



Powerful Azure Tools You're Not Leveraging Enough



Azure, [Microsoft's cloud computing platform](#), is essential for businesses looking to innovate, scale, and enhance their digital infrastructure. It offers a wide range of services that enable organizations to deploy applications, manage resources, and store data securely and cost-effectively.

For many businesses, Microsoft Azure is a central hub for analytics, offering over a dozen services. These include [Power BI](#), AI-powered analysis and data mart options, and governance tools like Microsoft Purview.

However, many businesses need to leverage Azure's potential fully. The platform's vast array of tools can be overwhelming, leading to underuse of features that could significantly boost productivity, security, and efficiency. By fully utilizing these tools, organizations can unlock new performance levels and achieve their goals more effectively.

This blog will highlight seven powerful Azure resources you need to leverage more. These tools offer unique functionalities to streamline processes, enhance security, and provide valuable insights. Here are some useful but underused Azure features and what makes them unique.

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Azure Tools You Should Be Using More

Microsoft Azure SQL for Database

Overview: Microsoft Azure SQL is a managed cloud database platform that leverages traditional SQL technology to simplify database management for organizations.

Key Feature: It offers a fully managed service that handles database administration tasks such as patching, backups, and scaling, allowing businesses to focus on development.

Use Case: Ideal for web and mobile applications, Azure SQL supports a robust and scalable backend for managing data, ensuring high performance and availability.

Azure Cost Analysis to monitor your costs

Overview: Azure Cost Analysis is a tool that helps organizations estimate and manage their cloud expenses effectively.

Key Feature: This Microsoft Azure cloud tool provides detailed cost breakdowns and forecasting to optimize and control spending.

Use Case: Ideal for budgeting and financial planning, Azure Cost Analysis enables businesses to predict future costs and identify areas for cost-saving.

Read more:

- [Optimizing Azure Compute for Performance and Cost Savings](#)
- [Azure Cost Optimization: 8 Proven Ways to Smash Costs](#)

Azure Active Directory to protect 99.9% of cyberattacks

Overview: [Azure Active Directory, a component of Microsoft Entra](#), is an enterprise identity service providing single sign-on, multi-factor authentication, and conditional access to protect against 99.9% of cyberattacks.

Key Feature: This Azure security tool enhances security and user experience with solid authentication and adaptive access policies. It also streamlined access through intelligent governance and automation.

Use Case: Ideal for enterprises needing to manage identities and user access across on-premises and cloud-based applications, ensuring efficient and secure resource access control.

Azure Virtual Machine to deploy and manage virtual machines in the cloud quickly and easily

Overview: [Azure Virtual Machines \(VMs\)](#) are a core component of the Azure platform that allows for the rapid and easy deployment and management of virtual machines in the cloud.

Key Feature: Azure VMs offer autoscaling capabilities. They automatically adjust the number of VMs based on predefined rules and metrics to optimize performance and manage costs effectively.

Use Case: They provide a scalable, reliable, and cost-effective solution for running various applications and services, from development and testing to production workloads, supporting digital transformation without costly hardware investments.

Azure Information Protection to improve data protection

Overview: [Azure Information Protection](#) enhances data protection with features like simple classification, embedded labels, and permissions, regardless of where data is stored or shared.

Key Feature: Applications like [Microsoft Office](#) have built-in data classification and protection controls, enabling quick and secure data handling.

Use Case: It provides comprehensive external data security for emails, documents, and sensitive information shared beyond the company's boundaries.

Azure Firewall

to rapidly scale and ensure high availability during operation

Overview: Azure Firewall is a managed cloud-based network security service that protects your [Azure Virtual Network](#) resources.

Key Feature: It allows you to create, enforce, and log application and network connectivity policies across subscriptions and virtual networks with built-in high availability and unlimited cloud scalability.

Use Case: Azure Firewall uses real-time security signals and Microsoft threat intelligence to protect against evolving threats and zero-day vulnerabilities.

Azure Advisor **to help you with what you need**

An Azure Advisor like [ECF Data](#) analyzes your current Azure usage and suggests improvements. It helps you discover best practices, key features, and settings you might be overlooking. Even advanced users can find new tips and tricks through its recommendations.

Finding the Right Azure Tools for Your Business Needs

Identifying the appropriate Azure tool for your needs doesn't have to be overwhelming. We typically adhere to these criteria to streamline the software selection and purchasing process for ECF Data's team.

Prioritize safety.

Ensuring your data's safety and security is crucial. Verify the data security and compliance standards that the Azure tool meets. Protecting your business secrets should always be a top priority.

Consider your business needs.

Identify your current and medium-term priorities and pain points. This approach will help you select the Azure tool that can scale and evolve with your business over time.

Evaluate your budget.

Determine how much you are prepared and able to spend. Azure tools will help you identify the trade-offs you can make to maximize the value of your investment.

Consult with other businesses that use Azure.

First-hand experience with a cloud tool is sometimes the best guide, so leverage your network to gather recommendations and insights. Find out what tools they endorse and learn from their experiences with various Azure solutions.

Select user-friendly and easy-to-manage tools.

Investing time and resources in learning how to use a complex tool takes away the time you could spend enhancing your core services.

Verify that the support meets your needs.

While automation is valuable, expert guidance from certified professionals is even better. Ensure the Azure tool offers technical support from experts during convenient hours and without incurring extra costs.

Ensure that the support meets your requirements.

While automation is helpful, expert guidance from certified professionals is even more valuable. Confirm that the Azure tool offers [expert technical support](#) during your preferred hours and at no additional cost.

Choose an Azure tool that is reliable and scalable.

As your business grows, you shouldn't have to worry about tool outages or limitations.

Maximize Azure with ECF Data

Microsoft Azure is a versatile [cloud computing platform](#) offering numerous features and benefits for businesses of all sizes. It provides scalability, flexibility, security, cost savings, disaster recovery, collaboration, and advanced analytics. Azure continuously evolves, introducing new features that ensure businesses access the latest technology and capabilities.

Extensive documentation and support make it easy for businesses to get started and maximize the platform's potential. For those considering cloud computing, Microsoft Azure is a valuable option. Its comprehensive range of services can elevate your organization and keep you competitive.

As a Microsoft Gold Partner, ECF Data specializes in helping businesses migrate to and manage Microsoft Azure. Contact our team if you have questions regarding Microsoft Azure, its pricing, and its implementation.

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