Effective Ways to Optimize your Azure Costs
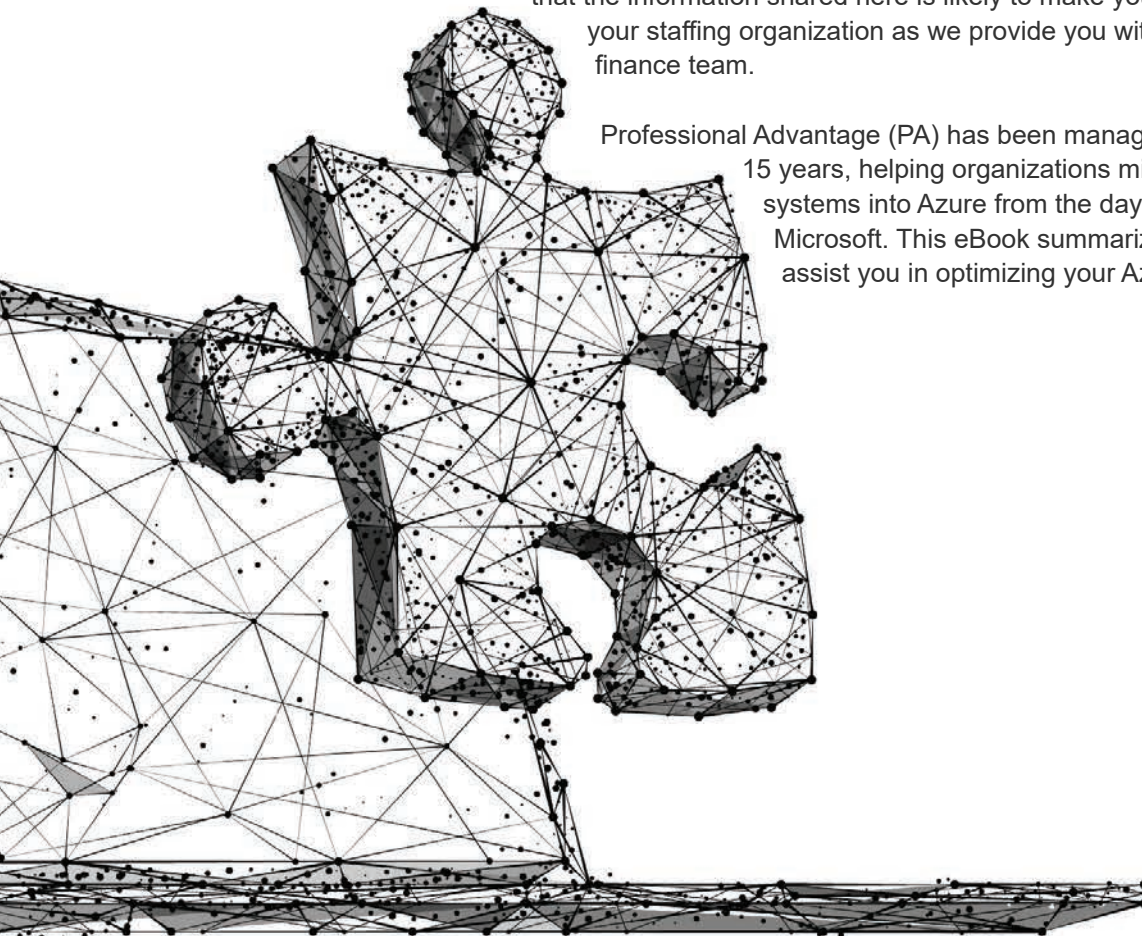
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by professional **advantage**

For many businesses, a few hundred dollars spent on a subscription to a cloud-based, enterprise quality platform such as Microsoft Azure is not a difficult decision. After all, it can be easily seen that the benefits outweigh the financial commitment; scalability, disaster recovery, and improved security are just some of the aspects that your business can immediately take advantage of, once you move your workloads to Azure.

Thousands of organizations have been able to improve their IT operations by leveraging the Azure platform, but some organizations have rushed in without proper planning and consideration of their Azure architecture. The optimized   cost models available, and the ongoing governance plans.

The reason for this is simple. The platform is intuitive, and organizations can easily embark upon the journey with limited knowledge or without a governance plan. They should not be blamed for taking this approach as choosing from the number of options available can be a daunting process to find the best combination of cost-effective resources in Azure. You almost need someone living and breathing the platform to pick the most suited configuration to avoid the risk of any future performance issues for your critical applications.

If you are reading this eBook, the chances are your staffing business is either bearing the brunt of increasing Azure costs that are now being questioned or you are looking to achieve more from your monthly Azure commitments. The good news is that the information shared here is likely to make you the new 'Azure Star' within your staffing organization as we provide you with the right tools impress the finance team.

Professional Advantage (PA) has been managing hosting platforms for over 15 years, helping organizations migrate their business- critical systems into Azure from the day it was originally launched by Microsoft. This eBook summarizes some of the quick tips to assist you in optimizing your Azure costs.
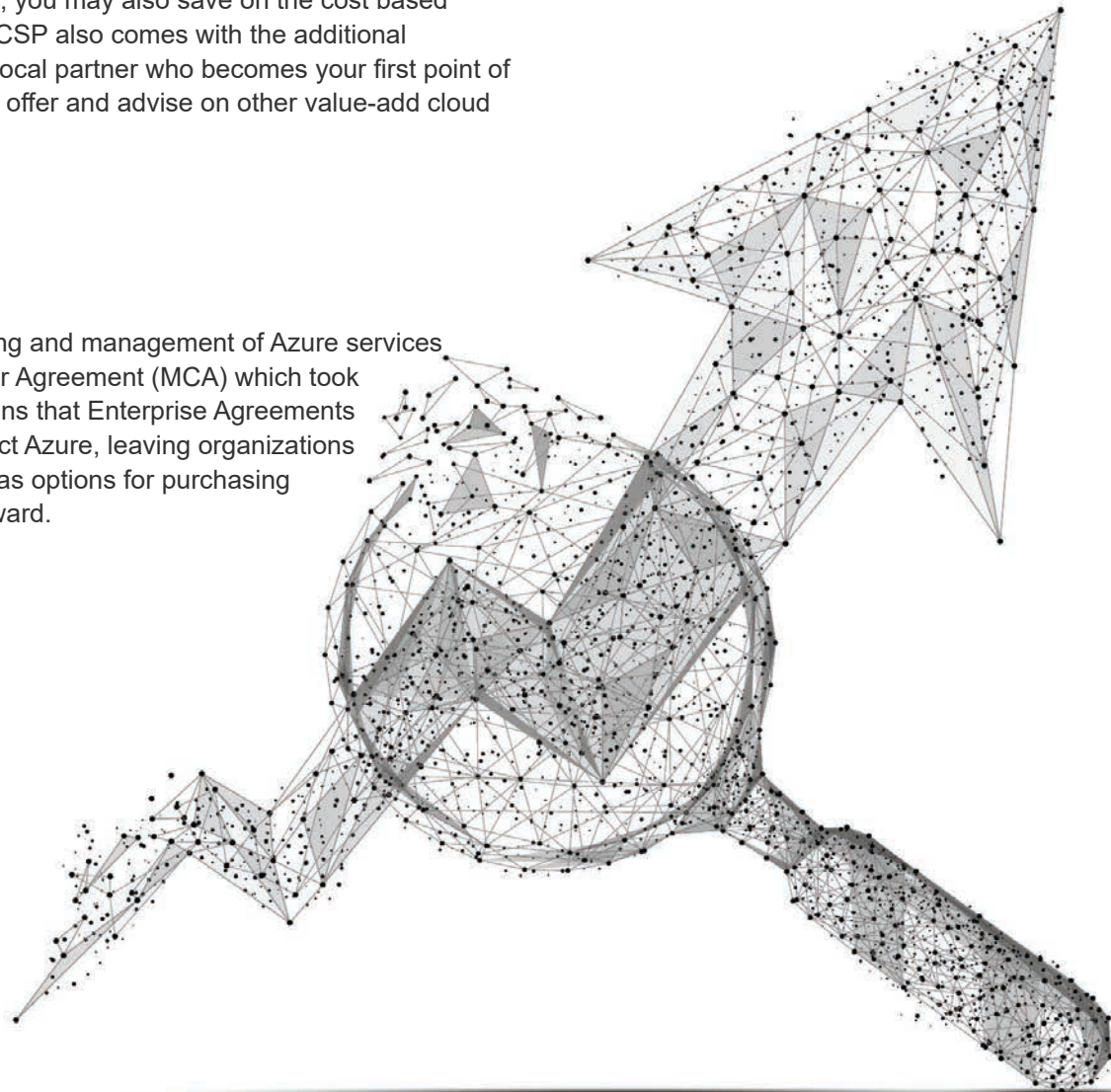
Review Your License or Payment Agreement

It can be confusing to understand Microsoft licenses due to the number of choices they offer. In the case of Azure, however, the payment options are not that complex; you can simply prepay and get a reasonable discount. Spending some time with a licensing partner and taking them through your annual spend can easily lead to significant savings each year. The default option we often see is that opt for the PAYG (pay as you go) option and switching over to Reserved Instance can lead up to 72% reduction in cost.

If the Microsoft Licensing partner you speak to is also a Microsoft Cloud Service Provider (CSP) like PA, you may also save on the cost based on their setup. Working with a CSP also comes with the additional convenience of dealing with a local partner who becomes your first point of contact and who will be able to offer and advise on other value-add cloud services for your business.
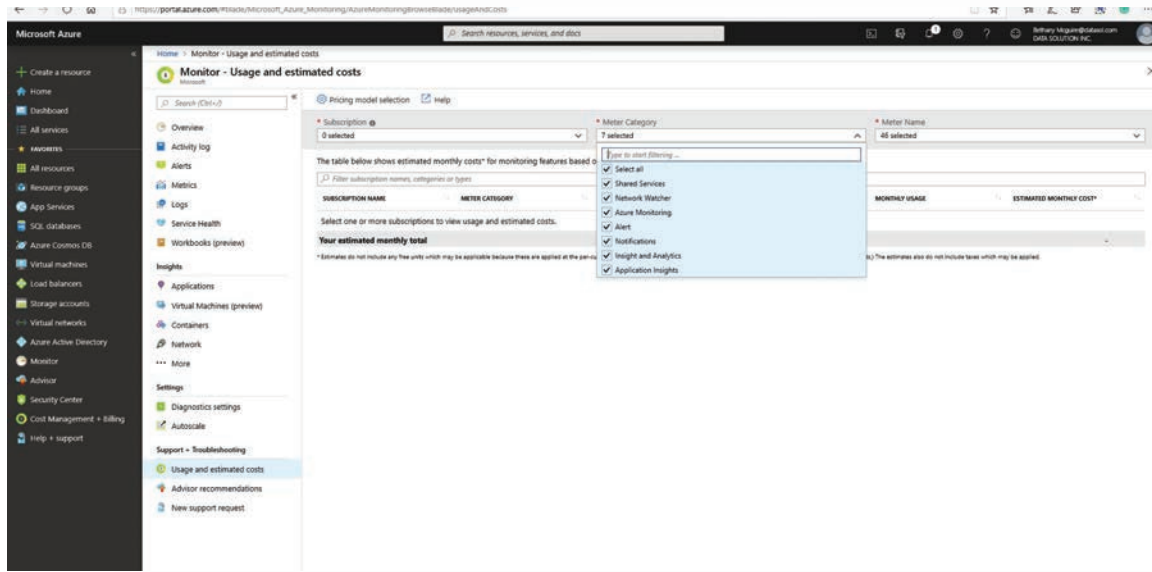
TIP:
Microsoft is simplifying the billing and management of Azure services through the Microsoft Customer Agreement (MCA) which took effect in March 2019. This means that Enterprise Agreements will no longer be able to transact Azure, leaving organizations with only MCA, CSP, or PAYG as options for purchasing Azure subscription moving forward.
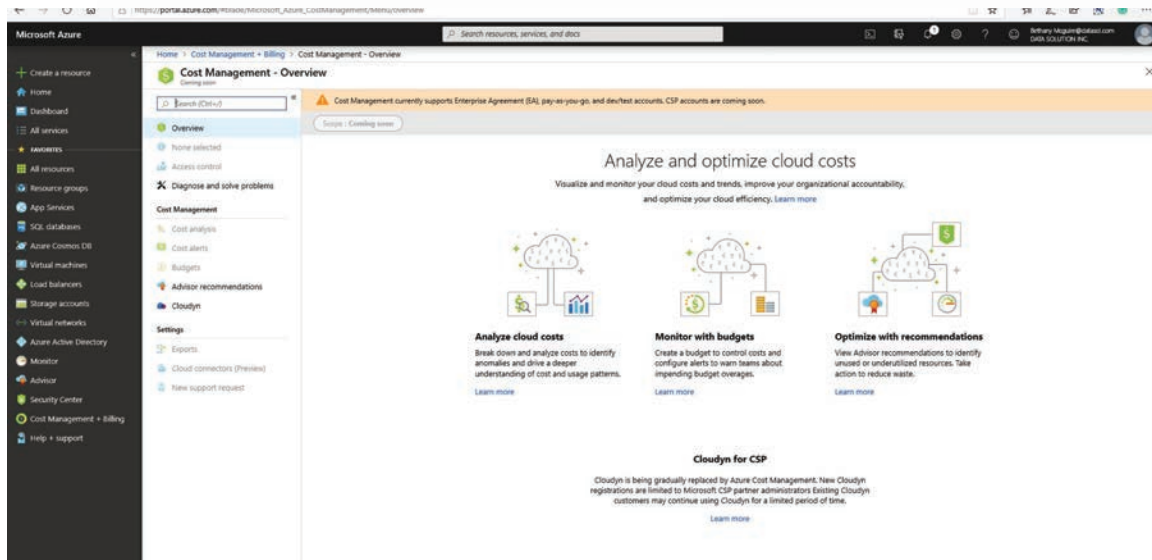
Track
Monthly Usage

The Azure Portal provides a monitoring hub that allows you to know how much you're spending and on which workload or application, enabling you to analyze and manage your Azure billings.
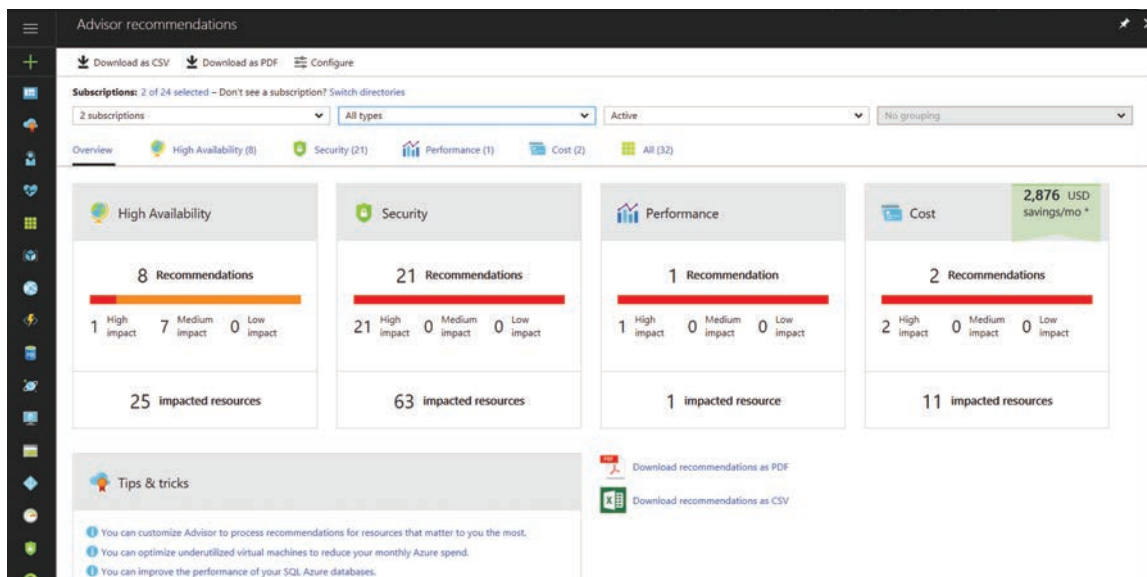

A more comprehensive approach to managing costs in Azure is by using Cost Management hub, which is included at no additional cost. This tool can help you to report and analyze usage and costs by allowing you to tag resources, budgets, create alerts, and provide recommendations.

Access Azure Recommendations

Another tool that comes free with your Azure portal is Azure Advisor.

This provides you with personalized recommendations you can follow to achieve the best practices to optimize your deployments. It also helps you to analyze your resource allocation and measure your usage based on specific categories such as High Availability, Security, Performance, and Cost.
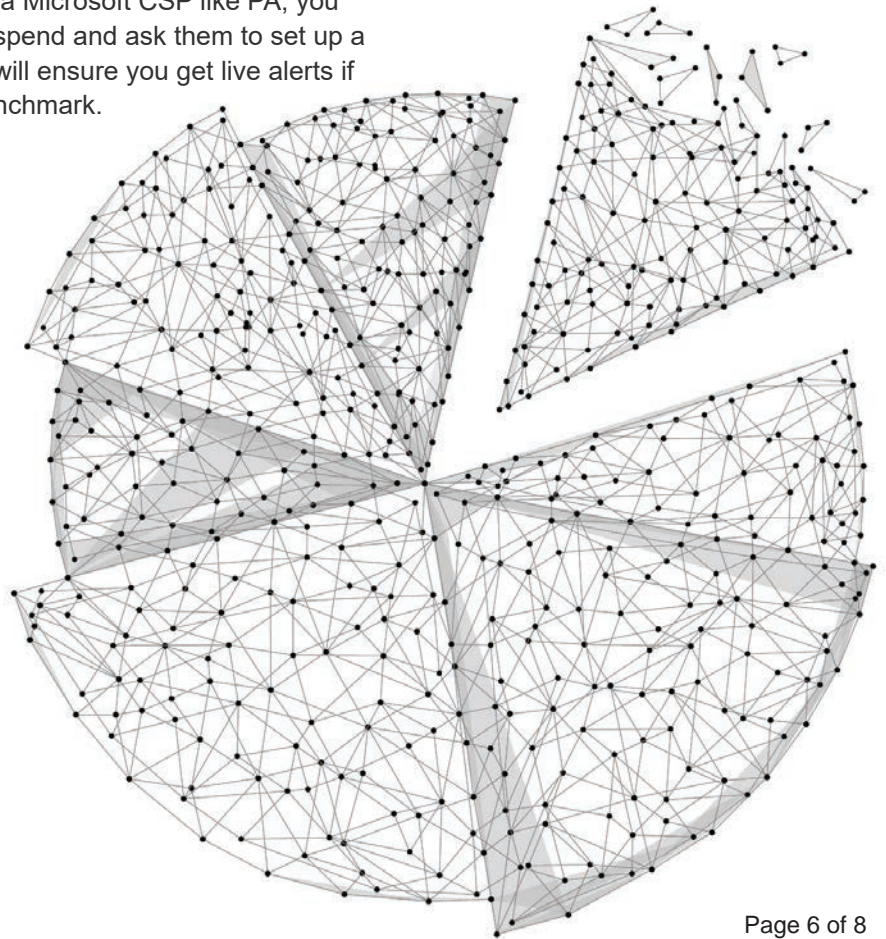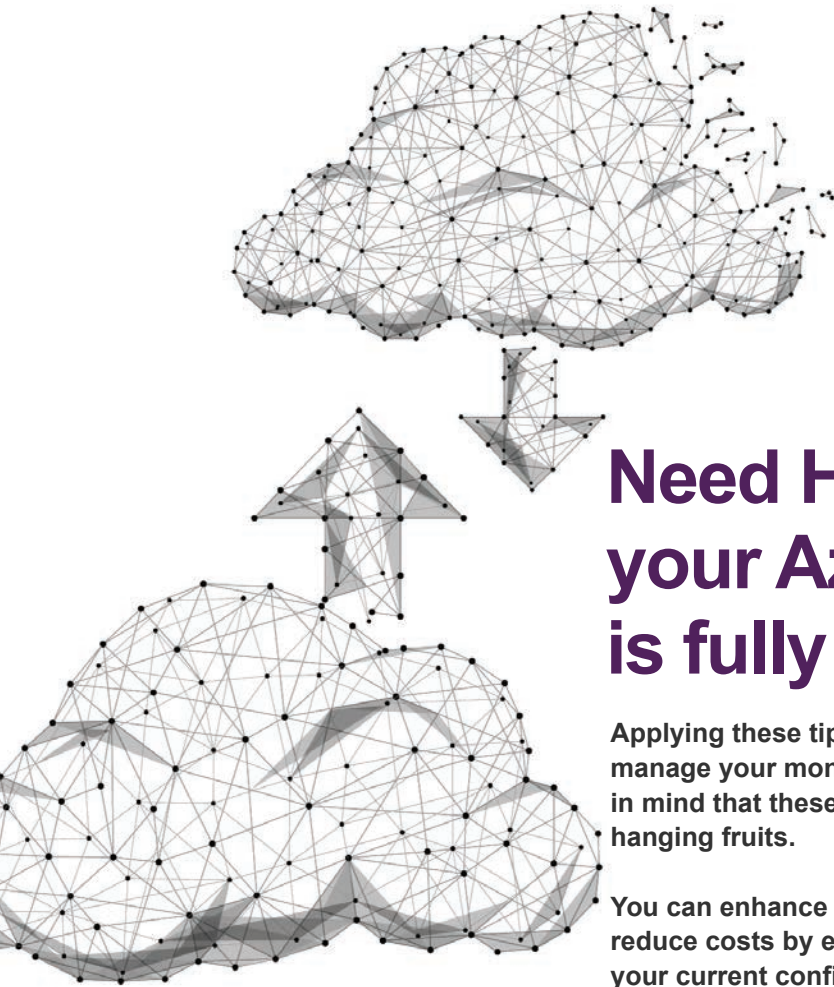
Use Test Environments

If your IT department constantly needs to develop apps, then you are likely to need a test environment. To optimize the value of your testing budget, you can also subscribe to a dev/test environment on Azure, which comes at a subsidized cost. For example, Windows Machines in a dev/test environment are charged at Linux VM rates, and SQL Databases are up to 55% cheaper.

Ask your CSP to Set a Budget

Once you have your licensing sorted with a Microsoft CSP like PA, you can be more proactive with your monthly spend and ask them to set up a budget in the Partner Centre Portal. This will ensure you get live alerts if the environment reaches a predefined benchmark.

Need Help Assessing if your Azure Environment is fully Optimized?

Applying these tips to your Azure subscription will help you better manage your monthly billings and keep your costs at bay, but keep in mind that these tips are just to get you started and are the low hanging fruits.

You can enhance security, improve system performance, and still reduce costs by engaging a cloud architect to thoroughly analyze your current configuration in Azure and prepare a plan.

Find out more at https://go1staff.com/microsoft-azure-cloud-services/

Let's Talk.

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About Us

Professional Advantage was established in 1989 in Sydney Australia and has grown rapidly over the years across the globe. We currently have 7 offices that range world-wide, and established a North American presence in 1996, including two branches here in the US (Denver & Fargo).

Professional Advantage has been a Microsoft Presidents Club Member and Certified Partner for several years, providing offerings and products in both the Dynamic GP and 365/CRM space. With 6,000 customers globally, the focus has always been helping clients use the technology to make a difference and enable high performing workplaces.

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