

EBOOK

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The background is a deep purple. It features several abstract, glowing geometric shapes made of white lines and dots. At the top center is a sphere. Below it are three elongated, capsule-like shapes. At the bottom is a large, complex shape that resembles a map of Australia. A thick, orange, wavy line sweeps across the left side of the page, partially behind the title.

# Effective Ways to Optimise your Azure Costs

professional  
**advantage**

For many businesses, a few hundred dollars spent on a subscription to a cloud-based, enterprise quality platform such as Microsoft Azure isn't a difficult decision. After all, the benefits pretty much 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.

Fast forward a few years and you might be wondering if an on-premise deployment would have been easier to manage and more cost effective. We are hearing from organisations who were the front runners in moving across to Azure that they are now feeling the pain of ongoing costs spiraling out of control.

The reason for this is fairly simple. The platform is very intuitive and organisations can easily get sucked into embarking upon the journey with limited knowledge or without a governance plan. They shouldn't be blamed for taking this approach as the number of options available mean it 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 business is either bearing the brunt of increasing Azure costs that are being questioned or 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 organisation as you will have the right tools to impress the finance team.

Professional Advantage has been managing a hosting platform for over 15 years now and has helped hundreds of organisations migrate their business-critical systems into Azure from the day it was originally launched by Microsoft. This e-book summarises some of the quick tips to assist you in optimising your Azure costs.



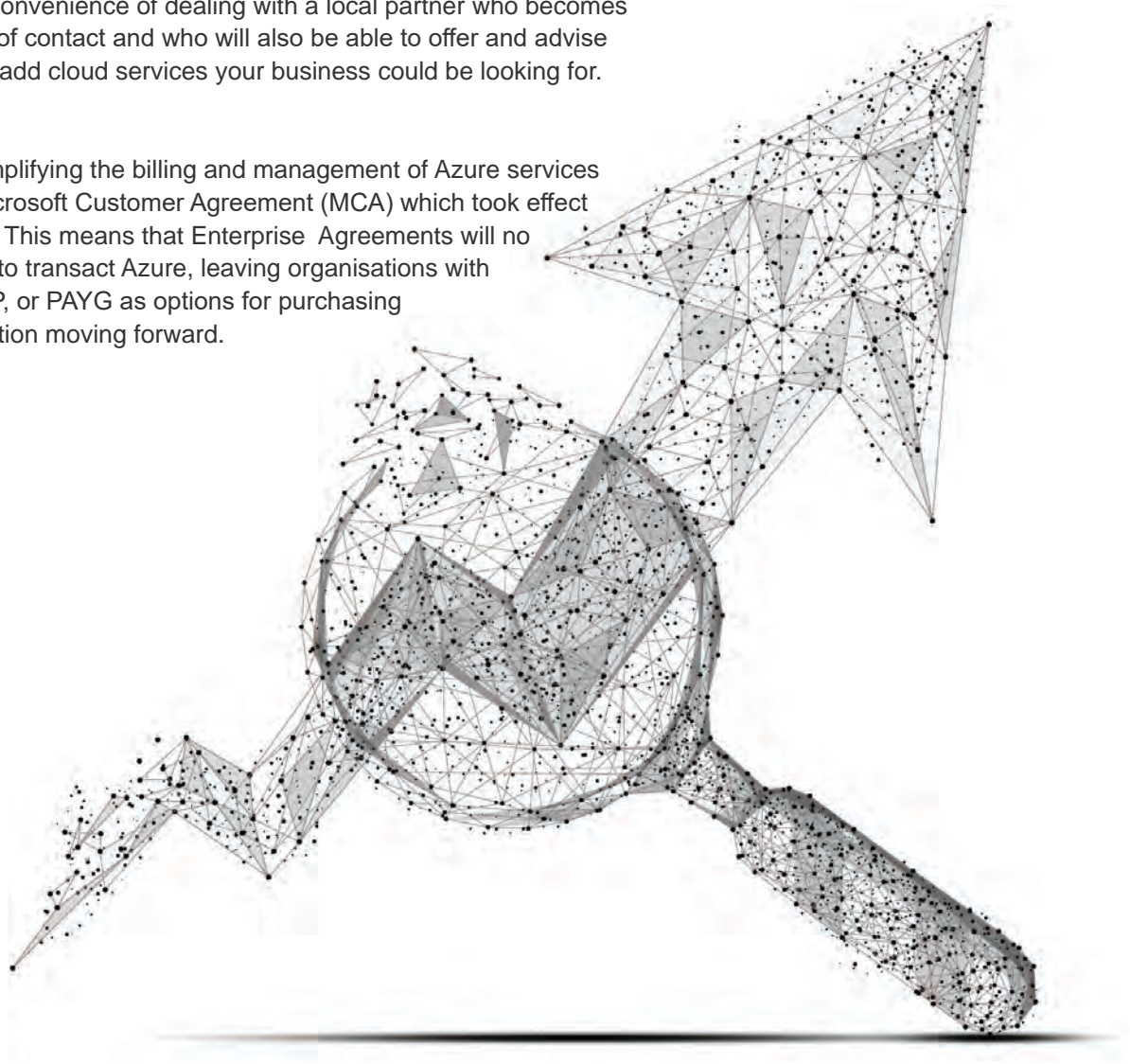
# Review Your License or Payment Agreement

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 to opt to PAYG (pay as you go), and switching over to Reserved Instance can lead to up to a 72% reduction in cost.

If the Microsoft Licensing partner you speak to is also a Microsoft Cloud Service Provider (CSP) like Professional Advantage, 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 also be able to offer and advise on other value-add cloud services your business could be looking for.

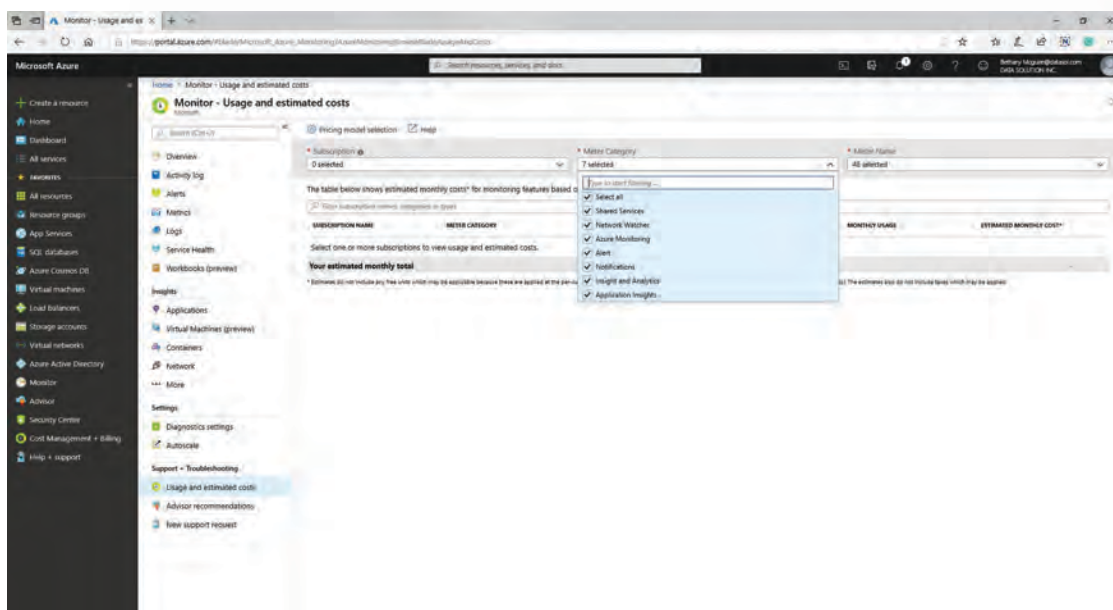
**TIP:**

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 organisations with only MCA, CSP, or PAYG as options for purchasing Azure subscription moving forward.

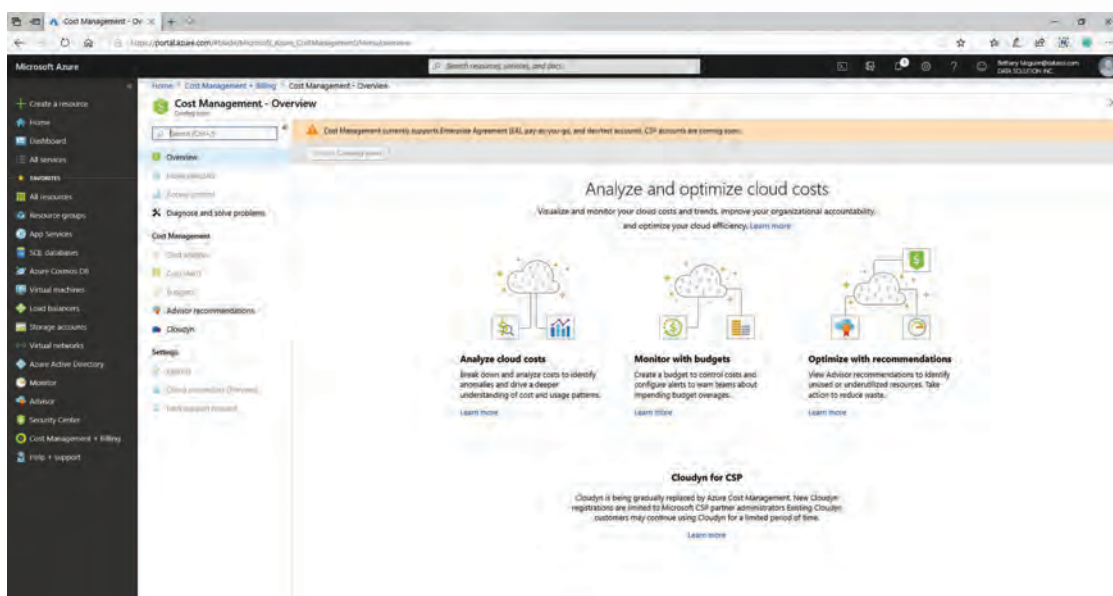


# Track Monthly Usage

The Azure Portal has a monitoring hub that lets you know how much you're spending and on which workload or application, allowing you to analyse and manage your Azure billings.



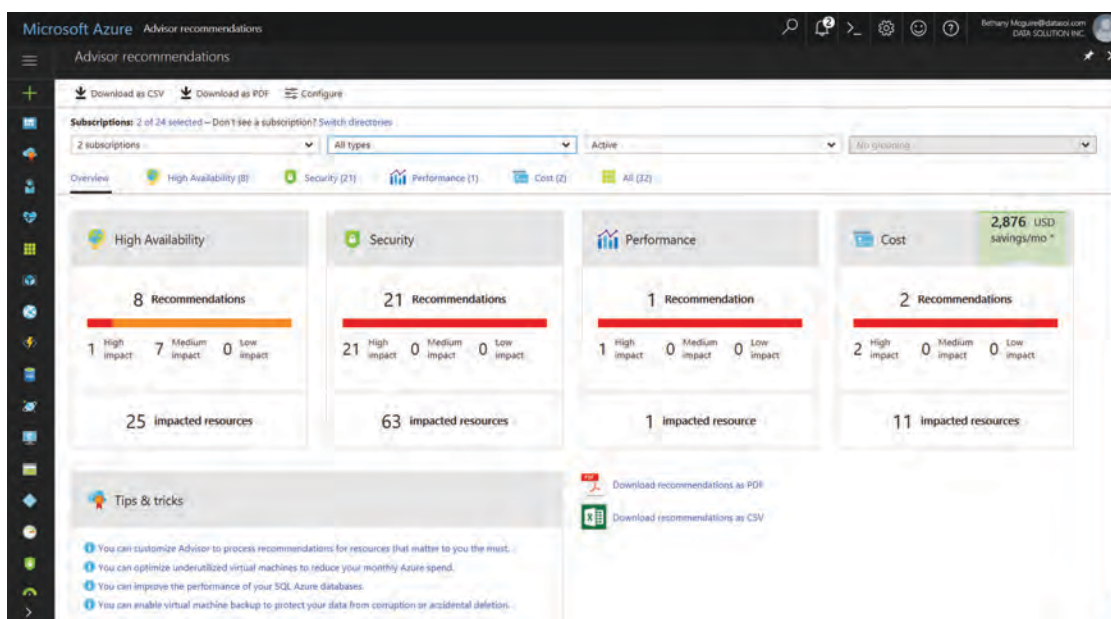
A more comprehensive approach to managing costs in Azure is using its Cost Management hub, which is included at no additional cost. It can help you to report and analyse usage and costs by allowing you to tag resources, use budgets, create alerts, and provide a recommendation.



A large, stylized wireframe piggy bank is positioned on the right side of the page. It is composed of a network of black dots connected by thin grey lines, giving it a digital or mesh-like appearance. The piggy bank is facing left and has a small coin slot on its back. The background is white, and the overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

# Access Azure Recommendations

Another tool that comes free with your Azure portal is Azure Advisor. It provides you with personalised recommendations on how you can follow the best practices to optimise your deployments. It also helps you to analyse your resource allocation and measure your usage based on specific categories such as High Availability, Security, Performance, and Cost.

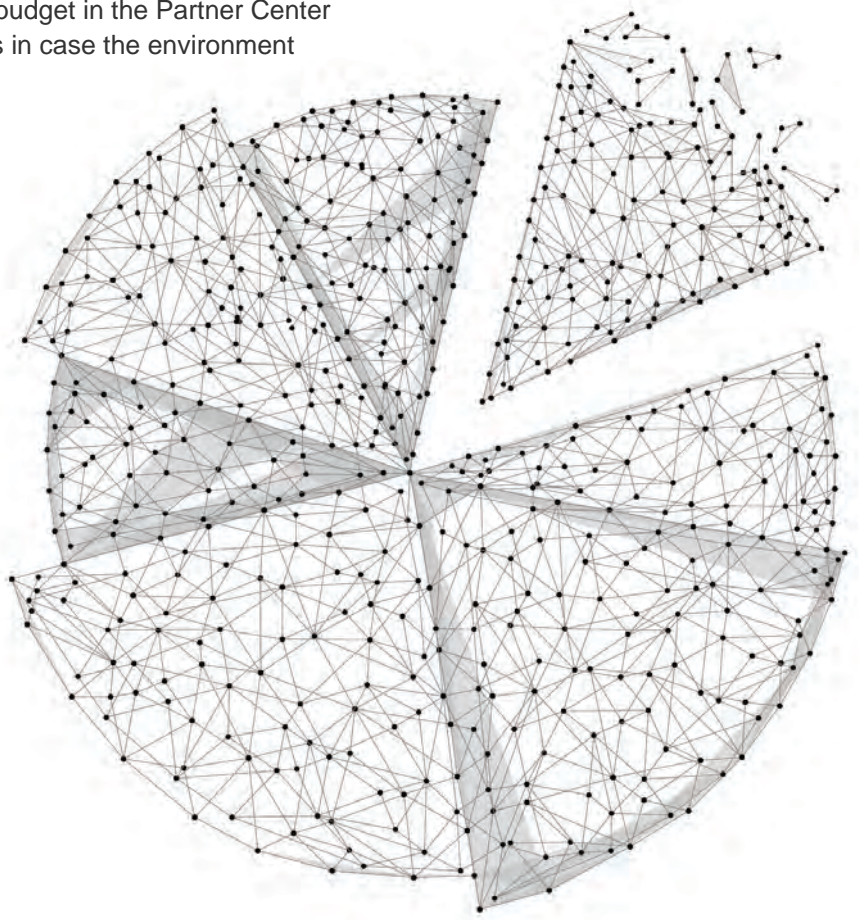


# Use Test Environments

If your IT department constantly needs to develop apps, then you are likely to need a test environment for various Proof of Concepts (POC). In order to get more value out of your testing budget, you can also subscribe to a devtest environment on Azure, which comes at a subsidised 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 Professional Advantage, you should also get more proactive with your monthly spend and ask them to setup a budget in the Partner Center Portal. This will ensure you get live alerts in case the environment reaches a predefined benchmark.





## Need Help Assessing if your Azure Environment is fully Optimised?

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 Professional Advantage (PA) cloud architect to thoroughly analyse your current configuration in Azure and prepare a plan.

PA's Azure optimisation involves conducting a comprehensive audit leveraging some advanced platform tools, and, depending on your environment scale, can be only a couple of days of effort. Your compute and storage requirements, security configuration, user count, and Microsoft subscription are just some of the things we check as part of this indepth assessment. PA's Azure optimisation finishes with a findings presentation and a plan to develop your organisation and add to the company's bottom line.

Get PA's cloud experts to audit your Azure environment today by calling us at **1800 126 499** or signing up at <https://www.pa.com.au/products/microsoft-azure/>.



# Let's Talk.

1800 126 499

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## About Professional Advantage

Professional Advantage is one of Australia's most awarded solution providers, with over 30 years experience in helping organisations improve their business systems through industry leading software solutions. Our 250-strong team in 6 offices across Australia and internationally has successfully worked with over 1000 organisations.