Fact sheet: Working constructively with the UK CMA to support customer choice and cloud competition

Introduction

Microsoft has already taken steps globally to remove barriers to switching cloud providers, investing heavily in multicloud technologies. For example, we have continued to invest in Azure Arc to manage resources across different clouds through a single, consistent control plane. Recent improvements expand customer flexibility with new Arc-enabled Kubernetes, GCP support, stronger identity and security features, simpler operations, and tighter migration and cost-planning tooling. Microsoft is also investing heavily in reducing friction across cloud deployments by harnessing the power of AI to enable customers to more easily manage and move workloads using natural language. The Azure MCP Server is one such recent example, exposing Azure services as governed, AI-callable tools—streamlining deployments, enabling multicloud scenarios, and leveraging AI to simplify how customers interact with cloud infrastructure. Beyond technology changes, we have also abolished egress fees for customers moving their data to another cloud provider or to on-premises infrastructure. Building on this approach, and in response to the CMA's concerns, Microsoft will make the following additional changes for UK customers migrating from UK datacenters, which will be incorporated into the formal contract structure within two months.

Free switching using the Microsoft Global Network (MGN)

While Microsoft has abolished egress fees globally for customers switching clouds, for UK customers, we will extend this further. Free egress will apply not only to transfers using standard ISP egress, but also to transfers using MGN from UK datacenters.

Extended switching period

We recognize that largescale or complex cloud migrations often require more time than a standard migration window allows. To address this, Microsoft already as a matter of course grants customers extensions for longer migrations. Microsoft will proactively extend the period during which UK customers may complete a free egress switch from UK datacenters from 60 days to **180 days** without the need to ask for an extension.

Broader definition of a qualifying switch

For UK customers, Microsoft will expand the definition of a qualifying "switch" so that it covers not only the complete exit from Azure, but also the complete exit from an individual Azure service. This broader definition recognizes that customers may choose to adopt multi-cloud strategies incrementally, and it ensures that partial but meaningful switching decisions receive the same subsidized free egress.

At cost egress for multicloud on MGN

Microsoft already caps egress fees at cost for multicloud scenarios using standard ISP egress. Going forward, Microsoft will allow **at cost egress on the Microsoft Global Network (MGN)** from UK datacenters for multicloud use cases. This further reduces cost-related frictions for customers that choose to operate across multiple cloud environments. Microsoft will leverage the same customer notification process that exists for the current at cost ISP egress option.

Strengthening Interoperability Through a Dedicated Process

In parallel, Microsoft is committed to ensuring that Azure customers and developers can deploy interoperable solutions effectively. Today, Microsoft supports customers through a combination of dedicated professionals—such as Cloud Solution Architects, Customer Success Account Managers, and product specialists—as well as extensive self-service documentation, community resources, and engagement through our MVP network.

In addition, Microsoft will establish a new, dedicated interoperability request mechanism for competing cloud providers. This will be fully set up within 6 months.

This new mechanism is modelled on the interoperability request framework Microsoft has implemented for Windows under the EU Digital Markets Act. It will provide a transparent, structured, and accessible way for cloud providers to raise interoperability requests, including any request for new interconnect options, and for Microsoft to assess and respond to them in a consistent manner. The process will be designed to give developers and providers clarity on how requests are submitted, evaluated, and addressed. This approach aligns with the CMA's emphasis on effective interoperability.

Finally, Microsoft will implement in the UK any standards it adopts under the EU Data Act. The EU Data Act establishes a formal repository for standards intended to drive cloud interoperability.[1] Once a standard is published in the repository and referenced in the Official Journal under the EU Data Act, Microsoft will enable access to these for customers in the UK in the same manner that Microsoft would implement them in Azure in the EU.

Looking forward

We look forward to continuing our constructive dialogue with the CMA in a participative and future-looking way, focused on real world market dynamics and data, and to supporting UK customers as they build, migrate, and innovate in the cloud—on Azure and beyond. It is in Microsoft's DNA to put customers first, and we appreciate that the CMA will seek additional input from UK customers. The cloud is a very competitive and

dynamic market and this type of ongoing dialogue will help ensure it continues to meet UK customer needs and enable customer choice.