAY:

Organizations often forget that with cloud services, they still have responsibility for their data. You've also got to actively manage and understand who has access to what data - at all times.



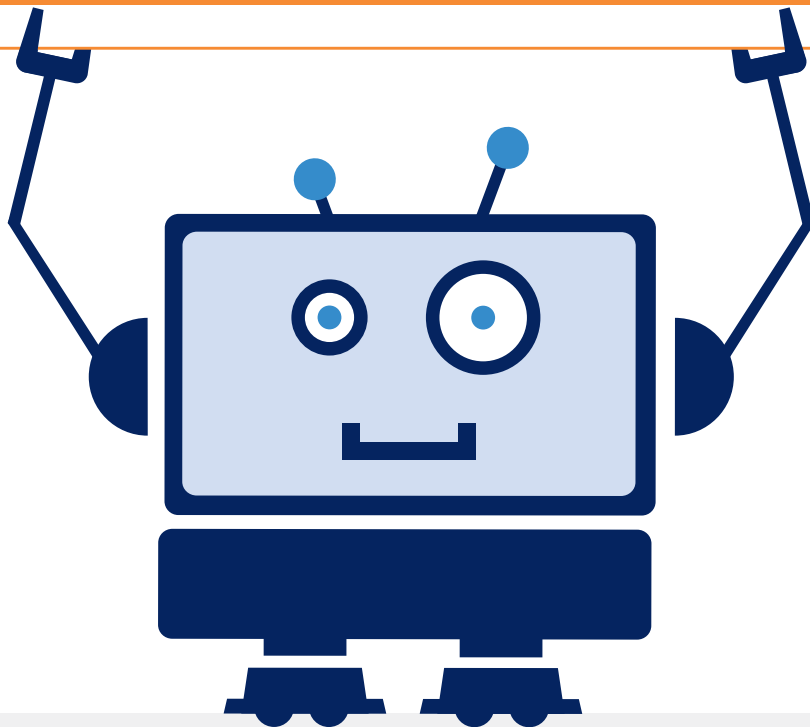
Softchoice Azure TechCheck Assessment

While Microsoft Azure offers your business tremendous opportunity for growth and competitive leadership in the years ahead, security concerns should not be taken lightly.

The information in this guide is meant as a primer. To get in-depth, custom and non-biased advice to craft your own cloud enterprise, consult with a Softchoice Microsoft specialist today.

**Jumpstart your move to the public cloud -
and Microsoft Azure - with our Softchoice
Azure TechCheck Assessment.**

- ✓ Streamline your planning phase
- ✓ Get a clearly-defined strategic road map
- ✓ Understand the total costs and opportunities





Azure TechCheck Assessment

Evaluating the Impact of Microsoft’s Cloud Infrastructure

Softchoice’s Azure TechCheck Assessment helps clients precisely evaluate how an existing environment maps to potential public cloud offerings. For clients considering migrating an entire data center, or looking to target an existing development and test environment, the Azure TechCheck provides the insight needed to justify projected effort supported by a formal cost evaluation

and risk analysis led by a Softchoice consultant. The Azure TechCheck catalogs legacy silos of technology and arms clients with a fact-based portrait of the current state environment. Softchoice combines the collected data with technical experts spanning the data center and hybrid cloud to help plot the way forward.

Phase	Client Benefits
Discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using an agent-less data collection tool to gather an end-to-end view of the existing server/storage infrastructure
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Softchoice technical experts evaluate findings and consolidate the broad data to identify potential barriers Sets actionable insights that are validated with a client findings and recommendations session Delivers a comprehensive view of impacted infrastructure
Azure Workshop & Analysis Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review business demands and current issues Review risks and remediation through guided data review and recommendations Provide a structured review of the Azure TechCheck and evaluate options with a Softchoice Azure subject matter expert
Azure TechCheck Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workload summaries of data center Reporting on local divisions of environment, customized to business requirements A basic projected cost analysis on migrating to Microsoft Azure


To arrange for a Azure TechCheck, contact your Softchoice Account Manager today and request an appointment!

Who Should be Involved?

Softchoice recommends clients assemble a cross functional IT team with a senior IT leader sponsor that provides alignment to the issues, business drivers and guides prioritization.

Why Softchoice for Azure Planning?

- Cross-discipline expertise spanning leading vendors in data center, hybrid cloud and public cloud scenarios
- Day-to-day operations for over 400 core and hybrid infrastructure
- Proven IaaS planning methodology to connect on premise data center infrastructure investments with the potential of the cloud
- Architect and engineers carry over 10 year average tenure

 **TechValidate** “ 100% of organizations who engaged Softchoice for Cloud Services rated Delivery Methodology as valuable or better when compared to alternatives.” Source : TechValidate TVID:C2E-EBB-3CE



Softchoice IaaS Accelerator for Azure

Accelerating the Adoption of IaaS

The Softchoice IaaS Accelerator for Azure is for clients who want to improve their planning and evaluation approach to Azure. The Softchoice IaaS Accelerator for Azure streamlines the process by applying a proven approach based on a

set number of servers, and includes the implementation of a single, initial workload. The result is a clearly-defined roadmap that informs a long-term vision, including costs associated with Azure's subscription model.

Deliverables	Client Benefits
Planning and discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify critical success factors and collect necessary inputs to guide execution• Gain a rich understanding of the capabilities of Azure as it relates to the client's goals• Capture metrics and data associated with up to twenty (20) workload defined virtual servers and identify any network redundancy limitations as an input to roadmap
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides logical hierarchy and server placement based on Softchoice best practices
Implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creation and configuration of cross-premises connectivity over site-to-site IPsec VPNs using the Windows Azure Virtual Network to build a secure link between the target and source location
Validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Validates the configuration, authentication and administration capabilities based on a standard quality assurance approach
Project closure and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide appropriate knowledge transfer and recommendations

Why the Softchoice IaaS Accelerator for Azure works

Based on client feedback and real-world deployment findings, Softchoice created the IaaS Accelerator for Azure to fast track your evaluation and adoption of this feature-rich technology. Softchoice has completed over 5,000+ projects throughout North America helping clients discover, plan, deploy, adopt and operate solutions. Using similar delivery best practices, the IaaS Accelerator for Azure improves returns and lowers risk through effective planning to align technology with desired business outcomes.

How to get started

Call your Softchoice Account Manager to set up an appointment with a Softchoice Solution Architect, who has advanced knowledge of Microsoft technology. They will provide more information and a statement of work, where specific assumptions and deliverables are outlined.



Softchoice Azure Accelerator

For Microsoft Windows Server 2003

The Microsoft Azure Accelerator for Windows 2003 is for clients who want to relocate critical servers or services ahead of the Windows 2003 end of life deadline looming in July 2015 to the Azure cloud service platform. This engagement is customized for each client, and results in a

roadmap to a alternative service delivery model over legacy Windows 2003 servers. OS upgrades, application remediation and long-term vision are all addressed, along with Azure's subscription model in transforming legacy Windows Server 2003 workloads into modern data.

Deliverables	Client Benefits
Planning and discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify critical success factors and collect necessary inputs to guide execution• Gain a rich understanding of the capabilities of Azure as it relates to the client's goals• Leveraging Softchoice's TechCheck Assessment Discovery technology, we capture current state services and requirements to ensure successful relocation to Azure
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides logical hierarchy and server placement based on Softchoice best practices
Implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creation and configuration of cross-premises connectivity over site-to-site IPsec VPNs using the Windows Azure Virtual Network to build a secure link between the target and source location
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Why the Softchoice Azure Accelerator for Windows Server 2003

Based on client feedback and real-world deployment findings, Softchoice created the Azure Accelerator series to ensure repeatable methodology and adoption of feature-rich technologies. Softchoice has completed over 5,000+ projects throughout North America helping clients discover, plan, deploy, adopt and operate solutions. Using similar delivery best practices, the Azure Accelerator for Windows Server 2003 improves returns and lowers risk through effective planning and alignment to desired business outcomes.

How to get started

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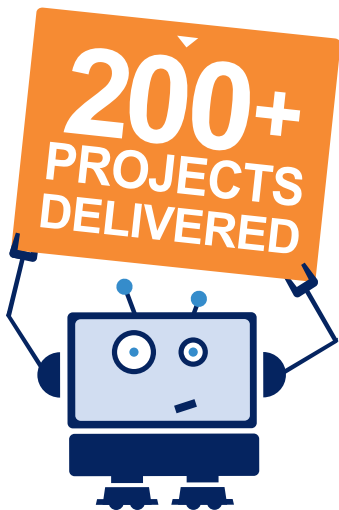
softchoice
About Us

Softchoice is a leading North American services and IT solutions provider, offering professional managed services, procurement and architecture excellence in all areas of the data center. With a deep bench of Microsoft technical experts, we are the leading Enterprise Agreement reseller in the United States and Canada, and we offer a series of non-biased data-driven assessments that help our clients chart the best path for their business needs.

Softchoice is also a leader among technology solutions partners for providing insight, and hands on experience in the planning, licensing, delivery and maintenance of large-scale business cloud projects. From our SaaS management dashboards to our accelerator programs, we give you everything you need to be successful in the cloud.

Other guides in this series:

- ▶ The Essential Guide to Azure Security
- ▶ The Essential Guide to Azure Compliance
- ▶ The Essential Guide to Licensing and Consuming Azure



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