

# Azure Operations Readiness Checklist

## Are You Truly Ready to Run Azure Day to Day?

Running Azure successfully requires more than standing up workloads. This checklist helps you evaluate whether your team, processes, and tools are prepared for Azure’s operational demands — or whether partnering with a managed services provider would reduce risk, stabilize operations, and free up internal capacity.

### Monitoring & Incident Response

#### Incident Response

- We have a documented incident response workflow
- We have SLAs for response and escalation
- We can troubleshoot Azure incidents across compute, storage, network, and identity
- We have true 24x7 and on-call coverage
- Sev-1 incidents can mobilize multiple team members quickly

#### Monitoring Coverage

- We have 24x7 monitoring of VMs, databases, storage, and identity
- Alerts automatically generate incidents in a ticketing system
- We have meaningful alert tuning that avoids alert fatigue
- Someone is reviewing alerts every day, including weekends

### Patching, Backups, & Lifecycle Management

#### Backups

- All critical workloads are backed up with retention that meets business needs
- Backup failures are monitored daily
- We periodically test restores (not just rely on backup "success" status)

#### Patching

- We have a regular patch schedule for Azure VMs
- Patching windows are coordinated with the business
- Failed patches are investigated and remediated

#### Lifecycle

- We track OS versions, deprecated VM sizes, and retirement notices
- We regularly upgrade or right-size VMs to avoid performance or security issues

### Cost Management & Governance

- We get daily or weekly Azure cost visibility
- We understand cost drivers in the Azure platform
- We perform regular rightsizing across compute, storage, and networking
- We use Azure Savings Plans or Reserved Instances strategically
- Cost alerts are configured and reviewed
- We practice governance around tagging, orphaned resources, and scale rules

### Service Help & Platform Change Management

- We track Azure Service Health alerts and act on them
- We map service retirement notices to our environment
- We proactively address breaking changes before they impact production
- We update runbooks whenever Azure updates its services
- We have someone dedicated to staying current on Azure announcements

### Security & Identity Operations

- We patch vulnerabilities in Azure VMs within defined timeframes
- Identity configurations follow Microsoft best practices
- We maintain least-privilege access
- Logs are monitored for suspicious or anomalous activity
- Backups and DR meet cybersecurity frameworks
- We review security baselines regularly

### Hybrid Cloud Operational Complexity

- We can troubleshoot issues that span on-prem and Azure
- Network dependencies are mapped and documented
- We understand how on-prem identity interacts with Azure
- We maintain consistent governance across all environments
- We can diagnose performance issues across all layers (network, compute, storage, identity)

### Staffing & Expertise

- We have dedicated Azure expertise on staff
- Our team has bandwidth for patching, monitoring, updates, and project work
- We maintain 24x7 on-call staffing without burnout
- We have cross-platform skills (Azure + VMware + networks + identity)
- We have documented runbooks and consistent processes

## Your Personalized Azure Readiness Score is Waiting



#### 20+ checks

Your team is well positioned. Managed services may still add efficiency and reduce risk, but you have a strong operational base.

#### 12-19 checks

You have good foundations, **but significant gaps exist**. Managed services could meaningfully reduce overhead and improve stability.

#### 0-11 checks

**You're operating Azure with high risk**. Managed services will dramatically improve uptime, security, cost predictability, and team bandwidth.

### Want help interpreting your readiness?

A US Signal cloud architect can walk you through your results and show where managed services could support your Azure strategy.

Connect with an expert now: [ussignal.com/contact](https://ussignal.com/contact)

