

Are you really cloud-first?

Three steps to evaluating your cloud-first strategy.

Cloud has become foundational to business transformation, differentiation, and competitive advantage. If you don't already have a cloud-first strategy, you may be falling behind your competition. Once you have a cloud strategy, Gartner advises that you continue to evaluate it to ensure cloud is primary, prioritized, and promoted.

1. Define your cloud-first business objectives as a first step to align your cloud-first requirements. Zones pairs our customers with cloud-savvy architects to build best-in-class cloud-first strategies including:

- a. **Align your cloud strategy with broader business objectives.** While cloud-first is a growing trend, in order to get buy-off, the move will need to resonate with your business and executive team.
- b. **Translate these objectives into cloud-first requirements.** Zones Solution Architects consult with your teams to help in this translation process. Zones has cloud licensing specialists who can provide a "one-stop shopping experience" for all of your cloud business needs.
- c. **Proactively plan for change control.** A cloud-first strategy needs to plan for change control and transitioning to your cloud provider(s) of choice using tooling that best fits your requirements both in the near and long term.

2. Partner with cloud-centric resources. A knowledgeable partner can be an invaluable resource in translating these objectives into solid designs and implementation based on multi-cloud best practices in Microsoft Azure or other cloud providers, such as AWS.

- a. In-depth knowledge of cloud architecture. When striving to develop a cloud-first approach, it is necessary to understand best practices with a deep knowledge of cloud architecture, cloud security, and deployment processes.



3. Establish multi-cloud governance and management processes.

- a. Zones cloud governance, cloud support, and managed services, as well as cloud solution architect expertise, can guide you in the long-term governance and maintenance of your new cloud-first implementation. We can work across Microsoft Azure or other cloud providers to implement your specific business objectives. We'll continue to revisit the progress of your cloud initiative as we tailor it to your business requirements.

// *If you have not developed a cloud-first strategy yet, you are likely falling behind your competitors. IT organizations have moved past asking whether applications can be deployed or migrated to the public cloud. Instead, they are commonly accepting the pace and innovation of cloud providers as foundational to their business.* **//**

— Elias Khnaser, VP Analyst at Gartner



Zones and Microsoft provide intelligent solutions to help you succeed in the future. As an authorized Microsoft Licensing Solutions Partner and a Tier 1 Microsoft Cloud Solution Provider, Zones offers the solutions, teams, and services that support an agile, engaged, and energized workplace.

Zones and VMware, a global leader in cloud infrastructure and business mobility, team together to provide software solutions and industry-leading virtualization technology that simplify and automate our customers' data centers. Zones designs and implements solutions that enable quick recovery of infrastructure, workload applications, and critical data based upon business and IT policy-driven models. Zones has delivered on-prem, on-prem-to-on-prem, on-prem-to-cloud, and cloud-to-cloud solutions.

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