The Journey to SaaS

Subscribe to your journey with AWS. Learn how (SaaS) or you're about to launch your first solution, use this guide to accelerate Whether you've just taken the first steps toward delivering Software-as-a-Service

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### Business Planning

**Actions**
- Create unique buyer and user personas based on target market segments
- Complete competitive analysis (inc. pricing, market penetration)
- Prepare pro-forma budgets (design/build/DevOps)
- Prepare commercial conversations with SaaS-specific revenue metrics
- Assess the SaaS-specific experience of existing in-house resources
- Explore training opportunities and partner benefit programs for SaaS
- Survey focus group (existing and prospective customers)

**Motivations**
- Desire to inform tiering strategy with SaaS-specific personas
- Financial model should provide funding justification and path to profits
- Ensure budgets and commercial plan include SaaS-specific attributes
- Capture business requirements to inform architecture decisions
- Determine capabilities to inform in-house or outsourcure
- Size the total addressable market

**Questions**
- Is our future portfolio SaaS-only or just a SaaS component?
- When will the growth and financial benefits offset the cost and effort?
- How will this impact existing on-prem customers? Will they migrate to SaaS?
- Do we need SaaS-specific solutions for staff augmentation?
- How will we fund the (up-front) investments required?

**Pain Points**
- Lack of funding
- Lack of aligned resources to design/build/DevOps
- Ambiguous or unrealistic profitability objectives
- Lack of relevant benchmarking in alignment with internal SaaS adoption
- Executive friction, confusion, or conflict over future SaaS posture
- Verticalized competition with more agility and faster time-to-market

**Resources**
- AWS SaaS Factory Insights Hub
- AWS Cloud Adoption Framework
- SaaS Growth Opportunity for Building SaaS: On-Boarding
- AWS Executive Briefing Center
- Whippingpost: The Journey to SaaS

### Product Strategy and Roadmap Development

**Resources**
- AWS Innovation Sandbox Credits
- AWS Training and Certification
- AWS SaaS Roadmap
- AWS ISV Workload Migration Program
- AWS ISV Workload Migration Program
- SaaS Fundamentals
- AWS SaaS Boost
- AWS SaaS Solution
- Amazon EKS
- AWS Marketplace
- Draft playbook for customer success
- Test product-led-growth (PLG)

**Motivations**
- Lack of data from customers and prospects to inform feature design
- Missing feedback loops between technical and business teams
- Few resources to guide research and development
- Insufficient tools for builders and operators
- Ambiguous product release cycle timeframes
- Too much focus on feature, function, and not enough on value design
- Observability challenges—performance, product adoption

**Questions**
- What does Product Market-Fit look like for each unique tier? Will there be a free trial tier?
- What is the customer expectation for the onboarding experience?
- How will we design and measure value experience and time-to-value?
- How will we approach the multi-tenant aspects of our solution?
- Will we be able to correlate tenant-level activity with the costs we will incur?
- Should there be consumption-based options in our pricing model?
- How do we know that customers truly want to buy these features and services?
- How will we measure agility?

**Actions**
- Enable agility and efficient release cycles
- Understand the natural boundaries (functional, performance, isolation, etc.) of tenant profiles
- Map a frictions, automated, and standardized onboarding experience
- Prioritize observability—had a plan to capture tenant-level activity and costs
- Identify KPIs that reflect agility, innovation, and operational efficiency
- Ensure that cost-effective architecture decisions are made

**Pain Points**
- Inadequate representation from key market segments
- Friction, slow value recognition and time-to-value, inaccurate cost models
- Lack of visibility and observability into tenant-level resource consumption
- Operational capabilities are inadequate
- Too much hand-holding and manual tasks required to integrate/bind
- MVS features unable to deliver measurable value experiences to customers

**Resources**
- SaaS Lens for the AWS Well-Architected Framework
- AWS Product Marketing Cube
- AWS ISV Academy
- AWS ISV Workload Migration Program
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**Motivations**
- Validate hypothetical forecasts (i.e., costs, resources, time-to-value)
- Realistic assessment of organizational capabilities
- Identify risks, bugs, and weaknesses/potential points-of-failure
- Demonstrate ability to land-ondored customers and drive successful adoption
- Establish product adoption KPIs that indicate risk and opportunity
- Finalize organizational structure before GA release

**Questions**
- Who should participate and what features should be included in this release?
- Can the participants recognize value from the MVS experience?
- How do we measure tenant-level resource consumption and costs?
- How will we align right tools and operational process in place?
- How will we capture data and feedback from participants?
- What goals should we set for GA release?
- Will compensation should be made for the MVS relative to the GA release?

**Resources**
- SAAS Metrics
- Act Now or Lag Behind: PLG
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**Actions**
- Ensure sales and marketing resources are enabled
- Inaugurate demand and lead generation
- Ad hoc discounting allowed to hit quarterly quotes, leading to low-profits
- Inefficiency in sales motions and channel partnerships, or lack of experience selling SaaS
- QA solution not delivering on value proposition promised in demos or marketing collateral

**Questions**
- What lessons were learned during the MVS stage?
- How will we meet new business targets in Year One of GA?
- Should we sell this in the AWS Marketplace?
- How can we incentivize and reward successful product adoption and renewals?
- Will product design and development teams deliver enough new features to support cross-sell initiation?
- When should we allow pricing discounts, and for whom?

**Resources**
- AWS Marketplace
- Marketing Development Funds
- AWS SaaS Roadmap
- AWS ISV Accelerate
- AWS ISV Workload Migration Program

**Motivations**
- Misaligned compensation incentives, or conflicted by incentives to sell legacy solutions
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**Actions**
- Define, land, expand, and renew sales and marketing motions
- Set compensation models to reward adoption and renewal
- Finalize budget for customer acquisition and retention
- Update the Customer Success playbook and Customer Journey Map
- Develop product marketing campaigns emphasizing value recognition
- Create pre-sales qualification checklist
- Determine the role of the channel partners

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**Actions**
- Establish commercial and operational frameworks for customer acquisition and/or migration
- Develop profitable sales motivations spanning the entire customer lifecycle
- Recoup initial investments (payback) and realize economies-of-scale quickly
- Ensure SaaS-specific forecast accuracy
- Close profitable deals with customers most likely to succeed

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