Microsoft

Cloud OS

Network

World class partners.
Local experts.
Customized Cloud.

Engagement Guide

Microsoft

Microsoft Cloud OS Network

Help customers find your Cloud

If you're like most service providers worldwide, you have succeeded in incorporating the cloud into your infrastructure to increase efficiency and attract new customers.

The challenge for **most customers is finding the right service provider to partner with to deliver the cloud solution** that can best address their company's specific needs.

As a member of the Microsoft Cloud OS Network, you can deliver to your customers a comprehensive cloud platform customized to fit their individual business needs.

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Introduction

Grow your cloud practice

Microsoft wants to enable you to deliver more powerful hybrid cloud solutions with the Microsoft Azure global cloud and Microsoft cloud platform. In the last few years we've witnessed explosive growth in cloud computing. The worldwide public cloud services market reached US$45.7 billion in 2013, and the market is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 23 percent until 2018. Forecasts predict that the public cloud will grow by almost 100 percent over the next two years[1] According to a Gartner study, 80 percent of companies expect to adopt cloud services within the next 12 months, including 55 percent of those that currently don't have any cloud services running.[2]

The challenge for you as a service provider is to have the means to best help customers transition to the cloud. In order to succeed, a service provider needs to have the solutions and services that customers want. This means offering hybrid cloud platforms. While many service providers have cloud offerings, customers are looking for a combination of on-premises private cloud, public cloud, and a service provider partner-hosted cloud. With Cloud OS and the Cloud OS Network, Microsoft delivers this vision in the form of a comprehensive hybrid cloud platform custom fit your customer's individual business models.

What is the Microsoft Cloud OS?

The Cloud OS is Microsoft's vision of one consistent platform for infrastructure, applications, and data across customer, service provider, and Microsoft datacenters. This vision helps companies realize a cloud-optimized business because it fulfills infrastructure needs from every perspective. What makes this model so unique is that end customers have the ability to deploy a true hybrid solution spanning on-premises private cloud, Microsoft Azure, and service provider-hosted clouds. Customers can make decisions about where to host services based on business needs rather than technology limitations. This enables better optimization of IT resources while providing limitless scale, compute, storage, and networking for the countless day-to-day needs of operations and the workforce.

While many software vendors claim to have such capabilities, the truth is that most lack either a strong on-premises offering (a private cloud) or a global public cloud. With Microsoft however, customers choose their cloud roadmap, and Microsoft supports them with a consistent hybrid cloud platform with integrated virtualization to easily move workloads between environments without change.

Microsoft has the largest service provider partner ecosystem today with approximately 100 partners in Microsoft Cloud OS Network, 2,800 partners with Microsoft Partner Network Hosting Competency, and a vibrant service provider community of more than 20,000 infrastructure hosting partners.

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[1] IT Research Firm IDC. "Public Cloud Services Market Expected to Grow." July 8, 2014.

[2] Gartner. "Three Factors Will Significantly Impact Enterprise Cloud Use in the Near to Midterm Future" (http://www.gartner.com/newsroom/id/2581315). August 2013.

What is the Microsoft Cloud OS Network?

The Cloud OS Network (COSN) is a strategic group of service providers that can deliver differentiated value-added services to end customers based on the Cloud OS vision. COSN is a worldwide group of elite cloud service providers, partnering closely with Microsoft to offer technically validated, cloud-based infrastructures and application solutions. Members of this network combine Microsoft technology with their hosting expertise and geographic specialization to provide flexibility and choice for hybrid datacenter solutions.

As a COSN member, you become part of an exclusive group that delivers a wide range of differentiated Microsoft-validated services. This helps you attract customers, build brand value, and drive revenue and growth.

Since launching in December 2013, the Cloud OS Network has undergone more than 4x partner growth. Current network footprint includes 100+ partners with presence in 100+ countries. This represents serving more than 3.7 million customers daily through 600+ local datacenters.

Deliver a comprehensive end-to-end hybrid cloud platform

The Microsoft Cloud OS Network gives you the ability to add a comprehensive end-to-end hybrid cloud platform to your portfolio of solutions. Those solutions help enable customers to choose their own cloud roadmap.

This powerful, scalable, and reliable Microsoft hybrid cloud platform helps customers support mission-critical and data-intensive workloads without requiring the purchase of additional expensive add-ons. You increase your position as a trusted advisor by delivering consistent yet customized solutions that simplify deployment and increase reliability. You provide a modern application platform that helps enable customers to build and deploy applications across environments with common skills and technologies that they can manage with a "single pane of glass" view. In addition, you help customers combine data sets and gain insights using familiar Microsoft tools such as Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Power BI, and Microsoft SQL Server.

A final advantage with Microsoft workloads is that Microsoft platforms, tools, and support are designed to help ensure seamless interoperability. Microsoft also addresses issues of data sovereignty by providing governance and support around policies for devices, data, and users.

Grow revenue and increase your customer base

The Microsoft Cloud OS Network enables you to combine your expertise with Microsoft technology and support to gain a distinct competitive advantage and increased revenue opportunities tapping into high customer demand for Microsoft Azure and hybrid clouds.

According to 2014 Microsoft Cloud OS Partner Economics Research,[3] you can increase revenue by 2.3x by expanding to a hybrid cloud. Similarly, IDC reports that cloud-oriented partners realize 1.6x more recurring revenue than other partners.[4]

Microsoft Azure is an open and flexible cloud platform that enables you to expand your current applications capabilities, including the applications that you build and your customers use. The broad stack of services, running in datacenters globally, is managed by Microsoft. These services include infrastructure; data services that provide

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[3] Microsoft Cloud OS Partner Economics Research: 2014
[4] IDC. Successful Cloud Partners 2.0. 2014

storage and data management capabilities to applications; and application services for developing, scaling, and running applications on a global scale.

There are a large amount of new upsell, upgrade, and cross-sell opportunities connecting customers to the Microsoft Azure public cloud. On average, more than 1,000 new customers sign up for Microsoft Azure per day, and 3,500 initiate test trials per week. As a Microsoft Cloud OS Network partner, you give customers the peace of mind knowing that you work very closely with Microsoft.

Additionally, rolling out and provisioning solutions that result from working so closely with Microsoft experts can help you drive down costs and save money. You also gain access to the largest VAR/SI ecosystem for growing your customer base. Plus, there's the added advantage of winning more business through joint marketing and sales with Microsoft.

Enhance your ability to service customers with Microsoft support

With the Microsoft Cloud OS Network, you take advantage of Microsoft investments, training, and support to help you more easily provide hybrid cloud solutions and Microsoft Azure technology-enabled scenarios to customers. Microsoft products have depth from first-hand experience running some of the world's largest, globally scaled public cloud services (Xbox, Bing, outlook.com, and Microsoft Azure) that support more than one billion customers and 20 million businesses around the world. This reliable platform helps customers run workloads where it makes sense for their business and regulations, extending the OS beyond the PC into all forms of devices.

By committing to the Microsoft Cloud OS Network, you gain a host of technical, branding, marketing, and selling incentives. You get technical assistance in deploying the latest Microsoft technologies and in creating solutions built on top of those technologies. You also get assistance in identifying market opportunities, in business planning, in developing and launching new service offerings, and in other forms of sales and marketing planning. You also deepen your relationship with Microsoft.

When customers come directly to Microsoft in search of cloud service providers, there's a much **greater chance of Microsoft recommending COSN Partners** because your strategy will be better aligned with that of Microsoft.

Cloud OS Network overview

Engagement Time-frame

This Guide is applicable for Microsoft's fiscal year 2015 (July 1, 2014 to July 30, 2015). The Guide may be updated for subsequent fiscal years.

Engagement guide updates

This Guide is effective as of October 20, 2014. Microsoft may update or revise this Guide once per quarter. Any revision in any update will be effective 30 days from the date of publication, unless Microsoft has previously provided a 30-day notice via other means. Microsoft will provide a notice of the release of any update on the Cloud OS Network Partner Portal.

Cloud OS Network enrollment and compliance

To join the Microsoft Cloud OS Network, a service provider must sign a Cloud OS Network Agreement. Incentives and eligibility criteria vary by membership level. Cloud OS Network membership is subject to change at Microsoft's discretion. Microsoft may review compliance to criteria on an annual basis, and reserves the right to re-level service providers that exceed or no longer meet the criteria of their membership level.

Service provider criteria

To be eligible for Cloud OS Network membership, a service provider must:

- Have an active Service Provider Licensing Agreement (SPLA).
- Provide hosted IT services to end customers.
- Have a purchasing relationship with an authorized Service Provider Large Account Reseller (SPLAR) to procure Microsoft licenses to use for hosted IT services.

Cloud OS Network engagement tiers

The Cloud OS Network has three engagement tiers: Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3. Cloud OS Network incentives and criteria increase as service providers market more Cloud OS-based service offerings and obtain more customers that are hosted on the Microsoft Cloud OS platform. The following partner levels are available:

- **Tier 3**

  Tier 3 is the entry level of the Cloud OS Network. To qualify for this level, see the eligibility section of the Guide, beginning on page 8

- **Tier 2**

  Tier 2 is the level of engagement for organizations that have multiple service offerings and large numbers of hosting customers. To qualify for this level, see the eligibility section of the Guide, beginning on page 8.

- **Tier 1**

  Tier 1 is the highest level of engagement for Service Providers. This level is for partners that have committed their business resources to understanding and delivering cloud solutions based on the Microsoft Cloud OS Platform. These partners have multiple service offerings with Microsoft in market and have a large number of hosting customers. For this level of commitment, Microsoft offers the highest level of incentives. To qualify for this level, see the eligibility section of the Guide, beginning on page 8.

How to apply for incentives

Throughout this Guide, you will see Cloud OS Network eligibility criteria or incentives that you may want to learn more about or apply for. The first step is always to contact your Microsoft Account Manager or designated point of contact. If a form or an application is necessary to apply for an incentive, those forms are located on the Cloud OS Network Partner Portal. If you have any questions, please send an email to COSN@microsoft.com.

Cloud OS Network Eligibility criteria

Summary

This section provides an explanation of the Cloud OS Network Partner eligibility criteria. The criteria listed in this section may not apply to all partners that entered the Cloud OS Network in a previous engagement year. If you are a partner that entered the Cloud OS Network in a previous engagement year, please see your Cloud OS Network Legal Agreement. The eligibility criteria listed in this section may not apply to all partners, as individual partner criteria are determined by partner level.

Eligibility criteria		Tier 3	Tier 2	Tier 1
Number of physical hosts deployed	Windows Server 2012 R2 + System Center 2012 R2 (SCVMM, SCOM)[5] + Hyper-V + WAP	16	50	200
SPLA usage	Annualized SPLA usage on the Cloud OS Platform	Greater than US $16,000	Greater than US $50,000	Greater than US $200,000
Technical and business assessments[8]	Hosting Competency Technical Assessment—number of staff members who have passed the assessments	1	2	4
	Hosting Competency Business Assessment—number of staff members who have passed the assessments	NA	1	1
	Azure Technical Assessment—number of staff members who have passed the assessments	NA	1	2
Azure customers	Number of Unique paying customers with at least one commercial deployment of Azure or Azure-enabled services by June 30, 2015[6]	NA	2 unique paying customers	5 unique paying customers
Case study nominations	Case study nominations[7]	NA	1 or more case study nominated	1 or more case study nominated

5 COSN partners are recommended to use Orchestrator/SMA as part of the stack to ensure cloud consistency. Partners will receive onboarding/deployment assistance on these technologies.
6 Where applicable, Partner's internal consumption for Azure or Azure platform-enabled services, for any workload, will be counted as only one unique customer deployment.
7 The requirement is for partners to nominate a case study for development. It does not obligate Microsoft to produce a case study for all partners. COSN partners chosen for case study development will receive writing and development support. (See "Case Study Development" under Incentives for more details.)
8 The same staff member can be counted for Hosting and Azure technical assessments. However, the Hosting Business assessment and technical assessment have to be taken by separate individuals.

Description

Number of physical hosts deployed

Service provider agrees to deploy, in an at-scale production environment physical hosts, using each and all of the Microsoft Server Products listed below:

- Windows Server 2012 R2, with Hyper-V as the hypervisor

- Microsoft System Center 2012 R2, including but not limited to Virtual Machine Manager and Operations Manager

- Windows Azure Pack, including but not limited to exposing Service Manager API

- Windows Azure Pack must be installed and used to configure and sell offers through the Tenant Portal. The Tenant Portal can be consumed in one of the following ways:

    - Directly accessed by tenants or administrator

    - Indirectly accessed via a third-party control panel

    - Integrated using APIs, to the service provider's custom control panel

Service providers will submit inventory reports to ascertain number of physical hosts deployed as defined above. These reports can be provided through one of the following methods:

- **MAP Toolkit**: Inventory report from MAP Toolkit in the form of Excel spreadsheets. Documentation on where to download, installation, and use of the MAP Toolkit can be found by visiting TechNet.

- **System Center Virtual Machine Manager (VMM) Screenshot**: Submit screenshots of the VMM console managing the server hosts.

- **Alternative Toolset**: Inventory reports from a comparable systems management inventory toolset that provides the requested data.

Microsoft shall approve the service provider's method in writing (email acceptable); such approval will not be unreasonably withheld.

SPLA usage

The SPLA usage criteria refers to licensing payments for deploying the Microsoft Cloud Platform and for deploying any products or workloads on the Microsoft Cloud Platform under the Service Provider License Agreement (SPLA). The "Microsoft Cloud Platform" is defined as Windows Server 2012 R2 with Hyper-V + System Center components (minimum of System Center Virtual Machine Manager (SCVMM) and System Center Operations Manager (SCOM)) and Windows Azure Pack.

The SPLA usage for all workloads on the Microsoft Cloud Platform will be determined by observing a quarterly run rate and multiplying it by four to extrapolate to an annualized run rate. Partners not in the Cloud OS Network are expected to self-report their SPLA usage on the Microsoft Cloud Platform, for the preceding three months, at the time of application for inclusion into the Cloud OS Network. Partners already in the Cloud OS Network are expected to report their SPLA usage on the Microsoft Cloud Platform on a monthly basis to their Microsoft designated point of contact.

Technical and business assessments

Partners entering COSN will need their staff to pass a minimum set of free, web-based assessments.

Hosting technical assessment

All COSN partners must have at least one staff member; Tier 2 partners must have two staff members; and Tier 1

partners must have four staff members pass the following:

- Technical Assessment for Hosting Architects – IaaS and Cloud OS and;

  Staff members must also pass one of the following:

- Technical Assessment for Hosting Architects – Infrastructure and Management or,
- Technical Assessment for Hosting Architects – Infrastructure and Database

Hosting business assessment

Tier 2 partners must have one staff member and Tier 1 partners must have two staff members pass one of the following:

- Sales Specialist Assessment for Infrastructure and Database – Hosting or,
- Sales Specialist Assessment for Messaging – Hosting or,
- Sales Specialist Assessment for Communications – Hosting or,
- Sales and Marketing Assessment for Private Cloud/Management and Virtualization

More on the Microsoft Partner Network (MPN) hosting competency requirements

To obtain a Silver or Gold MPN Hosting competency, partners must pass the technical assessment requirement above, and meet a number of other criteria. To learn more, visit the MPN Hosting Competency page on the MPN website.

Azure technical assessment

Both Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners must have at least one staff member pass one of the following:

- Technical Assessment for Using Microsoft Azure for Application Development or,
- Technical Assessment for Using Microsoft Azure for Datacenter Solutions or,
- Technical Assessment for Using Microsoft Azure for Data Analytics and Data Platform Solutions

The same staff member can be counted for Hosting and Azure technical assessments. However, the Hosting Business assessment and technical assessment must be taken by separate individuals.

Azure customers

An Azure customer is defined as a unique, paying customer with at least one commercial deployment of Microsoft Azure or Azure-enabled services, by June 30, 2015. For the purpose of this criterion, a partner's internal consumption for Azure or Azure platform-enabled services, for any workload, will be counted as only one unique customer deployment.

Case study nomination

Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners must agree to nominate one or more of their customers using their Microsoft solution for potential development of a case study produced by Microsoft during the engagement year. (Note: nominating a case means the partner agrees to participate in a case study, but does not obligate Microsoft to create one). The case study should accurately describe the customer problem statement, the service offerings that the customer leveraged, and the benefits that the customer realized as a result of purchasing the partner's solution. The customer must be willing to speak to a Microsoft-hired writer about their experience and be willing to have their company name mentioned in the case study and promoted by Microsoft.

COSN incentives

Summary

The following table explains the incentives that each partner in a specific membership level is potentially eligible to receive.

Incentive Category	Incentive Summary	Tier 3	Tier 2	Tier 1
Membership engagement	Cloud OS Network Partner portal	Exclusive, secure access to a partner portal to access critical COSN materials, including training, marketing, sales, event and digital campaign information, press guidance, and technical deployment materials, announcements, and event information.		
	Account management	NA	Partners are attached to a local or tele-managed account manager to collaborate on joint business, marketing, and sales planning, and for implementing strategic Microsoft products and solutions.	Partners are attached to an account manager to collaborate on joint business, marketing, and sales planning, and for implementing strategic Microsoft products and solutions.
	Executive sponsor engagement	NA	NA	Semi-annual call with a Microsoft COSN executive sponsor to discuss strategies, partnering, new offerings, areas of growth, and revenue opportunities.

Incentive Category	Incentive Summary	Tier 3	Tier 2	Tier 1
Technical support	Deployment materials	Access to Microsoft provided technical and deployment materials, including Modern Datacenter planning templates, deployment and configuration guides, fabric management guides, Product Line Architectures (PLAs), scripts, and more.		
	Deployment support services	Deployment support by trained Microsoft Solution Technology partners (System Integrators)	Deployment support by Microsoft approved COSN Technology partners (System Integrators) or by Microsoft Consulting Services	Preferred access to Microsoft Consulting Services Resources for technical deployments
	Proactive technical support by Microsoft field engineers	NA	Select partners, at Microsoft's discretion, receive access to expert Microsoft Premier Field Engineers (PFE) resources for activities like health checks, risk assessments, technology deep-dive workshops, performance tuning, and so on.	
	Technical community forum	Exclusive access to the Cloud OS Network Technical Community Forum moderated by Microsoft technical experts.		
	Early adoption programs	NA	Select partners, at Microsoft's discretion, will be invited to participate in the Continuous Customer Engagement Program (CCEP) which provides pre-beta access to product roadmap and disclosures on upcoming technologies.	
Competency support	Hosting competency fee rebate	NA	Rebate of the Silver Hosting competency fee upon joining	Rebate of the Gold Hosting competency fee upon joining
Marketing and sales support	Cloud OS Network badge	NA	COSN Partners can promote their partnership by displaying the appropriate badge on their websites, in advertisements and customer communications, and other marketing materials.	
	Cloud OS Network partner catalog listing	Inclusion in the COSN digital catalog on Microsoft.com website. The catalog enables prospective customers to search for partners based on multiple criteria, such as location and offers. Detailed listings can link back to partner websites.		

Incentive Category	Incentive Summary	Tier 3	Tier 2	Tier 1
Marketing and sales support	Press support	NA	Prior to first service offering launch, partner will receive a quote from a local Microsoft executive for press releases and mentions in one Microsoft blog.	Integration into key, Microsoft corporate PR update moments. Prior to the next service offering launch, partner will receive a quote from a WW Microsoft executive for press releases and mentions in up to three Microsoft blogs.
	Events and campaign support	NA	Participation in local marketing campaigns and events run by Microsoft local marketing teams.	Integration in local marketing campaigns and events run by Microsoft local marketing teams.
	Case study development	NA	Select partners receive writing support to develop a single 2-page, co-marketed case study.	All partners receive writing support to develop a single 4-page, co-marketed case study. Plus, select partners receive funded support to develop a co-marketed, video case study.
	Marketing and sales planning	Self-serve marketing materials including offer description, customer value prop, positioning templates, and more.	All eligible incentives provided in Tier 3, plus, select partners get access to Microsoft sales and marketing consultants who assist in sales and marketing planning.	
	COSN GTM funds	Access to development funds on attainment of pre-defined Go-to-Market (GTM) milestones, at Microsoft's discretion.		Preferred access to development funds on attainment of pre-defined Go-to-Market (GTM) milestones.
	Business community forum	One business executive from each COSN partner organization is invited to join a closed, LinkedIn group for the Cloud OS Network. The group can be used to receive updates and GTM guidance from Microsoft, and discuss ideas and share best practices with global peers.		

Description

Membership engagement incentives

The Cloud OS Network Partner Portal

The COSN Partner Portal is a secure, centralized, web-based portal for all COSN partner participants to access mostly exclusive content that has been largely customized for COSN partners. When service providers join the Cloud OS Network, they will automatically be granted access to the Cloud OS Network portal. Within the Portal, partners will be able to view and download training, marketing, and sales support material, branding guidance and stay up-to-date on announcements and events.

Account management

Account managers provide service providers with a dedicated point of contact to collaborate on joint business (marketing and sales) planning. Joint planning helps drive improved alignment of sales and marketing strategies, more predictable business outcomes, informed investment decisions, and an improved partner relationship.

Tier 1 partners are attached to a local account manager and Tier 2 partners are attached to a local account manager or tele-manager, depending on the market.

Executive sponsor engagement

Tier 1 partner executives (CxO or VP level) have the opportunity to participate in a semi-annual, one-hour call with their Microsoft Cloud OS Network executive sponsor to discuss strategies, Cloud OS Network eligibility criteria and incentives, new offerings, new customers, and focus areas to drive revenue and growth. The calls provide company executives with direct access to key Microsoft executives to strengthen joint strategies and business decisions.

Technical support incentives

Deployment materials

All COSN partners will receive access to technical and deployment materials provided by Microsoft. The materials will be made available after logging in at the COSN Partner Portal. Deployment materials include materials such as modern datacenter planning templates, deployment and configuration guides, reference architectures, fabric management guides, Product Line Architectures (PLAs), scripts, and much more. These high-value guides and tools help service providers accelerate solution designs and deployments, which in turn reduce time to market for new service offers and increase revenue.

Deployment support services

Select partners who have committed to meeting the eligibility criteria for Tier 2 or Tier 3, are eligible for subsidized deployment services provided by Microsoft-trained COSN technology partners (System Integrators) or by Microsoft Consulting Services. These subsidies are paid directly to the COSN technology partners by Microsoft, lowering your cost and speeding the onboarding of new customer workloads after deployment.

All Tier 1 partners receive preferred access to deployment services provided by Microsoft Consulting Services (MCS). These services include architecture design, POC, and a stable, production-ready environment for deploying workloads.

Interested partners are encouraged to contact their account manager with a detailed deployment and business plan for deploying the Microsoft Cloud Platform.

Proactive technical support by Microsoft field engineers

Select Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners are eligible to apply for proactive technical support delivered by expert Microsoft Premier Field Engineers (PFE). Engineers can be used for activities such as technology deep-dive workshops, health checks, risk assessments, application stability consulting and troubleshooting, configuration management, performance tuning, and

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general deployment consulting.

Premier Field Engineers provide reliable technical solutions to the complex integration challenges partners face when building a new cloud platform. The PFEs can support a diverse variety of technical solutions built with Microsoft technology and products, saving technical teams time and reducing frustration when things don't go as planned. Additionally, PFEs are available to deliver a variety of trainings so service provider teams can draw upon the resources at Microsoft for advice and consultation. Types of training include:

- **Workshops:** Empower your team with personalized technical assistance during hands-on workshops on technologies.
- **Chalk Talks:** Bring your questions to these fully interactive sessions to become more knowledgeable about Microsoft products and technologies. Chalk Talks are free-form sessions, facilitated by whiteboard interactions that allow you to ask questions and receive real-time feedback from the Microsoft Services team.

The resources are available as a pooled set of resources and shall be made available to eligible partners on a first-come, first-serve basis. Currently, this incentive is available only to partners with datacenter locations in the United States.

Technical community forum

The Technical Community Forum is an exclusive, invitation-only, Microsoft moderated Yammer group for all COSN partners. Exclusive access to this forum allows partners to interact with Microsoft engineering experts, as well as the extended COSN Partner community to answer technical questions faster, saving time and money. This community forum is also an excellent place to collaborate securely and learn about best practices, customer offers, and hybrid cloud scenarios, and communicate with both Microsoft and other leading partners to find answers that are not found elsewhere.

Early adoption programs

Select Cloud OS Network partners will have an opportunity to apply to participate in the Continuous Customer Engagement Program (CCEP). CCEPs are pre-beta and are used by Microsoft product teams to get early feedback on which features are the most

important to customers.

The benefits of participation in the CCEP include:

- **Influence:** develop a close relationship with Microsoft as a strategic business partner to influence product development and ensure their own unique business is represented.
- **Lead:** gain a competitive advantage as an early adopter/front runner with access to new/enhanced technologies and features, as well as access to dedicated Microsoft support.
- **Promote:** obtain exposure to Microsoft's broad audience of customers and industry influencers, and leverage collateral funded and produced by Microsoft for internal and external visibility.

COSN partners interested in applying for CCEP need to commit resources to work with Microsoft teams, as well as provide feedback in a timely manner.

Competency support incentives

Hosting competency fee rebate

COSN Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners will be granted a refund of the fees paid (wherever applicable) to join the Gold and Silver Hosting competency status as part of Microsoft Partner Network

Competencies are membership levels provided by Microsoft Partner Network (MPN) to partners who use, deploy and sell Microsoft solutions.

With the hosting competency, partners are eligible for a variety of technical, marketing, sales, support and other benefits – including MPN logo access, MSDN subscriptions and product support.

Additionally, partners who have achieved the Gold and Silver levels of MPN Hosting competency are also eligible for the following benefits

To know more about Hosting Competency benefits and requirements, visit the Microsoft Partner Network.

Benefits	Silver	Gold
Stay up to date on the latest Hosting news by subscribing to the monthly newsletter.	**Yes**	**Yes**

Use no-cost Hosting marketing materials to help run campaigns.	**Yes**	**Yes**
Access to no-cost Hosting marketing materials in the Partner Marketing Center	**Yes**	**Yes**
Access internal-use software licenses (in addition to those you receive as part of the core partner benefits) for products related to this competency.	**Yes**	**Yes**

With the COSN criteria around technical and business assessments, COSN Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners would have already met most of the requirements for Gold and Silver Hosting Competency. If the partners decided to meet the other requirements as well (customer evidence, customer feedback and competency fee), they become eligible for a rebate of the competency fee.

Marketing and sales support incentives

Cloud OS Network Partner badge

COSN Tier-1 and Tier-2 partners can promote the joint partnership with Microsoft and their Cloud OS Network member level with a Microsoft-provided badge for customer-facing materials. This badge can be used on websites, in advertisements, in customer communications, for print materials, in digital posts, and for other materials. The badge helps promote status and designation within COSN to attract existing and new customers.

Cloud OS Network Partner catalog listing

All COSN partners can take advantage of the millions of monthly visitors to the Microsoft website by creating and maintaining an advertising profile in the online Cloud OS Network Partner Catalog. Prospective end customers that want to consider a Microsoft technology-based solution often start their search on our website so they can find the right partners with the right solutions.

The Catalog enables prospects to search for partners based on multiple criteria such as location and offers. Microsoft also makes it possible to link more detailed service offerings on service providers' websites to the Catalog listing for increased exposure and lead generation.

Press support

Getting the message out with the support of Microsoft executives is helpful when you want to continue to build credibility and interest in your initiative. Microsoft provides tools and resources for Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners to strengthen their PR messages and stimulate awareness and demand for your company's products and services.

All Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners receive the Press Guide which helps service providers develop a strong, more controlled image of their company across various communication channels. Most importantly, COSN partners that leverage this incentive can gain a competitive advantage over competitors who do not use press releases effectively.

Additional PR support for Tier 1 partners includes being mentioned during key Microsoft corporate press updates, plus, prior to the next service offering launch, Tier 1 partners will receive a quote from a WW Microsoft executive for press release. Tier 1 partners will also be mentioned in up to three local blogs or one corporate blog.

Prior to the first service offering launch, Tier 2 partners will receive a quote from a local Microsoft executive to use in their press release and will be mentioned in one local blog.

Events and campaign support

Microsoft creates a variety of events and campaigns to generate interest in hybrid and hosted solutions. Integration with events and campaigns to promote awareness about service offerings can include:

- Event sponsorship
- Event stage presence
- Event keynote speaking opportunities
- Tradeshow booth advertising
- Speakership in one-to-many webinars
- Invitations to participate or speak at CxO roundtables
- Campaign promotion integration, such as newsletters, advertisements, and websites

Tier 1 partners will have the opportunity to be integrated into local Microsoft events and campaigns run by local Microsoft marketing teams after they complete joint marketing and sales planning with their local Microsoft Account Manager.

Tier 2 partners, at Microsoft's discretion, will have the

opportunity to participate in local Microsoft events and campaigns run by local Microsoft marketing teams after they complete joint marketing and sales planning with their local Microsoft Account Manager or Tele Account Manager.

In addition, customer case studies can be promoted through a variety of marketing vehicles, and if a video case study is developed, it can be promoted as well. Please see the following section on Case Study Development Support for more details.

Case study development

Case studies are a great way to raise customer awareness about how you solve problems for customers. Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners will have the opportunity to develop a professional case study with Microsoft's assistance. Tier 1 partners will receive support to develop one, four-page case study per engagement year, with select partners receiving additional assistance to develop a joint video case study.

Select Tier 2 partners receive writing support to develop one, two-page case study with Microsoft's assistance. All case studies will be available for co-marketing by Microsoft and the partner. Partners will be selected based on a combination of criteria including, but not limited to, (a) uniqueness and complexity of solution offering (b) customer segment(s) targeted, (c) geography and/or (d) the industry vertical that the partner hosted solution is addressing. Microsoft will engage a professional journalist to write the case study and market it accordingly. All case studies will at a minimum be published on the Microsoft website.

Marketing and sales planning

All COSN partners can take advantage of content for self-serve sales and marketing planning on the COSN Partner Portal. The content includes sales and marketing tools to assist in business planning, offer creation, customer messaging and positioning, Go-to-Market planning, selling scenarios, marketing execution, and more.

In addition, select Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners, at Microsoft's discretion, will have an opportunity to apply for on-site consulting services from Microsoft sales and marketing experts. These expert consultants can be used for services, including sales and marketing strategy assessment, business planning, pricing, offer creation, digital marketing, campaign execution, customer messaging and positioning, Go-to-Market planning, and other related aspects of sales and marketing assistance.

This incentive helps lower marketing risk and reduce time to market.

Applications for consulting services will be approved based on a combination of criteria, including, but not limited to, the partner's membership tier, GTM plan, market opportunity, maturity and type of offers in market, partner readiness, and partner's resource investments in demand-gen and market development campaigns.

Additionally, select Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners will have access, at Microsoft's discretion, to Go-to-market (GTM) funds to help develop, review, and launch marketing campaigns. Please see the following section on COSN GTM Funds for details.

COSN GTM funds

Launching a new marketing campaign can be both risky and expensive. To help reduce the risk and some of the costs, Cloud OS Network partners will have the opportunity to apply for COSN Go-to-market (GTM) funds.

The goal of COSN GTM funds is to invest in partner marketing programs that will help service providers differentiate their offerings, build channel awareness, and build a preference for Microsoft products. COSN GTM funds can be used to:

- Launch new offerings.
- Create product awareness.
- Grow sales from existing customers.
- Increase sales to new customers.
- Increase market share.
- Incent your sales team.

All COSN partners have the opportunity to apply for COSN GTM funds based on achievement of pre-defined Go-to-Market (GTM) milestones. Your Account Manager will help identify activities that qualify for COSN GTM funds. COSN GTM fund applications will be approved based on a combination of criteria, including, but not limited to, the partner's membership tier, GTM plan, market opportunity, maturity and type of offers in market, partner readiness and partner's resource investments in demand-gen, and market development campaigns.

Business community forum

The Microsoft Cloud OS Network Business community forum on LinkedIn is an exclusive, closed forum for all COSN partners. COSN partners have the opportunity to nominate one business executive (preferably a sales and marketing leader) to join this Microsoft moderated group. The forum will help your business decision makers interact with, and learn from, other members of the COSN partner business community and from Microsoft business executives. This group can be used to facilitate discussions on business growth strategies, sales and marketing best practices, GTM planning, hybrid cloud scenarios etc.

Get started

To join the Cloud OS Network, contact your Microsoft account representative or send an email to COSN@microsoft.com

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