



The Business Value of Microsoft Azure Customer Enablement Tools, Resources, and Programs

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BUSINESS VALUE HIGHLIGHTS



Click on highlights below to navigate to related content within this business value white paper.

24% lower
three-year cost of running
Azure environment

42% faster
to migrate to Azure

55% more efficient
IT teams

26% higher
developer productivity

72% faster
to deploy new storage

Executive Summary

Enterprises have increasingly realized that unlocking the full value of cloud adoption requires more than just adoption of new cloud technologies. These technologies need to be accompanied by additional efforts and resources to enable the transition and to ensure optimized usage of new capabilities. Microsoft Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs (collectively known as Azure Customer Enablement Resources) are designed to assist customers on this path and to help enterprises successfully transition to and operate in a cloud-centric IT environment.

IDC spoke with organizations seeking to maximize the value of their Microsoft Azure cloud services through use of Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs. Interviewed Azure customers reported that they have gained improved understanding and capabilities for their Azure environments, which has enabled them to optimize costs and IT team capabilities while improving Azure functionality and performance.

Based on interviews with study participants, IDC calculates that they will achieve strong relative value with Azure Customer Enablement Resources, which will be worth an annual average of \$291,800 per 100 Azure virtual machines (VMs) by:

- ▶ **Completing Azure migrations and deployments faster**, thereby requiring less staff time and providing full functionality of the Azure platform at an earlier time than anticipated
- ▶ **Ensuring cost-effective and cost-efficient Azure environments**, which allows for greater ability to minimize costs and maximize operational benefits of the Microsoft cloud
- ▶ **Creating more agile Azure environments**, thereby enhancing IT flexibility in support of business activities
- ▶ **Delivering optimized performance**, which results in improved user and customer experiences and a better overall experience with Azure

Situation Overview

Digital transformation (DX), and the cloud journey that is often integral to its success, goes well beyond adoption and deployment of new technologies by enterprises. Equally important are the people and process changes that must accompany new technology, ensuring that such innovations effectively deliver all the potential benefits and business value associated with new technology. Also important are the transition tools and temporal frameworks needed to execute this change as the IT environment evolves from a traditional one to a modern cloud-centric one.

IDC's 2020 *IaaSView Survey* (n = 1,500) highlights that cost and billing are among the top challenges faced by enterprises already using cloud for their production IT needs. And the top drivers of cost challenges are migration costs, cost of management, and high costs when using adjacent services in the cloud. The availability of tools and frameworks to better enable the organizational, operational, and transition processes to support cloud adoption can significantly change the cost of IT operations and the financial outcomes from cloud at enterprises. The demand for such capabilities is reflected in customer responses to survey questions about additional services they would like to see delivered in the cloud ecosystem; services to support migration, management, and operation of the cloud environment have been consistently among the top responses in IDC's 2019 and 2020 *IaaSView Survey*.

Microsoft Azure Customer Enablement Tools, Resources, and Programs

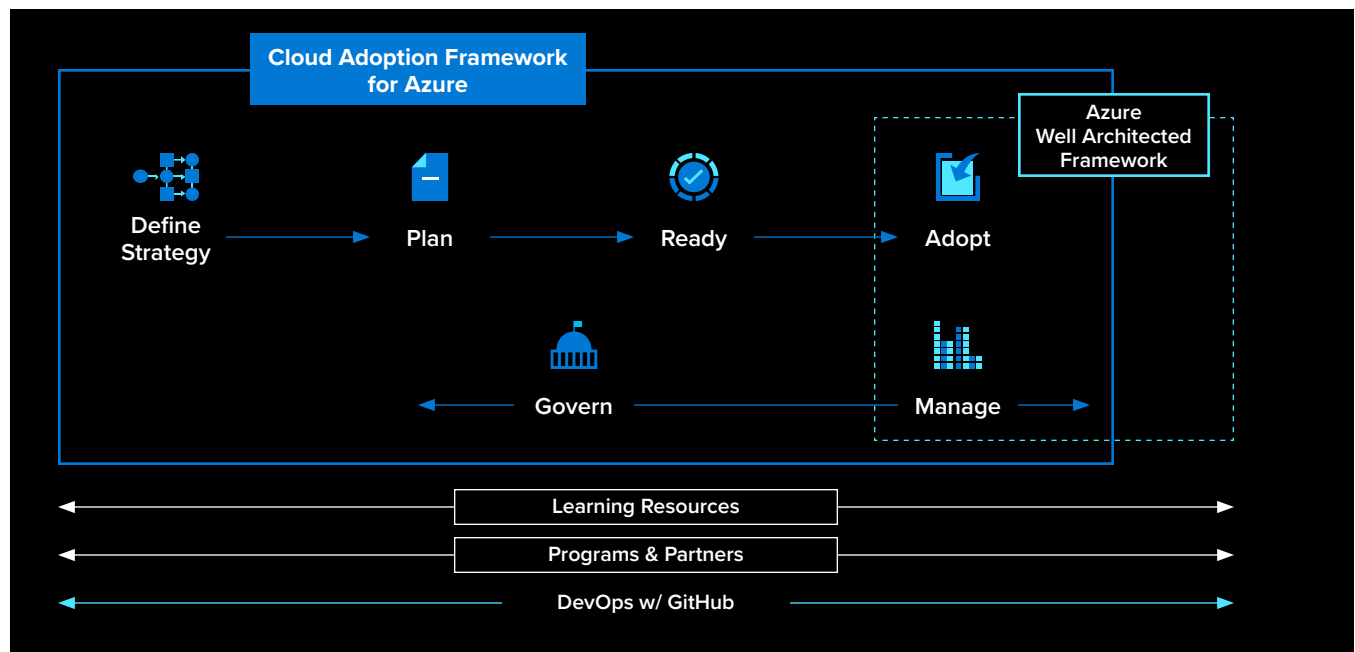
Azure Customer Enablement Resources deliver a set of tools, proven guidance, and frameworks to assist customers on their cloud journey—from initial strategy, planning, readiness, and migration through to ongoing innovation, governance, management, and organizational alignment. The tools, resources, and programs are built specifically to enable a clear path to cloud value for Azure customers across different phases of the cloud journey. These include resources to automate and simplify key activities (such as migration and monitoring), resources to accelerate competence and skill set building, and access to partners and programs to address generic as well as vertical-specific needs at enterprises. Customers can leverage these tools and programs to plan a cloud adoption journey optimized for their needs, execute with confidence on a highly tailored cloud adoption path, and maximize the value unlocked through cloud adoption at the enterprises.

Among the most valuable components of Azure customer enablement assets are two frameworks that assist in the cloud adoption journey and use of Azure. The **Microsoft Cloud Adoption Framework for Azure** provides customers templates, assessments, tools, and best practices to facilitate all aspects of the cloud adoption journey, including building a business case and strategy for cloud, creating an actionable adoption plan, ensuring technical readiness to migrate, incorporating the people and process changes to operate a cloud

environment, deploying workloads and implementing use cases in Azure, and managing and governing the Azure-based operations. The **Microsoft Azure Well-Architected Framework** provides guidance to help Azure customers continuously improve and optimize the quality of their cloud applications and workloads using a collection of proven technical guidance and resources centered in five pillars of architecture excellence: cost optimization, operational excellence, performance efficiency, reliability, and security. This is complemented by an ecosystem of tools, assessments, skilling resources, and partners to support customers in the implementation and execution of this guidance.

In addition, Microsoft offers targeted programs to enable customers at specific points on the cloud journey. Examples of such programs include the Azure Migration Program to assist in workload migrations to Azure, Microsoft Consulting Services to apply enterprise technologies to deliver business outcomes, and a comprehensive partner program that includes partner capability verification and enablement of specialized partners for specific technical and business scenarios. A complete description of Azure Customer Enablement Resources and the detailed tools and programs is available at www.azure.com/enablement (see **Figure 1**).

FIGURE 1
Azure Customer Enablement Tools, Resources, and Programs



Source: Microsoft, 2021

The Business Value of Microsoft Azure Customer Enablement Resources

Study Demographics

IDC conducted research that explored the value and benefits for organizations in using various Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs for deploying, running, and optimizing their Azure environments and solutions. The project included nine in-depth interviews with individuals at organizations with experience and knowledge about the benefits and costs of using Azure Customer Enablement Resources. The interviews covered quantitative and qualitative questions about the impact on their IT and Azure operations, costs, and business results.

Table 1 presents the study's demographics. The significant scale of participants' business operations is reflected in an average employee base of 57,541 and annual revenue of \$22.1 billion (medians of 1,500 employees and \$425 million annual revenue, respectively). In terms of geographical distribution, seven companies were based in the United States, one in Canada, and one in the United Kingdom. Interviewed organizations spanned verticals that included the healthcare (2), biotechnology and life sciences, financial services, IT services, manufacturing, retail, software, and waste management sectors.

TABLE 1
Demographics of Interviewed Organizations

	Average	Median
Number of employees	57,541	1,500
Number of IT staff	1,519	40
Number of business applications	516	45
Revenue per year	\$22.1 billion	\$425 million
Countries	United States (7), Canada, and United Kingdom	
Industries	Healthcare (2), biotechnology and life sciences, financial services, IT services, manufacturing, retail, software, and waste management	

n = 9, Source: IDC In-depth Interviews, January 2021

Use of Microsoft Azure Customer Enablement Tools, Resources, and Programs

Interviewed organizations discussed their use of Azure Customer Enablement Resources in conjunction with their overall use of the Azure platform. Study participants have chosen to make use of a mix of Azure Customer Enablement Resources that vary in both form and content but match their unique Azure environments and needs.

Organizations' needs included, but were not limited to, tools, resources, and programs such as:

- ▶ Microsoft Cloud Adoption Framework for Azure, including documentation assessments that include the Cloud Journey Tracker, Governance Benchmark Tool, and Strategic Migration Assessment and Readiness Tool, and other templates and tools that include the Cloud Adoption Framework plan template and Azure pricing calculators
- ▶ Microsoft Azure Well-Architected collection of proven best practices, guidance, and resources, including Azure Well-Architected Framework, Azure Advisor, Well-Architected Review, and other Azure reference architectures
- ▶ A variety of other Azure resources and tools, including the Azure Cost Management + Billing tool, as well as various skilling and employee training resources, DevOps services and resources, and support from Microsoft-specialized partners and programs

Every interviewed Azure customer reported using a different mix of Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs, with use ranging from nearly all of the aforementioned tools, resources, and programs to much more targeted use of only several resources.

The interviews identified various ways that study participants were leveraging Azure Customer Enablement Resources to:

- ▶ Understand Azure's capabilities and features.
- ▶ Prepare for migrations and deployment of workloads to the Azure platform.
- ▶ Calculate Azure budgets and optimize Azure use.
- ▶ Obtain access to best practices, training, and support for working on the Azure platform.

Study participants also discussed how Azure Customer Enablement Resources have helped them upskill IT teams and optimized access to current and relevant training materials. Among other things, this helped ensure that IT teams were fully up to speed on the latest releases and capabilities of Azure.

Study participants commented on these and other benefits:

▶ Healthcare organization:

"Azure Customer Enablement Resources are good for benchmarking and understanding adherence to reference architectures. Understanding a blueprint on how to use and optimize the complex Azure landscape is not easy, and we use this to make sure that our best and brightest minds are aligned with Microsoft."

▶ **Waste management organization:**

“We’re using Microsoft tools and assessments to determine if Azure services are going to meet our requirements and to calculate our budget.”

▶ **Software company:**

“We definitely are big proponents of developers continually learning, so all my developers get about two hours a week training time. The Microsoft Learn resource is one of the ones that we use a lot to teach new skills.”

▶ **Manufacturing company:**

“We leverage the training done by Microsoft partners. We do workshops and proof of concepts with these partners. We also gain an understanding of what’s possible through attending conferences. We’ve also done strategy workshops with the Microsoft centers.”

For most study participants, the use of Azure has become a core component of their IT and business strategies. Accordingly, Azure Customer Enablement Resources served to enable them to generate more value with Azure as a core IT and business platform.

Optimization has had significant implications for interviewed companies’ ability to directly support business initiatives, with study participants describing the centrality of Azure to their IT strategies and business activities:

▶ **Focus on business (a healthcare company):**

“Microsoft Azure allows us to spend less time thinking about legacy tech issues associated with infrastructure and allows us to spend much more time on marketing facing and business impact initiatives.”

▶ **Use IT to transform business (a financial services company):**

“We have completely transformed the business using Microsoft Azure. When I arrived, we were using a variety of tools that were a patchwork that did not allow good visibility of the data. Since that time, we’ve been able to offer a much more integrated solution that provides the ability to integrate data across many different functional areas The whole migration to using Azure has transformed the way the bank does its business.”

Table 2 shows the scope and scale of interviewed companies' use of Azure Customer Enablement Resources. The data shows that study participants had significant levels of Azure deployment, with an average of 848 Azure virtual machines supporting over 100 business applications. In addition, these organizations have made significant investments in Azure, with annual spend of over \$4 million.

TABLE 2
Use of Azure Customer Enablement Resources by Interviewed Organizations

	Average	Median
Number of Azure virtual machines	848	275
Total spend on Azure per year	\$4.1 million	\$375,000
Number of business applications	108	25
Storage capacity (TB)	516	148

n = 9, Source: IDC In-depth Interviews, January 2021

Business Value Results

IDC's research shows that customers that use Azure Customer Enablement Resources have optimized their use of the Azure platform. As a result, they completed migrations to Azure faster and more efficiently and established more cost-effective, robust, and high-performing Azure environments for their businesses. In short, Azure Customer Enablement Resources have enabled them to better leverage Azure to advance their IT and business strategies.

Study participants spoke to the real impact that Azure Customer Enablement Resources have had:

▶ **Enable effective preparation for Azure migration (a retail company):**

"Azure tools and resources help us prepare our workloads for migration to the cloud. It helps us determine how to best achieve the migration in terms of what can be automated versus manually converted. Our use of Microsoft partners also helps us achieve our goals by outsourcing much of the labor."

▶ **Optimize Azure costs and performance (a healthcare company):**

"The benefits come back to the cost, reliability, and predictability of the Azure platform and delivering what we need. It allows my team to focus on business and patient outcomes and transforming the business."

► **Improve overall Azure environment, which empowers business activities (a financial services company):**

“We have a much cleaner and better engineered environment. Because we have everything in one stack, we have improved productivity and made it much easier for the engineers to do their work. The integration across solutions sets also improves everybody’s productivity. The consistent look and feel also allows the operations and business teams to get their work done much more efficiently.”

Based on interviews with Microsoft customers using Azure Customer Enablement Resources to support their Azure environments, IDC calculates that they will realize total annual average value of \$291,800 per 100 Azure VMs in the following areas (see Figure 2):

► **IT staff productivity benefits:**

Study participants require less staff time to migrate to Azure and then benefit from more efficient and optimized environments in terms of management and development activities. IDC puts the value of IT staff time savings and productivity gains at an annual average of \$134,800 per 100 Azure VMs.

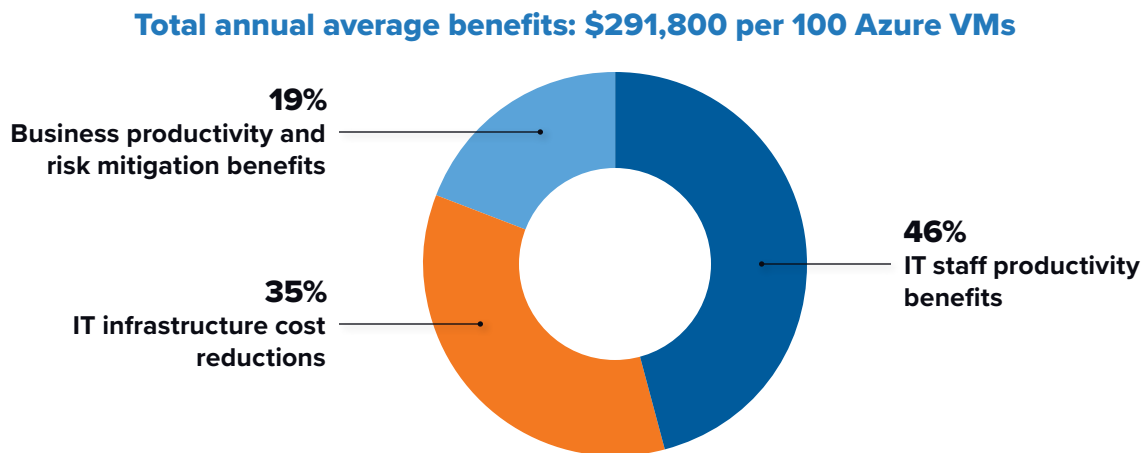
► **IT infrastructure cost reductions:**

Study participants leverage best practices, recommendations, and calculators to optimize their use of Azure resources, thereby reducing the cost of running equivalent applications. IDC projects that these cost savings will be worth an annual average of \$102,600 per 100 Azure VMs.

► **Business productivity and risk mitigation benefits:**

Study participants better ensure the availability, scalability, and performance of their Azure environments. IDC values the resultant user productivity gains at an annual average of \$54,300 per 100 Azure VMs.

FIGURE 2
Average Annual Benefits per 100 Azure Virtual Machines



Note: All findings are based on customer sample using Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs for average of 848 Azure virtual machines that run 108 business applications and require 516TB of storage capacity.

n = 9, Source: IDC In-depth Interviews, January 2021

Faster and More Efficient Microsoft Azure Migrations

Interviewed Azure customers reported that, through the use of Azure Customer Enablement Resources, they were able to complete migrations to Azure—whether simple or complex in nature—in a timelier manner and with less operational friction. The value of this benefit was derived not only from staff time savings in executing migrations but also from capturing benefits of running applications in Azure at an earlier time.

Study participants also noted the fact that use of these resources has allowed them to deliver increased levels of security. They commented on these benefits:

▶ **Enable more timely and efficient migration/deployment (a biotechnology and life sciences company):**

“Initially we planned 6 months for our migration project. We had a very methodical step-by-step project plan, including a fallback contingency plan in case things didn’t work out the way we wanted it to go. However, because of the tools and step-by-step approach and documentation, we were able to do it all in 4.5 months, so we were quite pleased.”

▶ **Enable secure and efficient migrations (a retail company):**

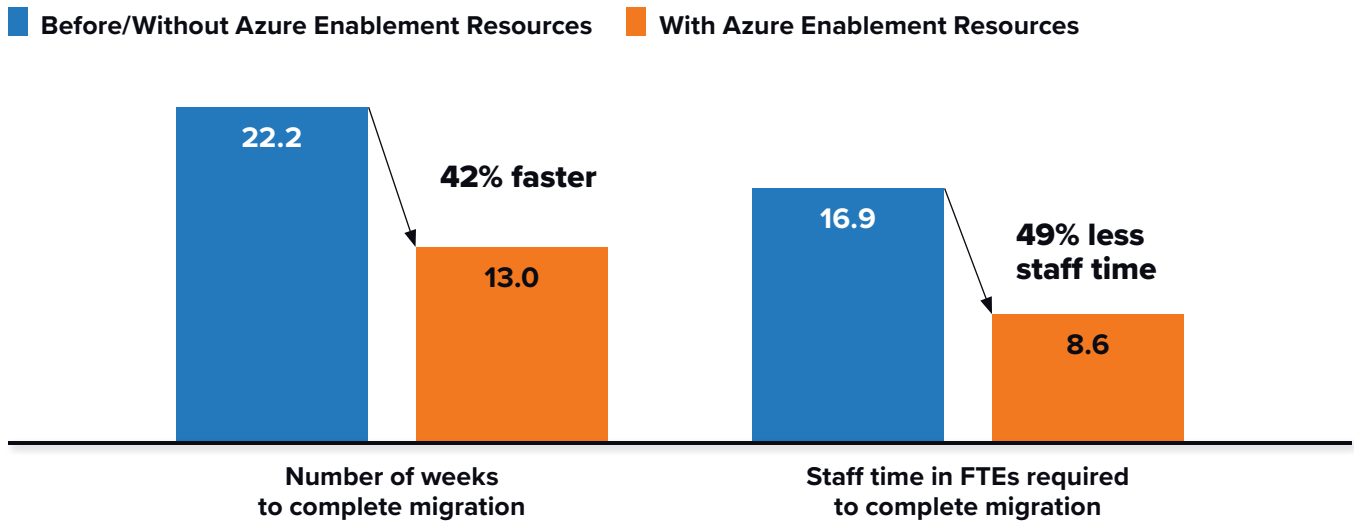
“Whenever we want to move a workload to the cloud, we have a comprehensive security review that is much faster in Azure, thanks to automated scripts for doing this analysis.”

▶ **Ensure successful complex migration (a software company):**

“We’re working on a big migration effort of on-premises Dynamics cloud, where we have 3 different teams that are affected and approximately 30 people that interact and deploy software regularly in Azure. We are using everything from monitoring the deployment to making sure that the deployment is successful. We also use some of the Azure DevOps tools to test that the deployment was released successfully.”

IDC quantified how the use of Azure Customer Enablement Resources has improved the speed and ease of migrating large amounts of data and code to the Azure platform (see **Figure 3**, next page). The overall time needed to perform migrations was reduced by 42%, while the IT staff time necessary to complete the migration process was reduced by 49%. Given several study participants described migration processes that took months, these efficiencies in moving workloads to the Microsoft cloud carry substantial value in terms of both IT staff time savings and faster completion of migrations.

FIGURE 3
Impact on Migration to Azure



Note: All findings are based on customer sample using Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs for average of 848 Azure virtual machines that run 108 business applications and require 516TB of storage capacity.

n = 9, Source: IDC In-depth Interviews, January 2021

IT Staff Operational Efficiencies

Beyond enabling faster and more efficient migrations to Azure, interviewed organizations also reported that Azure Customer Enablement Resources have a significant impact on their IT teams’ ability to run and support Azure environments in an efficient manner. For study participants, using Azure Customer Enablement Resources has been an important contributor to their IT teams’ ability to perform the day-to-day tasks associated with managing and maintaining their Azure environments.

Efficiencies gained from Azure Customer Enablement Resources have helped IT teams shift the focus away from more time-consuming and routine tasks dedicated to “keeping the lights on” to spending greater amounts of time on innovation and direct business support. Again, this reflects their ability to leverage Azure Customer Enablement Resources to generate more value from using Azure. **Figure 4** (next page) quantifies these improvements and shows that IT organizations benefited from a very significant increase in the time they were able to spend on innovation-related projects (168% more) while moving time away from routine IT systems support and management (44% less).

Study participants spoke to how they have achieved these improvements:

- ▶ **Getting up to speed on new technologies and functionalities (a biotechnology and life sciences company):**

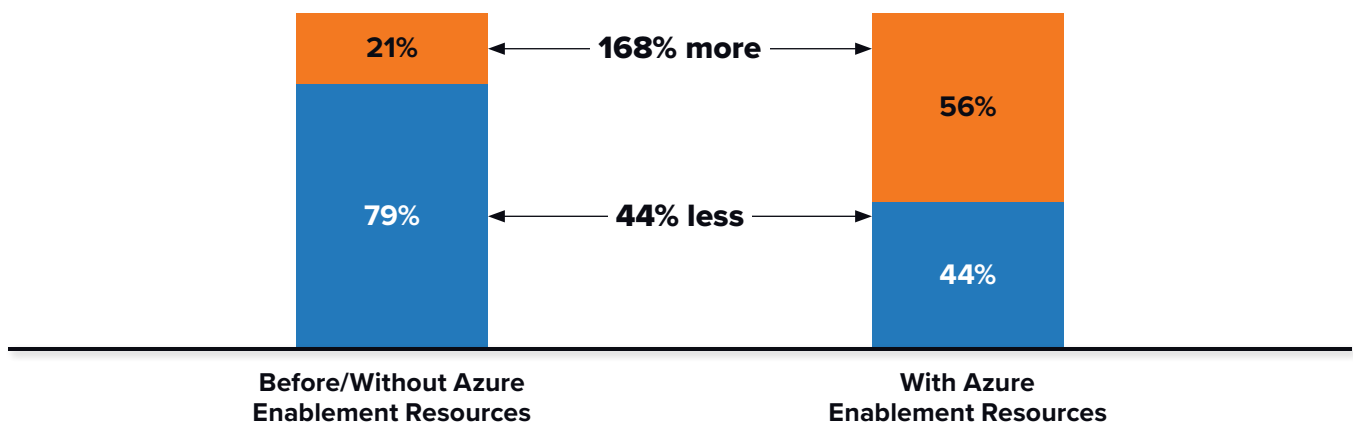
“When a new tool comes up inside Azure, we use the learning resources to get up to speed in terms of the functionality and what sort of prerequisites there are for that particular new tool set within Azure When it comes to new tools and technologies that Azure promotes, that’s when we do the learning aspect of it.”

► **Ensure capabilities of teams supporting Azure environment and freeing up staff time to focus on supporting customers (an IT services company):**

“We use Azure Customer Enablement Resources as needed to continuously improve our Azure skill set and to ensure we’re doing everything we can properly We’re able to look at ways we can do a better job and offer more services to our clients from the technical network back-end aspect of it and have time to do that now.”

FIGURE 4
Impact on IT Team Using Azure: Keeping the Lights on and Innovation

% of time: ■ Keeping the lights on ■ Other/innovative work



Note: All findings are based on customer sample using Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs for average of 848 Azure virtual machines that run 108 business applications and require 516TB of storage capacity.

n = 9, Source: IDC In-depth Interviews, January 2021

Moreover, study participants commented on how Azure Customer Enablement Resources have helped them address and overcome staffing gaps and establish processes that have eased overall management burdens:

► **Augment core staff capacity and capabilities (a healthcare company):**

“We use Azure partners and programs to fill in the cracks where we may have gaps or to increase bench capacity when we don’t have as many resources as we may need on staff.”

► **Ability to establish efficient processes that ease management burden (a software company):**

“Our DevOps team use a lot of the infrastructure and tools that Azure puts in place, like ARM templates to manage the environments Everything has become more process oriented and efficient. We have more infrastructure now that is more complex than our legacy system, but it’s easier to manage. For example, in our legacy system, we have one instance of our software that is less complex than our current infrastructure, and it takes three people to manage that environment. And we have three people managing the Azure environment that has 7x more servers.”

IDC drilled down on improvements realized by IT teams (see **Table 3**, next page). With the use of Azure Customer Enablement Resources, study participants require 55% less IT staff time to manage, run, and support their Azure environments.

TABLE 3
Impact on IT Infrastructure Teams

	Before/ Without Azure Enablement Resources	With Azure Enablement Resources	Difference	Efficiency
Staff time to manage infrastructure (FTEs)	11.9	5.4	6.5	55%
Equivalent value of staff time to manage	\$1.2 million	\$0.5 million	\$0.7 million	55%

n = 9, Source: IDC In-depth Interviews, January 2021

Microsoft Azure Environment Cost Optimization

Interviewed organizations reported that they have leveraged best practices, recommendations, and calculating tools available through Azure Customer Enablement Resources to reduce the overall cost of running equivalent applications in their Azure environments. They found that they can better predict both one-time and recurring costs and could therefore adjust and fine-tune their Azure environments to arrive at an optimal balance between cost, capacity, and performance.

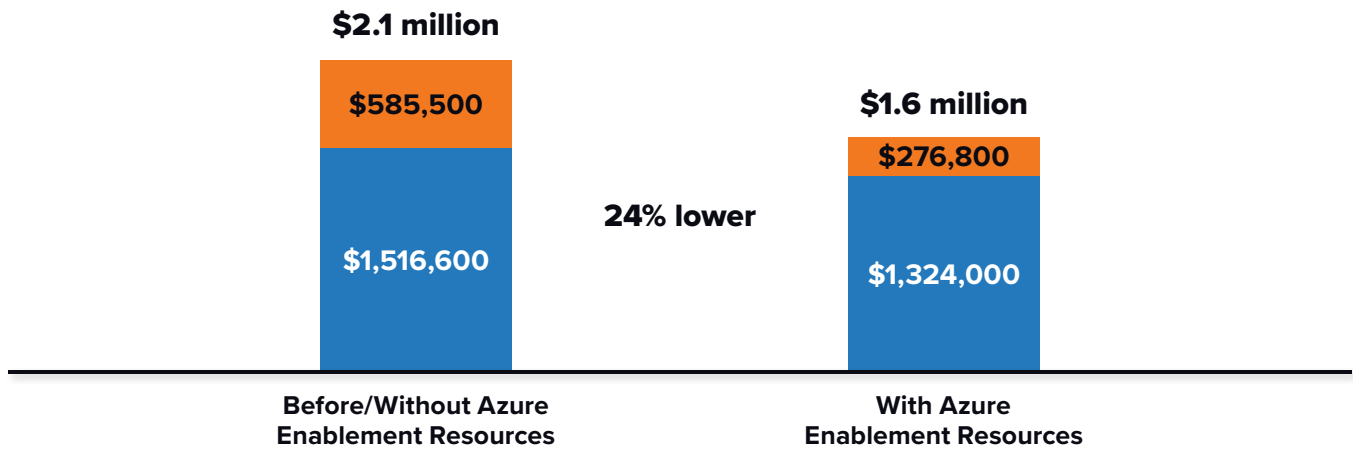
A key indicator of cost optimization for study participants is their ability to consolidate compute resources. Using Azure Customer Enablement Resources, study participants reported that 42% fewer Azure virtual servers were required to run equivalent workloads, resulting in less direct spend on Azure. As one study participant commented: *“Deployment and testing have been made easier for the applications we’re putting into the cloud, and we benefit from the ability to save money if the VMs are shut down. These tools highlight these options, making my life easier It’s easier for my team to access the behind-the-scenes settings that allow us to make the environment run more efficiently.”*

These direct cost savings and/or cost avoidances combined with previously described IT deployment and operational staff efficiencies have helped study participants run equivalent applications on Azure at a markedly lower cost. To quantify these improvements, IDC calculated the three-year cost of operations (see **Figure 5**, next page). These calculations included the costs of both staff time and Azure resources and show that study participants will save an average of 24% over three years. Importantly, these cost savings from the use

of Azure Customer Enablement Resources often come on top of savings already realized through the use of Azure compared with legacy or previous infrastructure environments, thereby enabling study participants to realize even more significant cost savings by using Azure as a platform for their businesses.

FIGURE 5
Three-Year Cost of Operations per 100 Azure Virtual Machines

\$ per 100 Azure VMs: ■ Cost of IT infrastructure ■ Cost of IT infrastructure staff time



Note: All findings are based on customer sample using Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs for average of 848 Azure virtual machines that run 108 business applications and require 516TB of storage capacity.
 n = 9, Source: IDC In-depth Interviews, January 2021

Microsoft Azure Performance Optimization

Given the centrality of study participants’ use of Azure to their business operations, they depend on their ability to ensure high and consistent performance levels. In the current business climate, resources that help IT organizations deliver needed performance levels are very valuable. Interviewed organizations reported that Azure Customer Enablement Resources have given them a leg up in the optimization process through best practices reviewed and approved by Microsoft and having access to a well-established and extensive knowledge and tools repository. As a result, they can better architect their Azure environment, leverage Azure functionality, and ensure that Azure will meet changing business requirements. As such, they continue to extend and broaden the core benefits of moving to Azure as they ensure that the platform matches business demand for high-performing and flexible business applications.

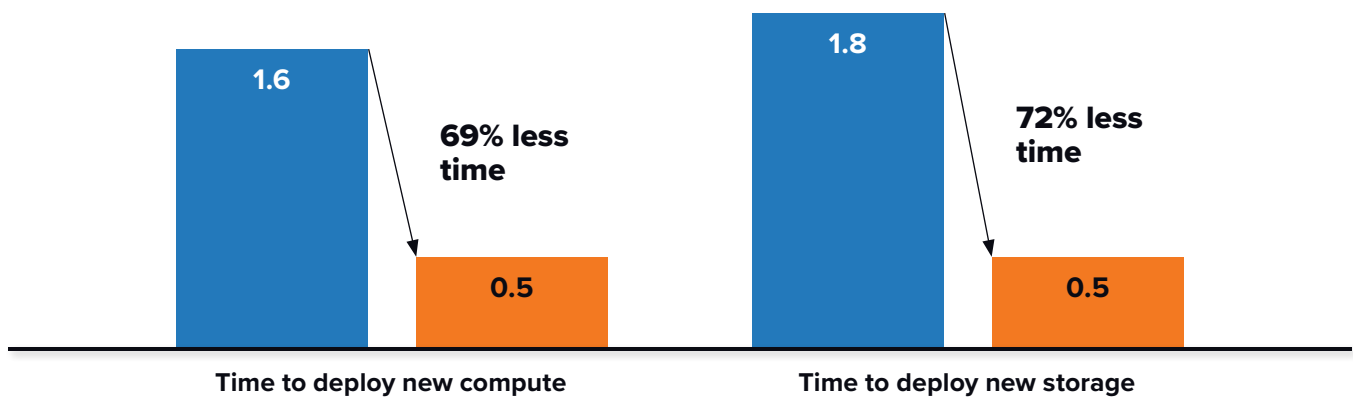
One study participant working in the retail sector discussed how Azure Customer Enablement Resources has helped the company better respond to customer needs:
“We can move at a much faster pace in everything we do. This can include deploying new applications or responding to changes in customer needs. For example, in the pandemic, we were able to deploy chatbots that helped respond to customer inquiries very quickly.”

Overall, my opinion of Microsoft Azure has improved. At first, I was skeptical, but I now realize that the combination of tools plus the core capabilities of Azure, if used wisely, can be very powerful.”

IDC quantified the value of improved agility on the Azure platform (see **Figure 6**). Azure Customer Enablement Resources have helped study participants substantially reduce friction associated with deployment of new compute (69% less staff time on average), with similar efficiencies seen in terms of deploying additional storage capacity (72% less staff time on average). These agility benefits contribute to improved ability for interviewed organizations’ development teams working on Azure to meet business demand. IDC calculates that these development teams will realize a 26% average productivity gain through the use of Azure Customer Enablement Resources.

FIGURE 6
Impact on IT Agility

Hours: ■ Before/Without Azure Enablement Resources ■ With Azure Enablement Resources



Note: All findings are based on customer sample using Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs for average of 848 Azure virtual machines that run 108 business applications and require 516TB of storage capacity.

n = 9, Source: IDC In-depth Interviews, January 2021

Interviewed organizations also reported that Azure Customer Enablement Resources have helped them set up and maintain more robust and reliable Azure environments. For both internal end users and customers, this results in an improved IT experience and reduced business and operational risk stemming from application and services outages. In particular, study participants linked their ability to identify and resolve outages when they do occur much more expediently to their use of Azure Customer Enablement Resources (79% faster on average). This means that outages exert a lower cost in terms of productivity losses, with study participants gaining back employee time worth an average of \$391,200 per year per organization (see **Table 4**, next page).

Study participants commented:

▶ **Helping deliver zero downtime environment (an IT services company):**

“Azure customer enablement tools and resources have very much affected unplanned downtime, because we’ve had zero unexpected downtime since we’ve moved to Azure. We’ve implemented the tools to be able to alert us, so if a virtual machine goes down, we can automatically fail over to another one and things like that. It’s a combination of both Microsoft’s Azure resources and tools.”

▶ **More successful migrations/deployments mean better use on an ongoing basis (a biotechnology and life sciences):**

“The more knowledge that we have to ensure a successful deployment means there’s going to be fewer problems down the road. So, to that extent, I would say these tools have absolutely been critical.”

Further, because Azure Customer Enablement Resources have enabled Microsoft customers to better leverage Azure, they have ultimately benefited their business operations and results. These benefits are often more challenging to quantify directly, but study participants provided clear anecdotal evidence of the impact. For example, one study participant, working in healthcare, noted: *“Our applications are definitely faster. We have times of peak demand. Because we can use the tools to bring other resources online, we can get ahead of these demand spikes. We can better anticipate and respond to changes in demand.”*

TABLE 4
Impact of Unplanned Downtime

	Before/ Without Azure Enablement Resources	With Azure Enablement Resources	Difference	Benefit
Mean time to repair (MTTR) (hours)	3.6	0.8	2.9	79%
Lost productivity per user per year (hours)	3.9	1.2	2.7	69%
Lost productive time per organization per year (FTEs)	8.1	2.5	5.6	69%
Equivalent value of lost productive time per organization per year	\$567,300	\$176,100	\$391,200	69%

Note: All findings are based on customer sample using Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs for average of 848 Azure virtual machines that run 108 business applications and require 516TB of storage capacity. n = 9, Source: IDC In-depth Interviews, January 2021

Challenges/Opportunities

The adoption of cloud needs to be accompanied by a structured set of tools and processes that guide that adoption to success. The need for these tools has accelerated during the past year, with the COVID-19 disruption accelerating the move to cloud. Enterprises are increasingly looking to cloud providers to share what they've learned in working with early adopters and the broader cloud customer base and to provide practical and valuable guidance based on this empirically broader experience. Azure Customer Enablement Resources bring to market a set of timely tools and programs to support enterprises as they increase their focus on cloud adoption.

Customer cloud adoption, however, often spans multiple cloud providers. There is a growing acknowledgment among enterprises that moving to cloud with a carefully planned multicloud architecture can result in greater flexibility and reduced constraints in the long run. This may be for varying reasons, such as using best-of-breed solutions across multiple platforms, or running a decoupled disaster recovery location in a different provider for business resilience, or bringing together organically fragmented assets across multiple clouds into a cohesive architecture. Irrespective of the underlying reasons, this motivation has driven customer interest and demand for tools and programs that can work across cloud platforms. Programs and tools that support some level of interoperability across multiple cloud providers can address a broader set of customer needs, such as supporting customers moving to Azure as their primary provider while moving or consolidating some of their workloads across other providers.

Nonetheless, as one of largest public cloud infrastructure service providers, Azure's customer enablement resources can deliver broader customer value with support for cloud destinations that are not exclusive to Azure. In fact, Microsoft recently issued guidance on hybrid and multicloud adoption as part of its Cloud Adoption Framework for Azure.

Conclusion

The growing maturity of digital capabilities and success stories of early adopters have accelerated the prioritization of digital transformation investments. This has been further accelerated by the increase in scale and rate of change in the marketplace. IDC's 2Q19 Industry CloudPath highlights that DX initiatives to enable employee and customer experience improvements are the top priority for over half of the respondents. A cost-effective and successful DX progress is emerging as a critical determinant of future business competitiveness for enterprises, ensuring successful outcomes of cloud adoption initiatives is critical to this progress.

The experience and lessons from early adopters of cloud have created a vast repository of benchmarks, guidance, and frameworks, which Microsoft has leveraged to create a portfolio of customer enablement assets. Azure Customer Enablement Resources are designed to help enterprises plan and execute a cloud adoption journey optimized for their business and organizational needs, maximizing the value of cloud adoption. These resources come to market at a uniquely critical point in the enterprise IT community's move to cloud as the center of gravity of the enterprise IT organizations moves closer to cloud. The tools,

resources, and programs offered as part of Azure Customer Enablement Resources allow enterprises to plan and execute on cloud adoption with a high level of confidence, accelerate their DX progress, and position themselves for success in the unfolding digital-first economy.

Appendix

IDC's Business Value Methodology

IDC's standard Business Value and ROI methodology was utilized for this white paper. This methodology is based on gathering data from organizations currently using Azure customer enablement tools, resources, and programs to run and support their Microsoft Azure environments as the foundation for the model. Based on interviews with these study participants, IDC has calculated the benefits and costs to these organizations of using Azure Customer Enablement Resources. IDC used the following method for conducting the Business Value analysis: **Gathered quantitative benefit information during the interviews using a before-and-after assessment of the impact of using Azure Customer Enablement Resources to run and support their Microsoft Azure environments.** In this study, the benefits included staff time savings and productivity benefits, IT infrastructure-related cost reductions, and the value of improved Azure performance.

IDC bases Business Value calculations on a number of assumptions, which are summarized as follows:

- ▶ Time values are multiplied by burdened salary (salary + 28% for benefits and overhead) to quantify efficiency and manager productivity savings. For purposes of this analysis, based on the geographic locations of the interviewed organizations, IDC has used assumptions of an average fully loaded salary of \$100,000 per year for IT staff members and an average fully loaded salary of \$70,000 per year for non-IT staff members. IDC assumes that employees work 1,880 hours per year (47 weeks x 40 hours).
- ▶ Downtime values are a product of the number of hours of downtime multiplied by the number of users affected.
- ▶ The impact of unplanned downtime is quantified in terms of impaired end-user productivity and lost revenue.
- ▶ Lost productivity is a product of downtime multiplied by burdened salary.
- ▶ Because every hour of downtime does not equate to a lost hour of productivity or revenue generation, IDC attributes only a fraction of the result to savings. As part of our assessment, we asked each interviewed organization what fraction of downtime hours to use in calculating productivity savings and the reduction in lost revenue. IDC then taxes the revenue at that rate.
- ▶ Because IT solutions require a deployment period, the full benefits of the solution are not available during deployment. To capture this reality, IDC prorates the benefits on a monthly basis and then subtracts the deployment time from the first-year savings.

Note: All numbers in this document may not be exact due to rounding.

About the Analysts



Brad Casemore

Research Vice President, Datacenter Networks, IDC

Brad Casemore is IDC's Research Vice President, Datacenter Networks. He covers networking products and related technologies and platforms typically deployed in the datacenter. Brad also works closely with IDC's Enterprise Networking, Server, Storage, Cloud and Security programs to assess the impact of emerging IT and converged and hyperconverged infrastructure. He researches technology areas such as Ethernet switching in the datacenter, Application Delivery Controllers (ADCs), SD-WAN, WAN Optimization, Network Virtualization, Network Programmability, and Software Defined Networks (SDN). In this capacity, Brad provides ongoing research for IDC's Continuous Information Service (CIS), market forecasts, custom consulting, and Go-To-Market services.

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