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AWS vs Azure vs Google: Cloud Wars

by Jeremy Aucoin

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ging behind, but it's not out of the race.

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e: Market Share

dominant cloud provider in terms of market
g to Statista, [AWS saw \\$88 billion](#) in revenue in

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ig though. It may seem like Azure is within reach of
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ced its revenue for the first quarter of 2023,
sitions Google as the third-largest entity in terms of

AWS vs. Azure vs. Google: Pricing Comparison

On the surface, it seems like cloud providers offer the same thing: a cloud platform and cloud services. While that's true to an extent, it's not as generic as it seems.

For example, if you focused solely on [compute services for AWS](#), Azure, and GCP, the pricing looks simple.

Computing General – Pay as You Go			
Vendor	vCPU	Memory	Cost
AWS – a1.large	2	4 GIB	\$0.05
Azure – Fsv2	2	4 GIB	\$0.09

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Winner: It's up to you

Because of these many differences, it's difficult to compare the costs of using each provider. At times, it's like comparing apples to oranges. In other cases, it's like comparing apples to shoes — not even in the same category. If you plan to make a decision between the three based on price, [AWS](#), [Azure](#), and [GCP](#) each offer a calculator you can use to estimate their monthly costs.

AWS vs. Azure vs. Google: Feature Comparison

AWS, Azure, and Google have roughly the same high-level features. They all have compute, storage, and other services. The third category has the greatest potential for differentiation. If you're just going to host a simple website or app, then it's simple enough, and probably comes down to cost. Many people select their cloud provider for specialized services, like analytics or machine learning.

Here's a high-level feature overview of the three cloud providers.

AWS. AWS is the Swiss Army knife of cloud providers. There's just about everything you could ever want and then some. However, its greatest strength — the [abundance of services](#) — is also its greatest weakness. Some find it difficult to keep up with the new service innovations offered by AWS.

CBT Nuggets trainer [Anthony Sequeira](#) did a webinar on this very topic. Amazon has hundreds

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With so many services, it can be burdensome to understand and manage the costs that accompany the many services. But, as Anthony points out, AWS has a ton of services, but most users only need a couple to get started — EC2 and S3. Gartner calls AWS the "safe choice" for customers that need, or may one day need, a wide range of services.

Azure. Azure doesn't have quite the breadth of AWS, but they're getting there. At latest count, Microsoft offers 154 Azure services ranging from Bing Custom Search to mixed reality apps.

CBT Nuggets trainer [Ben Finkel](#) explains why Azure stands out against the competition in 15 minutes.

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The thing that really puts Azure ahead of AWS in many circles isn't a service at all — it's interoperability. While AWS maintains a singular focus on public cloud computing, Azure cloud caters to those who want to interoperate with their own data centers. In short, this means Azure has a hybrid cloud option — and they're banking on it to edge out AWS. We know that because [they've said as much](#).

Lastly, Microsoft is finally playing nice with other technologies, including [Linux](#) and [VMware](#). That will go a long way toward expanding their market share outside companies that run Microsoft stacks.

GCP: Google has always been known as a pioneer, and that reputation continues with its cloud platform. GCP's greatest strength is its innovative capabilities. With specialization in

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Google is also an open provider, meaning their ecosystem is centered on open-source technology. To many in the IT world, that's important. If you have an aversion to proprietary offerings — which is something you'd see in an Azure platform (though they're working on becoming more "open") — GCP could be a great option.

GCP also has its weaknesses. Though GCP's infrastructure is second to none, it's limited in scope. They don't offer as many services and features as AWS or Azure. This could make it difficult to leverage as a one-stop shop for specialized applications.

Gartner reports clients tend to choose GCP as a "secondary provider rather than a strategic provider" and that their "ecosystem limitations significantly heighten the challenges of adopting GCP, and believe that this adds additional cost and risk."

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Here's what Bart has to say about AWS vs Azure vs GCP for businesses:

Prior to the cloud, there was a pervasive feeling of uncertainty that often prevented progress. It caused us to buy servers that were too big, which led to us having unused capacity. It caused us to buy licensing bundles that had too many seats, which led to us, again, having unused capacity.

After years of uncertainty, the cloud was a welcome disruption. Though the uncertainty has been minimized with cloud technologies, it's still something that must be addressed when choosing a cloud provider because they're all so unique.

Google has [amazing data analytics](#), storage tools, and a huge background for innovation. Microsoft excels (pun intended) at diagonal integration, meaning MS products work well with MS products. This continues to be one of Azure's biggest appeals: Businesses often prefer to maintain an existing relationship rather than start a new one.

But in the end, AWS has a portfolio of services that exceeds Azure and GCP in both breadth and depth. There are more vendors and solutions across more areas of expertise. So, here is where the uncertainty comes back around. When choosing a cloud provider, the risk of needing to transition to another cloud provider down the road is a HUGE factor we can't overlook.

So if I'm going to place my bet on who I want on my side to battle the future of uncertainty, I'll

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AWS vs. Azure vs. Google for Startups

Startups come with plenty of problems, but infrastructure hardware is no longer one of them. Cloud services are scalable, pay-as-you-go, and easily manageable. The biggest choice a startup has to make is which one to use.

All three big cloud providers have special programs for startups.

AWS. AWS offers [AWS Activate](#), which provides startup credits, training, and support. Along with an unmatched offering of services and features, AWS offers many cost-effective options for startups to use:

1. Up to \$100,000 in AWS promotional credits
2. Discounts on Slack, Atlassian products, and Twilio
3. Access to the Amazon network, which includes the Amazon Media Group, AWS Marketplace, and Amazon Launchpad

AWS Activate allows startups and small businesses to use the same infrastructure that large, established enterprises use — for free.

Azure. Azure offers [Microsoft for Startups](#), which gives you access to technical resources, free cloud, and even marketing support. Here are some of the marketing features they have:

1. Digital and social campaigns to promote your solution at launch and generate demand

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4. Dynamics 365 for customer engagement and talent
5. Enterprise-grade Azure support
6. Access to engineers, which includes NDA roadmap briefings, one-on-one consultations, and Architectural Design Sessions
7. Dedicated marketplace onboarding support desk
8. Marketplace listing optimization
9. Blog and event promotion

There's an application process, and it's unclear what criteria Microsoft uses to select startups for the program. Microsoft appears to do a great job making startups feel like they'll be well taken care of by choosing Azure.

GCP. Google offers [Google Cloud for Startups](#). And just like AWS and Azure, GCP offers mentorship, training, and credits for startups. GCP markets much less to startups than its competitors. Here are some of the features they tout:

1. Up to \$100,000 in credit for one year
2. Up to 10 free users on G Suite Basic for one year
3. \$600 a month of Google Maps API
4. Six months of free Hire by Google to help recruit talent

As a startup, it might be tough to know what you'll need in a year or five years. GCP has a limited feature scope, which is great if you're building on the things they do well. As Bart mentioned, GCP has world-class storage and analytics features. So in time, you may find

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Microsoft Azure takes the cake. They have a generous startup package that connects you with selling partners and a marketing strategy. With the second highest market share and one of the most trusted vendors as its backbone, it doesn't seem like there's much of a downside to Azure.

However, AWS is a really close second. They, too, have a great startup program. It's not all about the go-to-market strategy. If you're a forward-thinking business, which all startups should be, you can't beat AWS.

GCP isn't touting the sales side like Microsoft and Amazon. For startups with a product that makes sense for the platform, the Google Cloud for Startups program is an excellent choice, too.

There's no better price than free, especially when you're a startup. That's why being accepted to any of these programs would be a great start for your business.

AWS vs Azure for Government

Security, compliance, and reliability are huge concerns for all organizations. The need for those qualities is amplified for government organizations. The federal government has long been contemplating a [Cloud First](#) strategy. Now that the cloud has matured and the issue of security has been [thoroughly researched](#), the government is ready to get on board. It took a while, but the federal government is modernizing to the cloud. In fact, the Pentagon just put up for grabs a [\\$10 billion Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure contract](#) — or JEDI contract.

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workloads. With one region dedicated to the U.S. federal government, Amazon reports that more 2,000 government agencies already use AWS. They're the only accredited cloud provider cleared to handle Impact Level 6 workloads, which means everything up to [Top Secret](#).

Azure. Azure also carries all its strengths and weaknesses into the public sector. As we've said a few times, Azure plays nice with other Microsoft products, and the government uses quite a bit of Microsoft tech. Azure has six regions dedicated to the U.S. federal government, five more than AWS reports. Though Microsoft has been working with the Defense Information Systems Agency to attain Impact Level 6 classification, it's not there yet.

Winner: TBD

Quite honestly, the winner has nothing to do with technology at this point. It's going to be handled among lobbyists, contracting offices, and even the courts. Microsoft and Amazon are the front-runners for the winner-take-all contract. However, Oracle recently sued after falling out of the bidding. Not that JEDI is the only or last enterprise contract that we'll see. But it'll likely have an impact on the platform of choice for government organizations, which might even be Oracle.

How to Pick Your Cloud

Though nobody can confidently say which cloud provider will win the war, for the last decade, AWS has continued to win battle after battle.

AWS has been in the cloud game longer than any other player. so they know how to best cater

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