

How Customers Can Work with AWS and Our APN Partners

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Abstract

While customers are able to build with and use AWS services directly from AWS, they can also work with [AWS Partner Network \(APN\)](#) partner organizations to help them get the most out of the AWS Cloud. This paper outlines how this relationship works in practice, for customers and organizations interested in becoming an APN Partner. This paper explains the terminology, roles and responsibilities of AWS, APN Partners, and customers in a cloud adoption project team.

Introduction

Depending on the complexity of a customer's workloads, there may be numerous parties involved in a cloud adoption project. In this paper, we explore the roles, relationships, and responsibilities among them. In particular we focus on:

- what AWS does
- how customers procure AWS services
- how our global network of APN Partners helps customers in different ways
- how and when AWS works directly with customers to provide fast, effective technical and account support

This paper concludes with a fictional cloud adoption "story" to demonstrate how AWS, APN Partners, and customers work together in a typical project.

The APN Partnership Model

AWS maintains, develops, and expands the AWS Cloud platform and the services available on it. We also work with an international network of AWS-recognized APN Partners who architect, deliver, or manage additional solutions to customers; which customers use to undertake a variety of workloads.

The process of designing and deploying solutions is typically undertaken by a project team, consisting of personnel from the customer and an AWS-recognized Consulting Partner. These project teams may also use AWS Professional Services to deliver specific project goals or fill a capability gap in the APN Partner’s or customer’s organization; or technologies (for example, virtual firewall) provided by an AWS Technology Partner. This approach is outlined below in Figure 1.

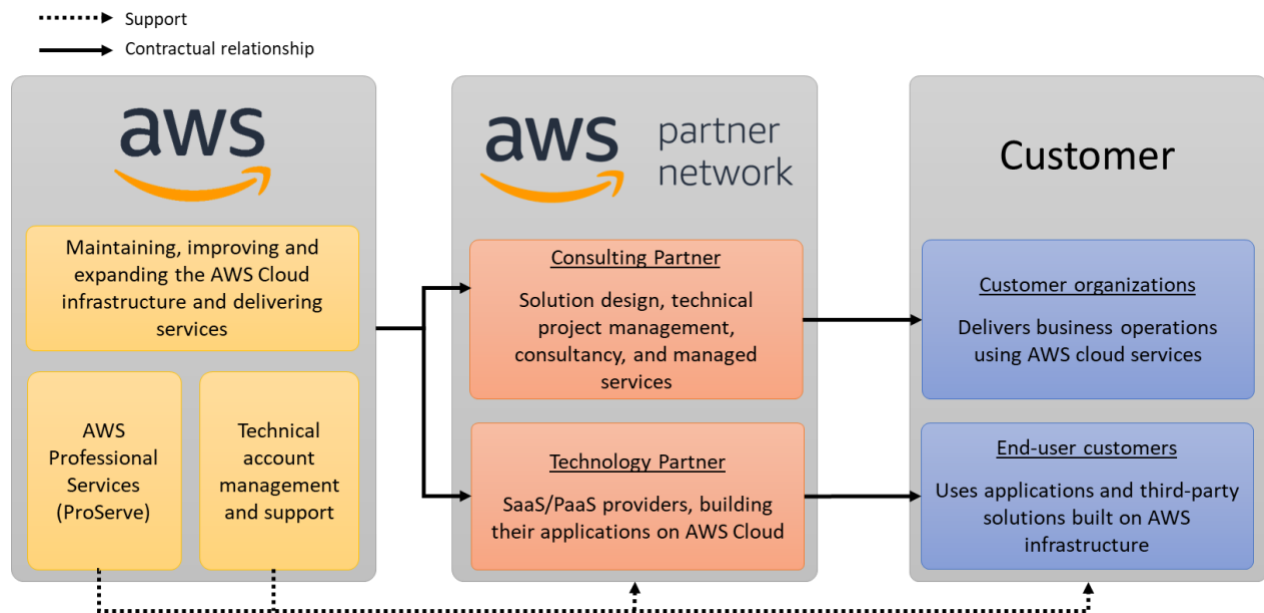


Figure 1: The relationships and responsibilities of AWS, APN Partners, and customers in a typical project team. While AWS typically holds a contractual relationship with the partner rather than the customer, project teams often require close collaboration between representatives of each organization. Customers’ projects may require engagement with more than one partner.

AWS

At AWS we focus on the development, maintenance, and delivery of the best cloud technologies in the world. Our secure [cloud](#) platform offers over 175 compute power, database, storage, analytics and other services to over a million public and private sector customers worldwide.

The principal point of AWS contact for customers is the Account Manager (AMs). Similarly, APN Partners have a dedicated AWS team of Partner Development Managers (PDMs). Discussions with AMs and PDMs are free. In many cases AMs and PDMs may involve an AWS Solutions Architect in discussions with customers and partners, at no extra cost.

We support our customers with several AWS employee roles, who offer costed services that help our customers and partners to be successful with AWS. These include Technical Account Managers, Solutions Architects, training specialists, Professional Services staff, support teams, and service teams to name a few.

While customers may choose to use an APN partner's support, customers may also choose to purchase AWS support plans that provide technical support delivered by AWS. If desired, we can deliver technical support directly to the customer (rather than to the partner) to provide faster resolution of technical issues, which can be time sensitive and business impacting. Customers who purchase the Enterprise Support Plan are assigned a named AWS Technical Account Manager (TAM) to assist with customer technical issues and business challenges.

Amazon Partner Network

Customers seeking AWS solutions or wishing to appraise AWS as a provider will normally do so by engaging with a partner with AWS expertise; specifically a member of the [AWS Partner Network](#) (APN). These AWS-recognized "APN Partners" are differentiated by their:

- type of service (i.e. [consulting](#) or [technology](#))
- level of expertise ([Partner Tier](#))
- additional specializations ([AWS Partner Programs](#))

The APN is a global community of companies which offer value-added software, developer tools, consulting services and expertise to help customers deploy and manage a wide variety of workloads in the AWS Cloud. AWS provides technical and business resources to the APN community through the [AWS Partner Programs](#).

By enrolling in these Partner Programs, APN partners are able to specialize in certain industrial sectors, service types, workloads, and solutions. When APN Partners meet the criteria to enroll on these programs they are listed on the AWS website's [Find a Partner](#) page under that specialization. APN Partners may choose to enroll in as

many or as few AWS partner programs as they choose – provided they meet the high standards and pass the audit required for enrollment.

AWS as a Provider of Cloud Infrastructure

AWS provides highly reliable, scalable, low-cost infrastructure in the cloud that powers over a million public and private sector customers around the world. AWS is responsible for maintaining, protecting, and improving the infrastructure that runs all of the services AWS offers. This infrastructure is composed of the hardware, software, networking, and facilities that run AWS Cloud services. As shown in Figure 2 below, this differentiation of responsibility is called the “Shared Responsibility Model”, which defines Security “of” the Cloud (AWS) versus Security “in” the Cloud (customer).

Customers may choose to outsource some of their responsibility to an APN partner. They may choose to use an APN Technology Partner’s application, or perhaps use an APN Consulting Partner to manage their security. The choices are as varied as our individual customers’ needs.

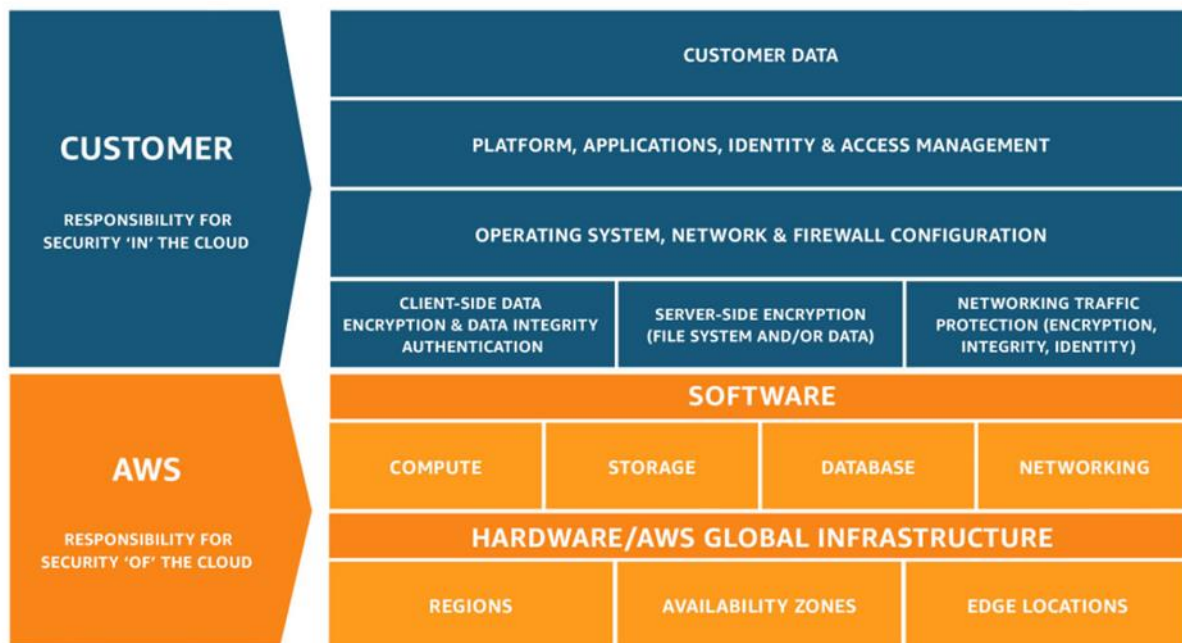


Figure 2: The AWS "Shared Responsibility Model" showing the extent of AWS' responsibility, and where customer responsibility begins. Customers may choose to outsource some of their responsibility to an APN partner.

Customers

The “customer” is the end-user organization of AWS Cloud products and services. Customers sign a Customer Agreement with AWS regarding the acceptable usage of the platform and own their AWS account. Customers will typically contract with an APN partner, who holds a separate contract with AWS. Customers can choose to retain full control of their AWS account, or outsource some or all of that control to an APN partner of their choice. In many cases customers contract directly with an APN Partner and do not sign an agreement with AWS.

Large customer organizations often have many AWS accounts, which are governed by an Enterprise Agreement. These accounts can be managed using the “AWS Organizations” functionality, from the customer’s designated “Master Account”. Billing may also be consolidated across these accounts to rationalize spending and get volume discounts by combining the usage of several accounts under the Master Account.

How Customers Procure AWS

Customers typically procure AWS Cloud services through APN Partners. Further detail on the different types of AWS partner are discussed in [APN Partners](#).

We typically see three permutations of APN partner-led procurements:

1. Customers going to APN Consulting partners to procure AWS services that the customer will manage themselves (these types of Consulting Partners are referred to as “resellers”).

For example: a software vendor provides a managed service of its solution in a “single tenant” model. To segregate the billing for each customer, it uses an AWS reseller to manage the different accounts. That way it is only billing its customers for the resources they used.

2. Customers turning over the day-to-day operation of their accounts to APN Managed Service Partners, using the AWS identity and access management (IAM) functionality.

For example: a government agency offers shared IT services to other ministries. Because the ministries have specialized workloads, they conduct their own procurements to select the individual companies (APN Partners) that are authorized to maintain their workloads. The central agency grants access to these partners for the duration of their contract. If another company wins the work in a future procurement, the central agency revokes their credentials and issues them to the new contractor.

3. Customers who use different types of AWS partners in combination across their business.

For example: a global non-profit uses the combination method. Its member franchises are in different countries, so it uses a reseller to manage the accounts and billing. It also relies on different Consulting Partners in Europe than it does in Africa, so it uses the same process of Identity Access Management (IAM) role segregation to allow APN Partners access to the workloads relevant to each continent. This company may also choose to use different partners within the same territory, to deliver services and products to different business functions within the same area.

In all of these arrangements, the customer retains strong control over security and quality control decisions, ensuring they have access to reporting and performance data.

APN Partners

APN Partners are AWS-recognized companies that are skilled in using AWS products and services to create and deliver solutions to meet customer needs.

APN Partners effectively improve the reach of AWS, offering extraordinary domain depth, and specializing in specific markets. They operate in countries across the globe, and have significant history with their customers and industries.

The APN Partner network allows a more diverse group of organizations to use AWS services, by getting close to the customer's needs at the ground level. For this reason, AWS trusts and relies on our partners to help deliver the value of AWS to customers.

Differentiating APN Partners

As discussed in Section 0 – Amazon Partner Network, APN Partners are differentiated by type, tier, and specializations. These three principle dimensions of APN Partners allow customers to choose the APN partner that is right for them.

Partner Type

Broadly, there are two “types” of APN Partner: [Consulting Partners](#) and [Technology Partners](#).

Consulting partners structure their work into projects or engagements with fees for service. Technology partners typically build a service using AWS hardware, software, or both; and then sell the service they have built (for example, a mobile application). Consulting Partners and Technology partners both have their own separate tier systems to differentiate them.

Partner Tier

AWS helps APN Partners to augment and enhance their AWS skills through a graduated program of support and accreditations called “Partner Tiers”. APN Partners progress through the tiers by training and certifying their employees, registering references of their completed projects, and showing experience across multiple AWS services through multiple customer projects.

Advancing to higher tiers provides specific benefits to APN Partners, including funding for market development, proofs of concept, and eligibility to enroll in certain partner programs.

Partner Specialization (Partner Programs)

APN Partners may specialize in a function by enrolling in [AWS Partner Programs](#). These partner programs support the unique business models of APN members, providing them with increased prominence and additional support from AWS partner teams. In order to enroll partners must be in good standing with AWS and meet specific program criteria. Being enrolled on one AWS partner program does not preclude an APN partner from also enrolling on other AWS partner programs.

Both types of APN partner can enroll in partner programs called [Competency Programs](#), where they can specialize in a solution competency (for example, migration), service competency (for example, databases), industry competency (for example, financial sector, non-profit), or even a workload competency (for example, SAP Workloads). Many of our partners are enrolled in a combination of competency programs, which make them highly capable in a certain niche – for example, migrating databases in the healthcare sector.

There are many other partner programs beyond the Competency Programs, with different programs available to Technology and Consulting partners. These can be found on the [AWS Partner Programs](#) webpage on the AWS website.

Consulting Partners

APN Consulting Partners are professional services firms that help customers of all sizes envision, design, architect, build, migrate, test, secure, manage, and optimize their workloads and applications on AWS. Simply, Consulting Partners help customers achieve their goals in the Cloud.

Consulting Partners may be System Integrators (SIs), Strategic Consultancies, Agencies, Managed Service Providers (MSPs), Value-Added Resellers (VARs), or a combination thereof.

Consulting Partners are tiered according to the number of qualified personnel in their organization and the degree of experience they can demonstrate across AWS services and diverse, referenceable customer projects. APN Consulting Partners have access to a range of resources and training to support customers in deploying, running, and managing applications on AWS.

A Consulting Partner is equipped with a go-to-market play book, which is a formal sequence of actions/activities required to design and deploy a particular solution (usually templated and based on similar previously-delivered solutions). Because these solutions rely on the experience gained in prior projects and other best practices, customers can be confident when using an AWS Consulting Partner in adopting AWS – even if this is their first deployment.

Higher tier partners have access to more programs, training, and even extra funding (called Acceleration Programs) for designing new solutions on AWS. To maintain their partner tier, partners must ensure their staff continue to hold the requisite accreditations and certifications. This way, customers can be sure that APN Partners have the necessary expertise to guide them in adopting AWS services.

Managed Service Providers

Managed Service Providers (MSPs) are a specialization of the ‘Consulting’ APN partner type. MSPs are skilled at managing cloud infrastructure and application migration, and deliver value to customers by offering proactive monitoring, automation and management of their customer’s environment.

If customers aren't sure where to start, APN MSPs are uniquely qualified to help them across every stage of their cloud journey to plan, design, build, migrate, run, and optimize AWS environments. In order to obtain the MSP partner designation, MSP partners must meet the [AWS Managed Service Provider Program](#) requirements, which includes a third party audit of their MSP capabilities.

The AWS MSP program helps customers identify qualified APN Consulting Partners who deliver AWS services as business solutions to AWS customers through their customers' full engagement lifecycle: Plan and Design, Migrate and Build, Run and Optimize. The programs entail a third-party audit that assesses partner capabilities in:

- Process & Cost Optimization
- Service Desk & Customer Support
- Infrastructure & Application Migration Capabilities
- SLAs & Reporting
- Solution Design Capabilities
- Business Health & Management
- Security Management
- Customer Obsession
- Billing and Cost Management
- DevOps & Automation

This allows a thorough understanding of the customer experience that can be delivered by the MSP, as well as an opportunity for best practice sharing with the partner as part of the consultative audit process. Most partners regard the guidance received during their audit process as one of the greatest values of the program.

Solution Provider Program

The AWS Solution Provider Program is designed for systems integrators, managed service providers, value-added resellers, and public sector partners to resell AWS services to end customers as part of their differentiated solution. Under this program, Authorized Solution Providers manage, service, support, and bill Amazon Web Services (AWS) accounts for end customers.

The AWS Solution Provider Program provides Authorized Solution Providers a tiered discount structure based on partners' technical capabilities and success in driving new business, has flexible contracting options to meet the unique needs of end customers, and provides partners multiple AWS Support models that align to a partners' AWS practice.

Technology Partners

Technology partners deliver specific technologies to customers, using their deep knowledge of one or more specific areas of cloud technology, such as Artificial Intelligence or Machine Learning. Technology partners typically deploy proprietary technology ('Platform as a Service' or 'Software as a Service'), which is built on AWS infrastructure. These can include complex services such as business process management, corporate accountancy, and big data modeling; or simple services, such as the hosting of a static website.

Technology partners typically retain complete control of the AWS account, and their service users (who are – by extension – AWS customers) are simply consuming a service, not necessarily aware that their workloads are being handled by AWS. For this reason it is less common for AWS to directly interact with the customer of a Technology partner.

AWS Support and Professional Services

All AWS customers have access to the Basic level [AWS Support](#), with further tiers of support available called Developer, Business, and Enterprise, in ascending order. AWS support is typically provided directly to – and requested by – the customer, unless the customer has instructed otherwise. Our support levels are shown below, in **Error! Reference source not found.**

Table 1: AWS Support levels

	Basic	Developer	Business	Enterprise
Customer Service – 24x7x365	✓	✓	✓	✓
AWS Trusted Advisor (application)	7 core checks	7 core checks	Full checks	Full checks
Health status and Notifications	Access to Personal Health Dashboard	Access to Personal Health Dashboard	Access to Personal Health Dashboard & Health API	Access to Personal Health Dashboard & Health API
Support Forums	✓	✓	✓	✓
Documentation, Whitepapers, Best Practice Guides	✓	✓	✓	✓
Technical Support		Local business hours access to Cloud Support Associates via email	24x7 access to Cloud Support Engineers via email, chat & phone	24x7 access to Sr. Cloud Support Engineers via email, chat & phone

Enterprise Support

Enterprise Support Plans are suitable for customer environments managed by an APN Managed Services Provider or the customer themselves. The advantages of an Enterprise Support Plan are visualized in Figure 3 below.

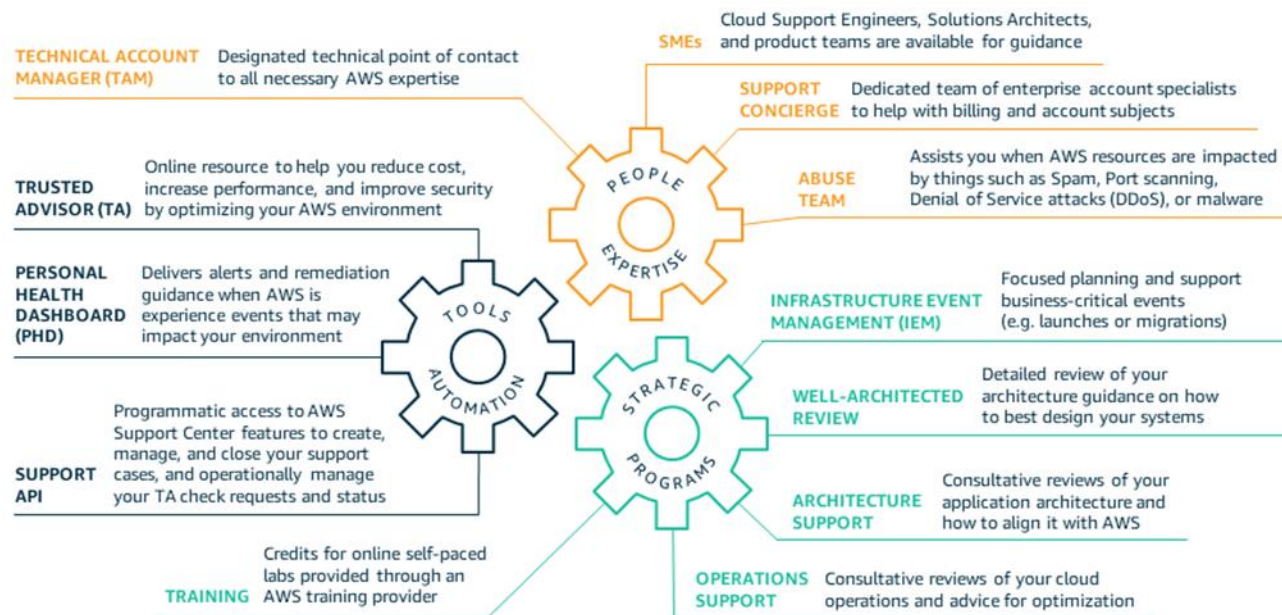


Figure 3: The various advantages of an Enterprise Support Plan

AWS Enterprise Support provides customers with a concierge-like service and 24x7 technical support from high-quality engineers, tools and technology to automatically manage health of a customer's environment, consultative architectural guidance delivered in the context of their applications and use-cases, and a designated Technical Account Manager (TAM) to coordinate access to proactive / preventative programs and AWS subject matter experts.

Technical Account Manager (TAM)

A TAM is an AWS employee who provides advocacy and strategic technical guidance to help plan and build solutions using best practices. They will drive discussions with senior customer leadership regarding incidents, tradeoffs and risk management. Where appropriate, they will work with the customer's APN partner to advise on solution design and troubleshooting.

A TAM is responsible for ensuring the health and efficiency of a customer's cloud environment. TAMs liaise regularly with internal AWS Solutions Architects to investigate how to make a customer's cloud environment cheaper and/or more effective, and will pass on these recommendations to customers, and the customer's nominated APN partner.

All of our TAMs are AWS Certified Solutions Architects (Associate level) at a minimum, and have an otherwise strong background in IT operations with varying specialisms in

Windows/Linux systems administration, DevOps, Big Data, and more. Put simply, the TAM is the center point of value to our Enterprise Support customers.

AWS Professional Services

The [AWS Professional Services](#) organization is a global team of experts who supplement the project team (of either the customer, APN partner or both) with specialized skills and experience to execute enterprise cloud computing initiatives. In this way, Professional Services fill capability gaps in the APN Partner and customer organizations. Professional Services work together with project teams to execute customers' cloud computing initiatives.

Combining the broad range of consulting services and software available from the APN with focused support from AWS Professional Services provides customers with the breadth of skills and resources needed to best realize the potential of the AWS Cloud.

AWS Professional Services are best used to achieve specific project goals and business outcomes, augmenting the capability of the customer's project team. AWS Professional Services are not intended to act as a consulting body in themselves, and work best by delivering specific expertise to existing project teams.

At AWS our Professional Services personnel are expected to maintain a deep, specialized knowledge of specific services and solutions delivered by AWS. This expertise allows project teams to overcome specific barriers in the cloud adoption lifecycle.

AWS Professional Services provides assistance through a collection of offerings which help customers achieve specific outcomes related to enterprise cloud adoption. They also deliver focused guidance through our global [specialty practices](#), which cover a variety of solutions, technologies, and industries. In addition to working alongside customers and APN Partners, they also share their experience through tech talk webinars, White Papers, and blog posts that are available to anyone.

So how do we work together?

We have examined the role of AWS, our APN Partners (focusing on Consulting Partners), and our customers. There are many [case studies](#) across the public and private sector showing how different customers adopted AWS using this partnership model. To put all these roles in context and explain how everybody works together, let's consider the generic project described in Figure 4 below.

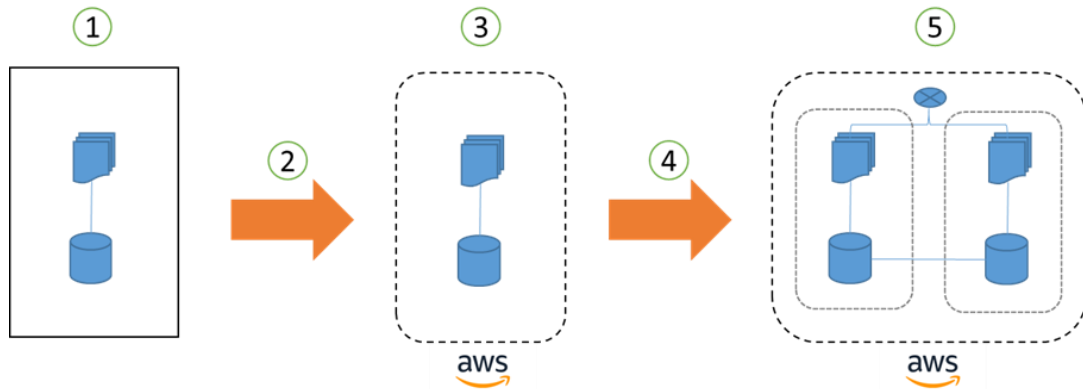


Figure 4: A five-step transition from an on-premises workload to initial re-hosting and then re-architecting in AWS.

Figure 4 shows five steps of a workload migration and re-architecting from an on-premises customer datacenter to an AWS Region:

1. The customer has a simple, development/test web application and database, let's assume it is a WordPress site.
2. A customer project team makes a copy of the website and database and moves them over a private network to an [AWS Region](#).
3. The website and supporting systems are re-hosted on an Amazon [Elastic Cloud Computing \(EC2\)](#) instance and the [AWS Relational Database Service \(RDS\)](#).
4. The project team is ready to move the site into production, so they re-architecture for the workload to take advantage of multiple [availability zones \(AZs\)](#), an elastic load balancer, and private network link between what will become the primary and back-up versions of the database for higher availability and disaster recovery.

5. The project team completes the re-architecture. With the savings they have from moving from on-premises to AWS, they decide to invest in additional software licenses in the AWS Marketplace. They also upgrade to a higher tier of support because the workload is now in production. Finally, they decide to turn over the day-to-day management of the infrastructure to an AWS Managed Services Provider.

With this generic cloud migration and re-architecture project, let's consider the various potential roles involved. The most important role is the customer and their Information Technology (IT) team in step one. To plan and conduct these projects, they have two options:

- they could deliver the project themselves; or
- they could engage an APN Consulting Partner to perform it for them.

Adopting AWS without an APN Partner

If they choose the former option, they could sign up for an AWS account and ask to speak with an Account Manager and a Solutions Architect. In this pre-sales role, the Account Manager and Solutions Architect could advise them on the type of services AWS offers that could meet the compute, network, database, security, and software licensing their workload needs. However, these staff are not permitted to perform workload migrations or other configuration steps for customers.

So, the customer could then send its IT staff to take AWS training. With practice, they could conduct the migration and re-architecture projects on their own. Some customers choose this path because they understand how simple and affordable it is to experiment on AWS through its on-demand services, thorough documentation, user communities, and free-tier services.

The important point to note here, is that it is the customer who chooses which aspect of their AWS deployment they use a partner for. This customer will later (in step 5 of our mock-up case study) transfer service management of their WordPress site and associated infrastructure, to an APN Managed Service Provider – despite choosing to architect the service themselves. This approach is entirely legitimate, and is preferred by this particular customer.

Adopting AWS with an APN Partner

For most customers, the value of AWS is how it removes the undifferentiated “heavy lifting” involved in managing hardware infrastructure, and how it enables them to focus

on the more “exciting” business of new features and services they will add to their workload. They would rather focus on their development projects and engaging their customers to understand their priorities rather than spending their time on cloud migration and managing the underlying infrastructure. These customers seek to outsource such projects to professionals who specialize in such tasks. This latter option begins to involve additional roles.

First, the customer engages an APN Consulting Partner of “standard” tier – let’s call them “Web Services Guru”. The partner offers Solutions Architects trained and certified by AWS, who have completed more than fifty cloud migrations, including twelve WordPress migrations. In step one, Web Services Guru comes up with an architectural design for the initial re-hosting. They even have the design peer reviewed by AWS Solutions Architects in a “well-architected review.”

In step two, Web Services Guru moves copies of the workload from the customer’s data center to a “[Virtual Private Cloud](#)” (VPC) in an [AWS Region](#). They help the customer set up their billing, even using AWS’s identity and access management (IAM) service to limit access to the billing data to approved customer finance employees. They also set up IAM roles to enable the customer’s IT staff to take over the management of the workload in AWS.

With the workload successfully running in development and test mode in AWS, the project team turns its efforts to re-architecting for production. The architecture includes configuring the workload to run in multiple Availability Zones connected to an [Elastic Load Balancer](#) to direct traffic effectively. If for any reason the primary site becomes unavailable (for example, fire, loss of power), the traffic will be automatically redirected by the Elastic Load Balancer to the second site.

To ensure the company has the latest version of WordPress, Web Services Guru signs up for an [AWS Marketplace](#) subscription of the license. Web Services Guru also signs up for a subscription to a cost management application in AWS Marketplace. These software licenses were created by two different APN Technology Partners who specialize in delivery software as a service. Web Services Guru also helps the customer upgrade to AWS Enterprise Support (see Section 0 – Enterprise Support). With this support plan, the customer has access to an AWS Technical Account Manager and faster response times for support tickets.

Involving AWS Professional Services

One risk in the project that Web Services Guru might have identified, was that it lacked experience turning over the management of a workload to an AWS Managed Services

Provider. In all of Web Services Guru's cloud migration projects, the customers' IT staff had continued to manage their own workload. Because of this technical risk, Web Services Guru acknowledged it to the customer during its proposal, but also said it would purchase an engagement from [AWS Professional Services](#) to fill this capability gap.

The customer agreed because Web Services Guru was investing on its own for the professional services engagement and said they would not charge the customer for any re-work, if needed, at the end. AWS Professional Services assigned one of its Solutions Architects to Web Services Guru to help them design a set of IAM roles and policies that would enable a managed services provider to configure a set of approved services relevant to the WordPress site. The policies would require the managed services provider to get a multi-factor authentication (MFA) token from the customer any time they tried to start up AWS services that were not part of the design configuration or any time they attempted to make a security-relevant change to the workload.

Finally, with the migration and re-architecture projects complete, Web Services Guru executed one final configuration change to the IAM roles and policies. Using the knowledge and artifacts gained from their professional services engagement with AWS, they implemented new IAM roles and revised policies. The customer's finance team still had access to the AWS billing information, but now they also had access to the cost management tool.

A key take-away point here is that AWS' in-house Professional Services were able to augment the APN Consulting Partner's capability. AWS Professional Services are not intended to act as a consulting body in themselves, and should only be aligned to specific projects to achieve specific goals.

The customer's chosen APN Consulting Partner was "Standard" tier, and so was likely to be a smaller organization, with some areas of more limited capability – in this case, migration. Because the customer contracts directly with the APN Consulting Partner, and the APN Consulting Partner contracts directly with AWS, all parties were able to operate flexibly and align new resource where needed with minimal delay or friction.

Handing Over to the APN Managed Service Provider

Finally, the customer's chosen APN Managed Services Provider received roles and policies that would allow them to maintain the current environment. Two of the customer's IT staff received privileged roles that would allow them to manage the finance team's access and that of the Managed Service Provider.

Conclusion

Many AWS customers work with our diverse, [global network of APN Partners](#) to help them get the best out of AWS cloud technologies. We do this because our APN Partners are the best placed to maintain close relationships with our customers, and can be most in-tune with their specific needs. Conversely, AWS focuses on maintaining and constantly improving the [services](#) and [infrastructure](#) of the [AWS platform itself](#). Customers control their AWS account and may outsource whatever permissions they choose, to APN Partners or indeed anybody else. Customers are responsible for [security](#) within their cloud environments, whereas AWS is responsible for the security of the cloud infrastructure as a whole.

AWS, our APN Partners, and our customers work together in a project team to deliver services to customers.

APN Partners are differentiated in three dimensions: [type](#), tier (for [technology & consulting](#)), and [specialization](#).

“Type” refers to whether they are a Consulting partner, providing expertise and management to customer organizations who want to migrate or expand their IT estate to the cloud; or a Technology partner who sells a proprietary application or service built on the AWS platform. The partners are also tiered according to their level of experience in delivering cloud projects. Further “specializations” are available, which are defined by APN Partner’s enrollment in the relevant AWS Partner Program; such as becoming a “Solution Provider” and/or a “Managed Service Provider”.

AWS provides account and technical [support](#) to respond to specific problems and keep customers abreast of new innovations and opportunities. AWS Professional Services can be purchased by the customer’s APN Partner or the customer themselves, to meet a specific project goal or capability gap in their project team.

Ultimately, customers may choose which stage of their cloud adoption project to involve an APN Partner in, and no two customers are the same. Our partnership model adheres to the same philosophy of as our cloud services, i.e. that of decoupling, flexibility, and choice for customers.

Glossary of Terms

Term	Explanation
Account Manager (AM) / Account Team	The Account Manager is a customer's point of contact within AWS.
Amazon Partner Network (APN)	A community of non-AWS organizations, who are recognized by AWS to deliver solutions and/or consulting services to AWS end-customers
APN Consulting Partner	APN Consulting Partners are one of the two main "types" of partner (the other type being Technology Partner). APN Consulting Partners structure their work into projects or engagements with fees for service.
APN Partner	An organization which is part of the "Amazon Partner Network" (APN) and thereby recognized by AWS to deliver services or products to AWS end-customers. APN Partners are differentiated in three dimensions: type , tier (for technology & consulting), and specialization .
APN Partner tier	AWS recognizes the achievements and competency of APN Partners through "Partner Tiers". Advancing to higher tiers provides specific benefits to APN Partners, including funding for market development, proofs of concept, and eligibility to enroll in certain Partner Programs.
APN Partner Type	Broadly, there are two "types" of APN Partner: Consulting Partners and Technology Partners .
APN Technology Partner	APN Technology Partners typically build a service using AWS hardware, software, or both; and then sell the service they have built (for example, a mobile application).

Term	Explanation
Availability Zone	<p>Availability Zones are physical areas, within a Region, which contain one or more data centers.</p> <p>These Availability Zones offer customers the ability to operate production applications and databases that are more highly available, fault tolerant, and scalable than would be possible with a single data center.</p>
AWS Partner Program / Specialization	<p>A Partner Program recognizes the experience of an APN Partner in a specific area. There are a wide variety of partner programs available to both Consulting and Technology Partners.</p> <p>APN Partners must meet strict criteria before being enrolled in partner programs. Partner programs enable partners to be searched for by those criteria on the AWS find a partner webpage.</p> <p>If an APN Partner is enrolled on one of these programs, it is referred to as a “Specialization” of that APN Partner.</p>
Competency Program	<p>Competency programs are a set of AWS Partner Programs, which signify the partner’s competency in delivering AWS technologies for a certain industry, solution, or workload.</p>
Managed Service	<p>A Managed Service allows an end customer to outsource part or all of their responsibility for managing their cloud infrastructure to an APN Consulting Partner.</p>
Partner Development Manager (PDM)	<p>The Partner Development Manager (PDM) is an APN Partner’s point of contact within AWS. PDMs help manage the commercial relationship between AWS and the APN Partner.</p>
Region	<p>A Region is a physical area in the world with two or more Availability Zones. Each Availability Zone consists of one or more data centers, which have redundant power sources.</p>
Solutions Architect	<p>A solutions architect is a highly qualified technical professional who provides prescriptive guidance across network, operating systems, storage, and a range of other technical considerations. Solutions Architects are available via AWS Professional Services.</p>

Term	Explanation
Support Plans	Support Plans are an agreed level of technical support provided to customer; and are purchased by a customer. Comparisons between different support plans can be found here: https://aws.amazon.com/premiumsupport/plans/ .
Technical Account Manager (TAM)	A highly-qualified, technical point of contact for AWS customers who have purchased an Enterprise Support Plan.

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