Accelerating your Time to Value in Azure

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Introduction

You've made it to the cloud, now what?

There is a general assumption that moving to Azure will inherently lead to cost savings and a more secure environment. However, transitioning to the cloud does not automatically guarantee reduced costs or enhanced security. This is primarily due to a skills gap. Organizations often lack the internal talent knowledgeable enough to take full advantage of native Azure benefits and to realize the value of Azure.

Migrating to Azure was the tip of the iceberg. Once there, organizations must answer questions like:

- How do you contain costs?
- How do you forecast costs?
- What are all these other costs that weren't anticipated?
- Most importantly, how do I align my spend with the business?

But technically, what about maintaining a secure platform and securing the resources contained within? What native tools are available to the organization and how do I get value out of them? *Where do I start?*

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Market Trends Impacting the Cloud Skills Gap

Industry experts estimate there to be nearly 7.5 million unfilled cloud positions by 2025 with over 3.5 million to be in cybersecurity alone. This is leading to delayed projects, increased costs, higher risk of security gaps, and reducing organizations digital market competitiveness.

With worldwide spending on public cloud services forecasted to reach $805 billion in 2024 and double in size by 2028, according to the latest update from the International Data Corporation (IDC), technology advancements are outpacing the existing workforce. This will only be exacerbated by the growing interdependence of AI and cloud technology; a compounding demand for specialized cloud skills are outpacing traditional IT education. Organizations need to embrace a multifaceted approach to address this through short-term and long-term strategies.

> *Cloud now dominates tech spending across infrastructure, platforms, and applications...The rapid advancements in artificial intelligence are significantly driving the surge in cloud spending.*
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> - Eileen Smith, group vice president, Data & Analytics at IDC

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Addressing the Skills Gap

1- Implement VMware
We have seen VMware implementations on Azure to offer staff a familiar interface, helping minimize the disruption caused by adopting a new platform. However, running VMware on Azure might not be affordable for some organizations. Additionally, it can overcomplicate the environment and create additional challenges down the road via vendor lock-in, feature gaps, integration challenges and more.

2- Educate
Reskilling offers you the ability to retain and retrain your current workforce who have invaluable tribal knowledge. However, it requires significant time, it diverts attention from day-to-day operations, incurs costs for training, testing new features in a sandbox, and learning through application or OS refresh cycles.
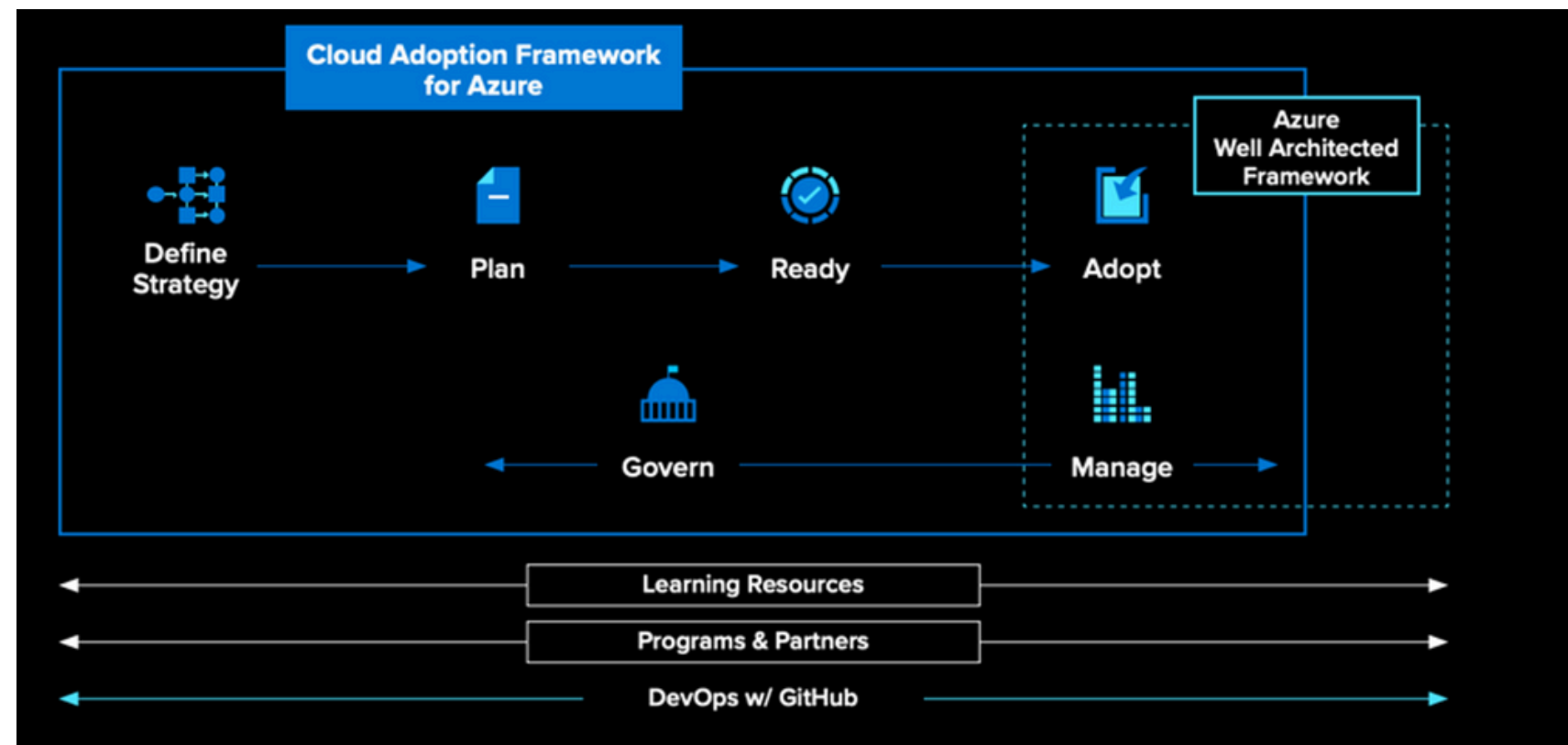
3- Trusted Partner
Some organizations decide that they would rather refocus their staff and uplevel their work. Transitioning the day-to-day to a trusted partner who owns the cloud footprint allows them to focus on what makes their organization unique. It also provides access to cloud experts, which can further shorten the time to value.

4- All of the Above
Typically, combining these strategies is key to accelerating time to value in Azure. If your organization is large enough and has the budget, a VMware overlay may be a good fit. However, organizations often achieve the greatest success by retaining their top-tier in-house talent and refocusing them on the application stack while partnering with a provider that offers a toolkit of solutions addressing not just cost and security, but also reliability, performance, and operational excellence.

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The Hidden Workload: Biggest Challenges Facing IT Teams

During the migration to Azure, legacy IT staff must maintain the existing infrastructure while also building the new cloud environment, effectively doubling their workload. Leadership often assumes that the workload will decrease once they migrate to Azure. However, the real work begins post-migration, as the team must now develop and leverage new features on the new platform.

Source: Microsoft

The Value of An IT Partner

Our goal is to help our customers build an integrated cloud foundation that supports a connected business environment while providing security and scalability across your entire organizational infrastructure. By enabling a strong and secure cloud foundation, your business will open doors for disparate branches of your organization to seamlessly achieve desired communication, security, reliability, and efficiency.

Effective cloud implementation and execution has far reaching benefits for your organization, many of which go beyond the realm of IT. RKON understands what it takes to properly and seamlessly migrate your organization to the cloud while keeping in mind your specific business needs and strategies.

No matter whether your business is grappling with the ongoing IT skills shortage, struggling to modernize development processes, or needing to better understand your cloud capabilities, RKON is well-positioned to help.

Ready to optimize your Azure use? **Let's talk.**

For additional insights, **watch the full webinar.**

ABOUT RKON

Founded in 1998 in Chicago, RKON has grown to become one of the nation's leading IT advisory practices. Our comprehensive understanding of execution strategies, technology, business processes, operations analytics, risk and compliance, and planning and integration supports hundreds of organizations.

Recognizing that no two companies have the same IT challenges, RKON takes a truly customized approach. We serve as trusted advisors to our customers, providing strategic guidance, technical resources, and honest assessments to address competitive challenges and meet long-term goals.

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