

Cloud Migration and Modernization in the Middle East and Africa: Imperative to building a resilient organization on your terms

Whitepaper

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Executive Summary

The cloud conversation in the Middle East and Africa region has moved from aversion to adoption quite rapidly in last two to three years. The region, which is known for in-house datacenters and on-premises implementations, is welcoming cloud adoption and providing a positive response to the vendor and partner ecosystem. Cloud is increasingly becoming a foundational platform for digital transformation, with more and more digital initiatives recommending cloud as a de facto IT platform for infrastructure, data, or applications. The rapid rise in application transformation initiatives, wherein cloud-native apps are being developed more than monolithic, traditional applications, is a testimony of the changing times.

More than a technological change, digital transformation is a cultural change for an organization regardless of its size, nature of business, and industry. Digital transformation touches not only the IT department but also the business units that interact with customers, suppliers, and government authorities. A broad and deep view of digital transformation, keeping the customer at the center, and workflows as the pathways that connect the customer with the organization, can help the leaders of an organization to leverage the potential of its digital initiatives. Even though public cloud may not be available or accepted in every industry and organization, adopters can coexist with the traditional environment and serve common goals related to customer satisfaction, organizational sustainability, financial performance, and employee happiness. Therefore, it is imperative for leaders to look at cloud with a long-term strategy and address hindrances in adoption.

Business resilience, which ensures sustained organizational growth even during uncertain times, is about building capabilities to respond rapidly to changes and minimize unplanned disruptions. Resilience is incomplete without studying the weak links, being critically aware of them, and creating a plan to address them, because today's smooth processes can become tomorrow's bottlenecks.

IDC looked at digital transformation from the point of view of IT and lines of businesses and we realized that every department has a distinct role to play. A fragmented, siloed approach towards enterprise transformation can provide an organization with short-term success but cannot assure sustained success and growth. On the other hand, a collaborative approach is tedious, time-consuming, and sometimes even slow, but is a proven path to build a resilient organization.

Emerging technologies such as, artificial intelligence (AI), Machine Learning, Robotic Process Automation (RPA), and edge computing are disrupting the traditional methodologies used to build a product or to render a service. Like AI, cloud is also shifting the paradigm and providing developers and technical experts with more options to perform their tasks. Infrastructure modernization initiatives are influencing the application landscape and triggering disruption across the sectors.

This white paper highlights key trends that are shaping digital transformation in the Middle East and Africa region and sheds light on the role of cloud in helping organizations achieve the business goals that are at the root of their digital transformation initiatives.

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State of Digital Transformation in the Middle East and Africa

IDC defines digital transformation as the act of transforming an organization into one that can scale all or part of its business and innovate at a pace that is in order of magnitude greater than traditional businesses. Digital organizations are driven by a customer-centric and empowered workforce that embraces risk taking as they seek to continuously innovate. Technology and data are lifeblood, fueling more efficient operations, new revenue streams, and customer loyalty.

According to IDC, products, and services from digitally transformed enterprises will drive more than 50% of the worldwide gross domestic product by 2023, making the ability to rapidly innovate a core competitive requirement. Around 67% of top global 2000 companies will be high-performance, large-scale producers of software-powered digital innovations by 2025. Digital transformation is enabling innovation across various industries. According to a recent IDC survey, 65% of organizations in the Middle East and Africa region indicated that they are advancing their digital transformation initiatives either by a year or two to meet the rapidly evolving needs of their business users. Half of the organizations are revisiting their strategies to work with their technology partners. They are looking at revenue sharing models, co-creation, co-innovation models, and building long-term partnerships.

Accelerated digital transformation is also providing the much-needed support to employees working from remote locations. Some 39% of organizations in the Middle East and Africa are creating plans to enable a large share of their employees to work remotely.

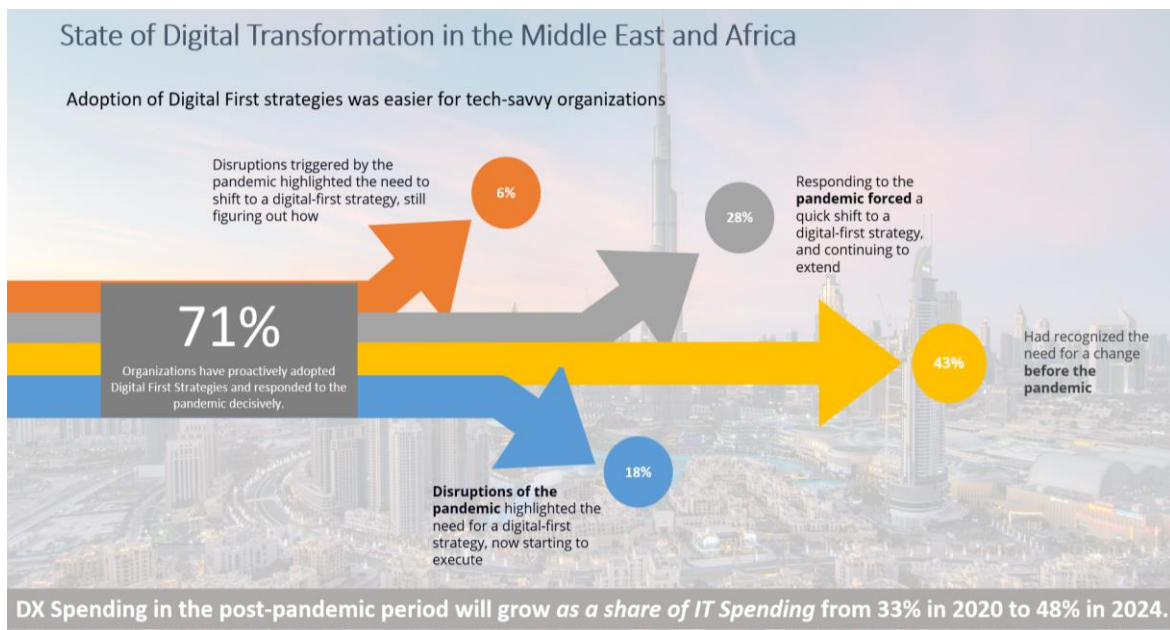


Figure 1: State of Digital Transformation in the Middle East and Africa

Source 1: IDC CIO DX Survey Jan 2022; Middle East and Africa, N=483; 100+ employees only.

Source 2: IDC DX Spending Guide Jun 2021

Digital Transformation: A defining journey in many ways.

The rising growth in transformational initiatives in the Middle East and Africa goes beyond the acceleration of complex, multi-year milestone and annuity-based technology projects and is triggering fundamental changes in the partnership models.

Traditional technology partners which used to resell technology products and avail 'incremental' services are under pressure to transform themselves and add significant value at every stage of their client interactions. CIOs are increasingly expecting their partners to help them innovate. IDC's survey conducted during December 2021 and January 2022 reveals that 34% of CIOs look at their technology partners and vendors' advice and support to monetize the IP's they have created when they had undertaken the digital transformation projects.

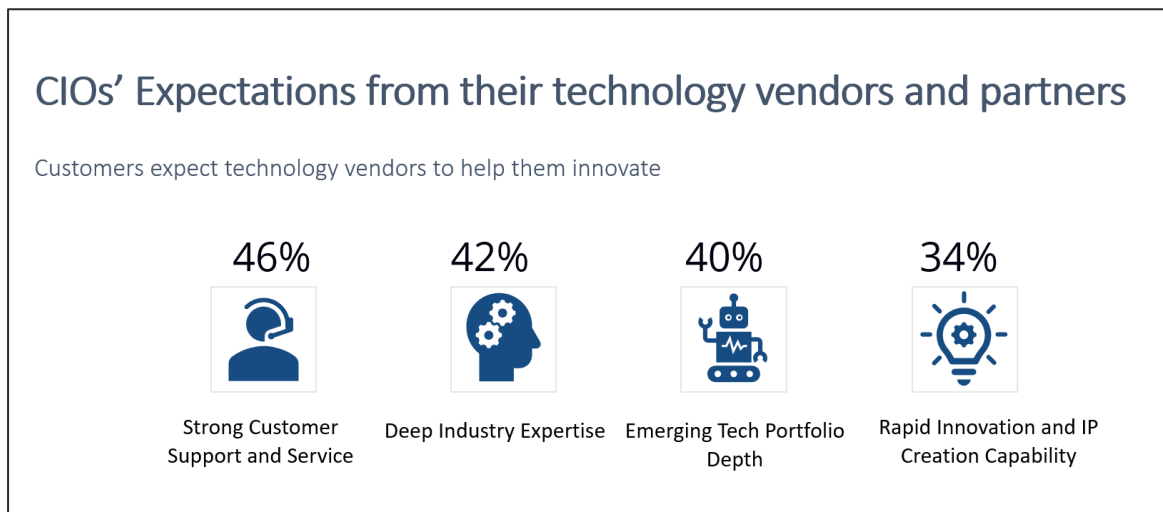


Figure 2: CIOs expectations from the technology vendors and partners in the Middle East and Africa

Source: IDC CIO DX Survey Jan 2022; Middle East and Africa, N=483; 100+ employees only.

CIOs' Technology Priorities

Technology Priorities in 2022

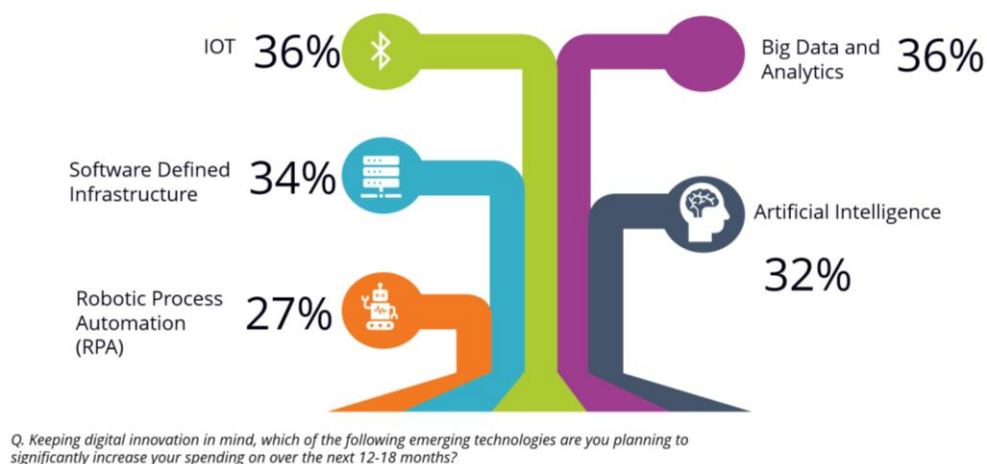


Figure 3: CIOs technology priorities in the Middle East and Africa

Source: IDC MEA Innovation Survey 2022; N=467; 100+ employees only.

CIOs' technology priorities are rapidly changing due to the rising demand from businesses to respond to the constantly evolving business scenarios. Since uncertainty has become a new norm, businesses expect technology to help them calibrate their responses as per the situation at hand. Industries that rely on a consumer footfall were impacted severely due to COVID-19. Retail, transportation, hospitality and tourism industries in the Middle East and Africa region realized that unless they look at creating a scalable, flexible, and modular technology backbone their relevance will be under question. Competition is not only from their industry peers, but it is also seen to be rising from factors that are beyond their control. Pandemic being one of them.

To address this need, organizations in the Middle East and Africa are seen to be prioritizing the adoption of emerging technologies such as Big Data and Analytics, IoT, AI, and RPA in the last few months. IDC expects the trend to continue for at least 12 to 18 months, with more organizations adopting solutions with AI/ML embedded into them. Restricted mobility in 2020 and the first half of 2021 has motivated asset-intensive organizations to explore IoT-based use-cases. Cloud seems to have a multiplier effect on the adoption of emerging technologies such as AI, RPA, and IoT in the region. Since cloud offers advanced capabilities, 39% of CIOs in the Middle East and Africa are considering cloud mainly because these functionalities are not available in the traditional on-premises deployments.

According to IDC's IoT research, the deployment of IoT use-cases such as manufacturing operations, production asset management, smart home, smart grid, fleet management, public safety and emergency response, and other key use cases is rising on public cloud at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 27.1% as against a 17.4% on-premises CAGR between 2020 and 2025.

Evolution of A Hybrid / Multicloud Ecosystem in the Middle East and Africa

An ecosystem of hybrid multi-cloud is evolving in the Middle East and Africa region where multiple deployment options such as private cloud and public cloud are expected to coexist with traditional on-premises non-cloud deployment. IDC's survey of CIOs reveal that they are inclined towards creating an IT estate that is scalable, elastic, flexible and modular in nature. According to the survey, 41% of CIOs are planning to migrate their workloads either on a public cloud or a private cloud (hybrid approach). Whereas 48% prefer private cloud to migrate their workloads. This could be due to their organizational policies or data regulations they have in their industries that restrict them from using public cloud. We are also observing adoption of public cloud with 9% of CIOs preferring mostly public cloud.

Organization's approach towards Cloud for the next 12 -18 months

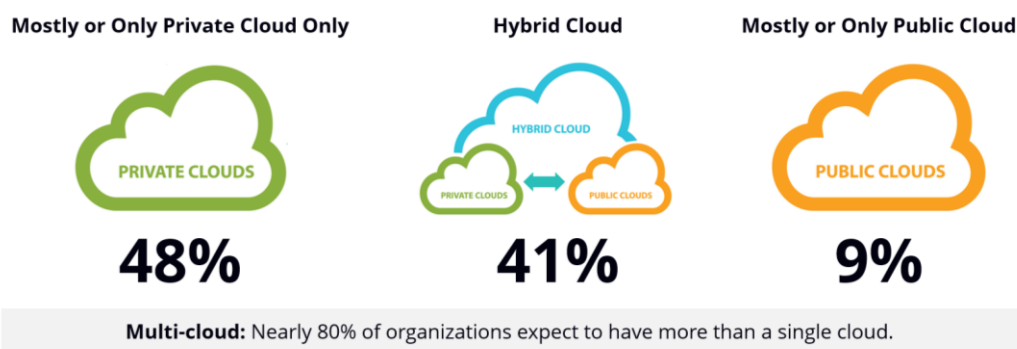


Figure 4: Evolution of Hybrid Multi-cloud Ecosystem in the Middle East and Africa

Source: IDC MEA Cloud Survey 2021; N=731; 100+ employees only.

Drivers of a Hybrid Cloud Ecosystem

CIOs in the Middle East and Africa region are exploring various deployments options for their applications as well as infrastructure landscape, and public cloud happens to be one of them.

In addition to the cost benefits that cloud offers and flexibility to operate digital commerce using cloud, increasing pressure from the lines of businesses to respond to their customer needs in an agile manner (51% of CIOs say this) is one of the top drivers for CIOs to accelerate their cloud journey. Apart from providing agile responses, availability of cloud-friendly regulations in the CIOs' industries and in their countries are also seen to be driving cloud adoption according to 39% of CIOs that IDC surveyed in 2021. While countries such as UAE and Qatar don't have a cloud regulation yet, they have Data Residency laws and cloud first policies. Not all countries have released a countrywide cloud policy, most have issued guidelines to help organizations adopt the right deployment option of cloud.

Agility appears to be the biggest driver of cloud adoption for more than 60% of organizations in the region from the below chart that highlights the drivers of a hybrid cloud ecosystem across the Middle East and Africa region. Almost 51% of organizations are adopting cloud mainly because they find specific functionalities that are in line with their innovation agenda only on cloud. In addition to looking for specific functionalities, CIOs also need to enable a hybrid workforce. Hybrid cloud is seen to be helping organizations drive their

innovation agendas using Emerging Technologies (43%). According to our survey, 30% of the IT leaders are looking at cloud-based productivity solutions, platforms, and remote connectivity solutions to accelerate the delivery of the customer service or citizen service.

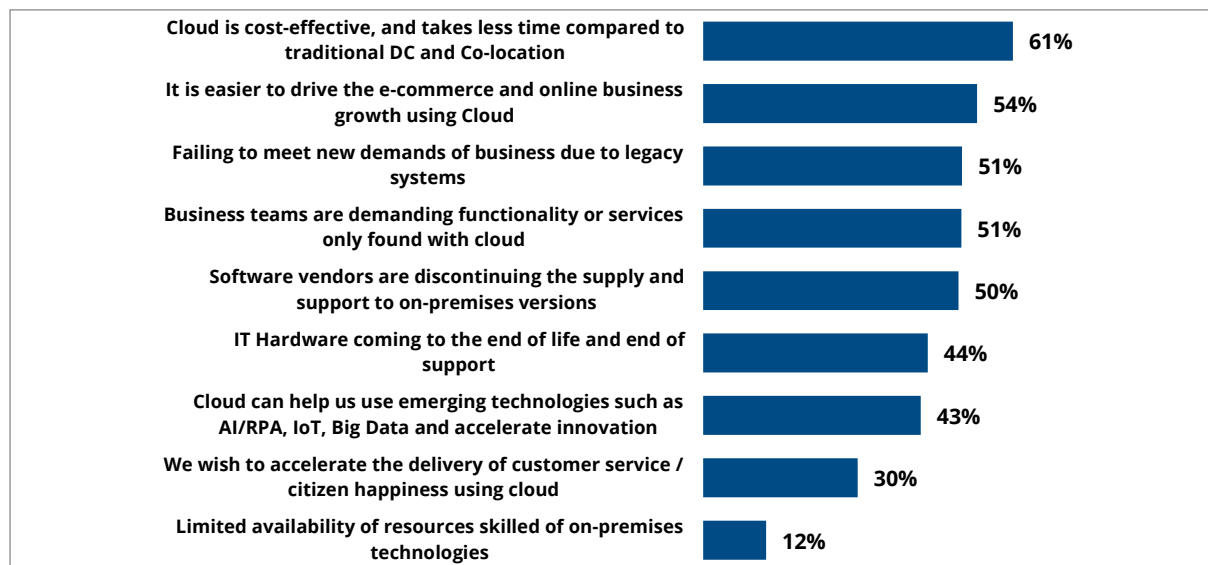


Figure 5: Chart: Drivers of Cloud Adoption in the Middle East and Africa

Source: IDC MEA Cloud Survey 2022; N=714; 100+ employees only.

One in every two organizations in the region is also seen to be taking up a cloud journey since technology vendors are prioritizing the cloud-based deployment of their solutions over non-cloud options, according to this survey.

Challenges with Hybrid / Multi-cloud Strategy

While a hybrid cloud ecosystem is evolving and organizations are increasingly adopting cloud, it is also creating a new set of challenges for the CIOs.

- Concerns regarding moving technical liabilities from on-premises to cloud:** Organizations have been using technologies for quite a few years even before cloud-based deployment options arrived. Almost 60% of organizations are not sure about the movement of workloads to cloud. They think that with hybrid cloud adoption, their technical liabilities will also move to cloud, and they may not receive substantial benefits of adopting cloud.
- Limited visibility of cloud cost and business case:** More than 50% of CIOs highlighted that while they have embarked on their hybrid cloud journeys, they get overwhelmed with the expectations of cloud cost optimization and ROI calculations. It is relatively hard for them to identify cost benefits and justify a business case for future expansion of cloud adoption. This means that migration of complex workloads can sometimes hit a commercial obstacle.
- Lack of Management Support:** Leadership's patronage to take an accelerated cloud journey is critically important since cloud adoption will trigger significant cultural changes. Keeping differences aside and aligning Lines of Businesses with IT towards the organization's vision to adopt cloud demands sustained support from top leadership, which 48% organizations seem to be struggling to receive.

- Lack of Agile Infrastructure:** While organizations may decide to take up SaaS or PaaS workloads, the underlying infrastructure plays a foundational role. Infrastructure which includes compute, network, storage, End User devices and IoT devices needs to be compatible. The survey reveals that 43% of organizations are facing this challenge and it is hindering their cloud journey.

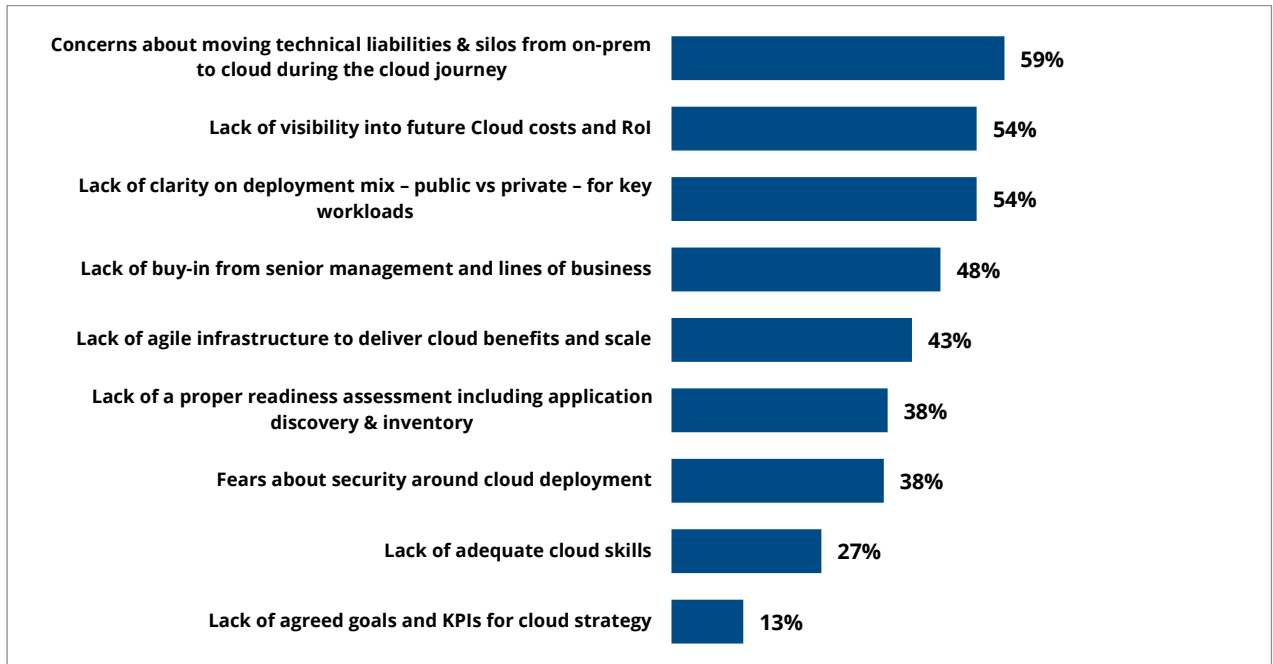


Figure 6: Chart: Challenges with Hybrid Cloud Strategy in the Middle East and Africa

Source: IDC Cloud Survey January 2022 MEA. N =601. 100+ Employees Only

- Information Security:** Many organizations have global compliances such as General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), ISO 27K and others. They also have customer-specific, country-specific, and industry-specific compliances. The compliance and cyber security factors further become overwhelming with vendor's technologies that demand certain compliances. Almost 38% of CIOs informed IDC that while hybrid multi-cloud offers great benefits it is also creating complexity in their security landscape.
- Limited availability of skilled resources:** With 27% of organizations, limited availability of cloud skills is a key concern in the Middle East and Africa, especially in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and a few African countries. UAE and South Africa are not far behind when it comes to limited availability of cloud architects, cloud engineers or certified developers.

Cloud Workload Migration trends

The accelerated cloud journey had started with non-critical workloads such as storage, compute, DR back-up and archive, however the initial experience of cloud has motivated organizations to continue their migration journey. The chart below highlights the trends IDC is observing about migrating organizational workloads to cloud.

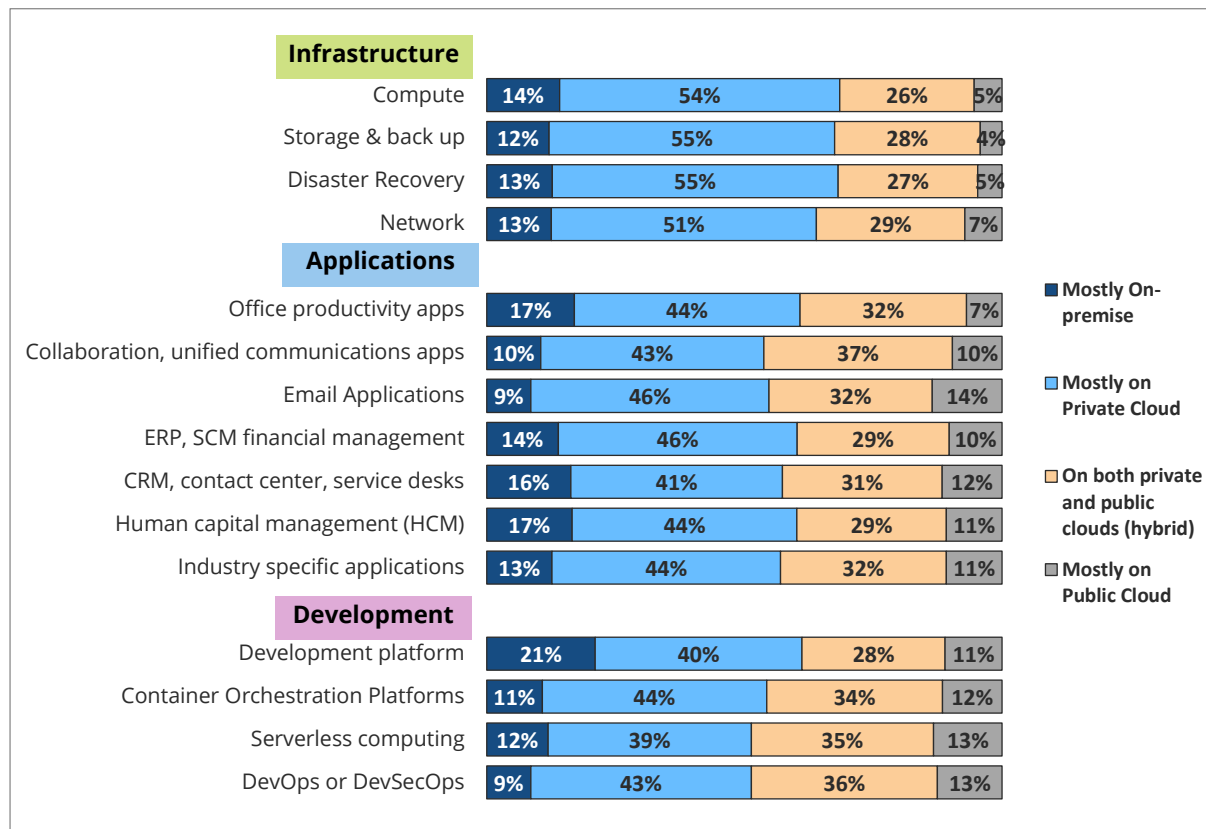


Figure 7: Chart: Workload migration to cloud in the Middle East and Africa

Source: IDC MEA Cloud Survey 2021; N=731; 100+ employees only.

- Infrastructure: Compute, Disaster Recovery (DR), Backup, Storage.** IDC's survey reveals that 86% of organizations are likely to explore cloud for infrastructure workloads such as compute capabilities on cloud. Other workloads such Disaster Recovery, Storage, and backup are also expected to find a place in a cloud environment.
- Applications:** Some 83% of CIOs have informed IDC that they would like to explore cloud for office productivity applications, and 90% believe that they will use cloud for collaboration and unified communications. Enterprise applications such as ERP, CRM, supply chain management, and human capital management and a few engineering applications such as production planning applications and CAD/CAM applications have already started finding a place either on public cloud or private cloud, with more than 86% of CIOs looking at cloud-based software-as-a-service option for enterprise applications.
- Development Platforms:** Traditionally, organizations used to prefer on-premises development platforms; however, rising capabilities such as microservices and DevOps, coupled with AI and analytics that cloud offers, are compelling 79% of organizations to migrate these workloads to cloud or consider new development platforms that are cloud-based.

How cloud drives innovation and helps build a resilient organization

With the accelerated cloud adoption that IDC has observed in the last few years and more so in the last couple of years, it seems that cloud is rapidly becoming the de facto infrastructure platform. It has become inevitable for organizations in the Middle East and Africa region to explore cloud at least from a business continuity point of view, if not for running its day-to-day operations.

IDC's research reveals that cloud is increasingly becoming a springboard for innovation, with organizations looking at cloud to accelerate their digital initiatives and bring in much needed resiliency. The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed the cloud conversation from *aversion to adoption* in less than a year, and many organizations have adopted cloud mainly to ensure business continuity during uncertain times. Apart from establishing business continuity, organizations in the key countries in the Middle East and Africa region, such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and South Africa, are leveraging cloud to accelerate their time to market and respond to rapidly evolving customer needs.

While cloud adoption is broadly at the discovery, evaluation, and pilot stage, it is gradually getting mature, with more complex workloads such as business-critical applications finding their place on the cloud. The IT landscape is evolving with more workloads finding a place either on a private cloud or on a public cloud in the Middle East and Africa region. IDC predicts that 80% organizations will have more than one cloud and majority of them will plan to increase the number of cloud deployments in next 12 to 18 months.

Cloud: The New Springboard for Innovation:

An IDC study reveals that 49% of CIOs in the Middle East, and Africa consider cloud as foundational for digital transformation and believe it will help them drive innovation. Cloud is seeing accelerated adoption broadly due to the market forces where customers, suppliers, and technology vendors are pushing organizations to innovate and innovate faster.

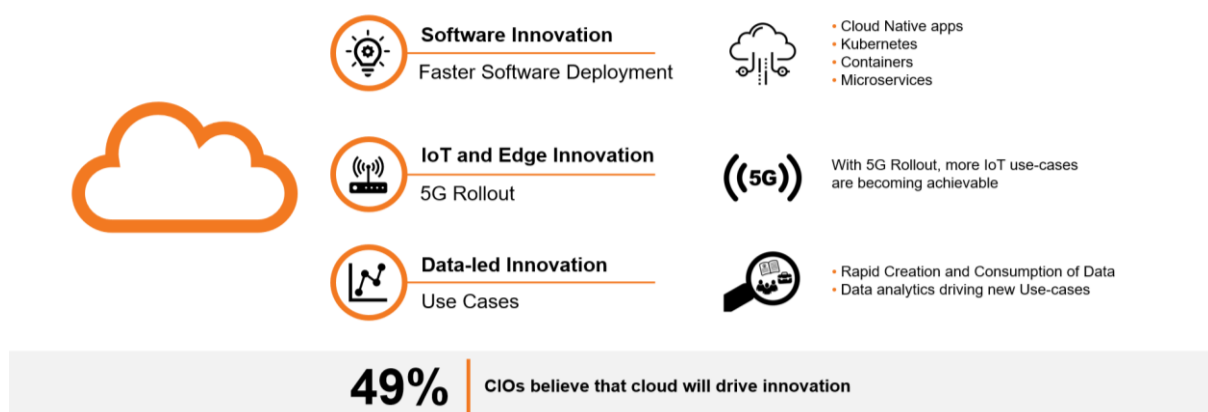


Figure 8: Cloud, the new springboard for Innovation

Source: IDC CIO Survey January 2021. META. N = 841. 100+ Employees only.

Software-led innovation with cloud being its foundational platform

Cloud adoption is expected to accelerate the use of agile software development tools and technologies. Technologies such as Kubernetes, Docker and platforms that help organizations develop using microservices and containers are expected to rapidly shift the application landscape from monolithic to cloud native. Below diagram highlights the trend of cloud-native technologies and agile methodologies that is driving software-led innovation.

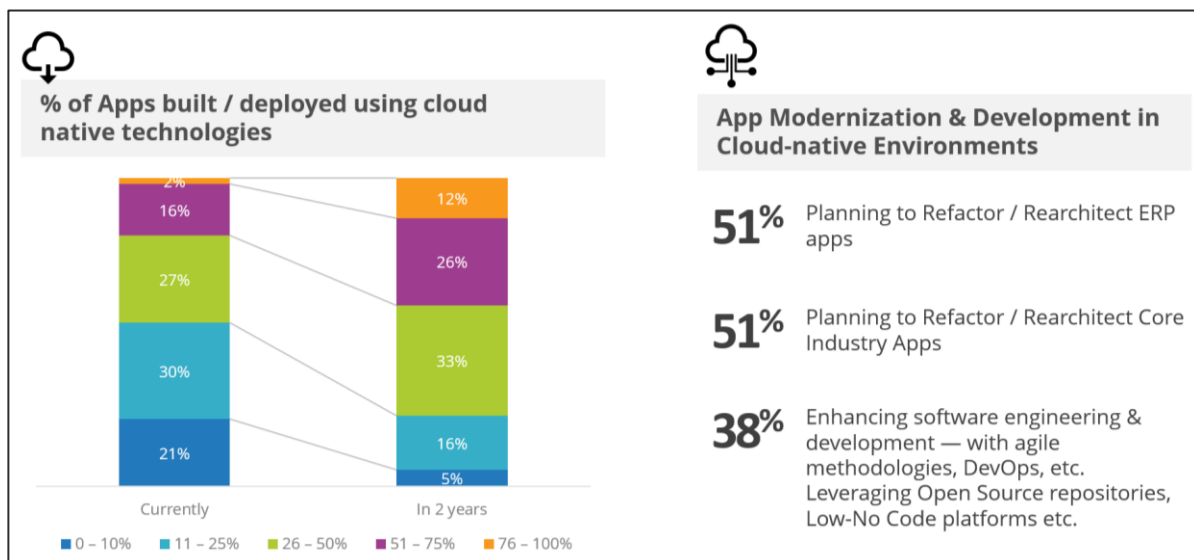


Figure 9: Software-led innovation and adoption of cloud-native application development using cloud

Source1: IDC Innovation Survey January 2022. MEA. N = 472. 100+ Employees only.

Source2: IDC Cloud Survey January 2022 MEA N =601. 100+ Employees Only

IDC's latest research further reveals that organizations in the Middle East and Africa region are relying upon cloud-native technologies for app modernization. The above chart demonstrates the accelerated growth from 16% to 26% within 2 years from 2022 in those organizations that have 51% to 75% of their applications developed using cloud-native technologies.

Accelerated Application Modernization Using cloud:

Initiatives to modernize applications, such as rearchitecting (revisiting the existing enterprise architecture), 'refactoring' (making component-level changes in the IT architecture and adding cloud-native apps), or 'replacing' legacy monolithic applications with cloud-native apps are seeing a surge in their adoption in the Middle East and Africa region.

When it comes to "Refactoring", or "Rearchitecting" 51% of CIOs in the Middle East and Africa region are planning to make component level changes to their IT architecture or refactor their Enterprise applications such as ERP. Similarly for Core Industry Apps, 51% CIOs are planning to either "Rearchitect" or "Refactor" their core industry applications. It is essential to ensure their architecture supports cloud-native application development and accommodates them in their IT landscape.

Effective Data Governance is vital for Business Resilience

While Digital Transformation using cloud is expected to provide agility and build a resilient organization, the digital initiatives are incomplete without a carefully thought-out data management strategy.

Cloud adoption is also seen to be driven by Data Management and Data Governance strategies of the organizations in the Middle East and Africa region. IDC's survey reveals that 53% of organizations are struggling with siloed data. This means, data is fragmented across the organization, and they face unification issues. With the pre-packaged reports and dashboards that cloud offers, it becomes easier for IT and lines of business leaders to track the progress and get the status update. However, the lack of quality data comes under light as they try to centralize data analysis. Cloud adoption to a large extent, does that.

76% Organizations in the Middle East and Africa have moderate to limited data lineage visibility.

Source: IDC Innovation Survey, January 2022. N = 467. 100+ Employees only.

IDC's survey of CIOs conducted during January 2022 reveals that 76% of CIOs in the Middle East and Africa region have limited to moderate visibility of the data-lineage. This means that they are not sure about who has touched the data and how many changes it has undergone before the data landed on their desks.

Streamlined Data Migration and Data Governance is a priority for 43% of organizations in the Middle East and Africa region. CIOs of a few leading organizations across various African countries informed IDC during our interactions that cloud adoption might help them streamline data management and data governance. IDC's survey further reveals that 61% of organizations in the Middle East and Africa region are planning to invest in cloud and associated cloud infrastructure as part of their technology investment plans to ensure organization-wide data management.

The below chart highlights the data migration initiatives that are increasingly taken upon cloud to avoid challenges such as siloes and limited data lineage. Insights about the data migration to cloud highlight that organizations are now willing to explore data that they initially planned to keep within their premises.

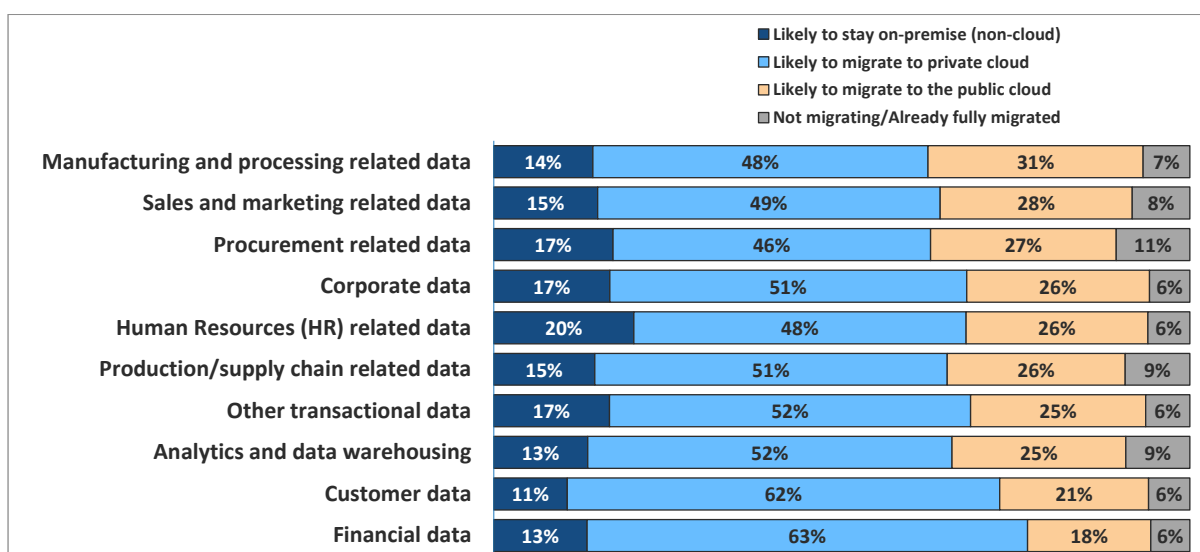


Figure 10: Data Migration to cloud

Source: IDC Cloud Survey Middle East and Africa N = 695. January 2021

Data that provides invaluable insights about the organization's transactions, business processes, customer information and data about financials of a company are expected to find their place either on public cloud or private cloud. Our survey of organizations in the Middle East and Africa region highlights that compared to 2020, organizations are inclined to migrate their data to cloud. The deployment option can vary depending upon an organization's business and its data privacy policy. During our interviews with a few leading organizations across various industries, the IDC research team realized that organizations from regulated industries are more likely to prefer private cloud and in case of private non-regulated industries, organizations are more likely to prefer a combination public cloud and private cloud.

IDC's study reveals interesting trends about the effective use of compute, storage, and analytics that cloud offers to the organizations that are willing to explore scalability of cloud's compute and storage and the out of the box analytics capabilities that often eliminate the need for a separate reporting solution.

About Microsoft Azure

The global pandemic accelerated the need for organizations to innovate in new ways and demonstrated that to face unexpected challenges, organizations need to be agile and resilient. With data and intelligence at the core, establishing a digital feedback loop is how organizations can transform and unlock new value for their customers. For them to be successful, organizations need the capability to digitally connect every facet of their business and should not have to make tradeoffs when choosing solutions to drive their digital transformation. They need connected, effective solutions offering depth (best-of-breed) and cohesion (best-of-suite) to transform and become more resilient in today's environment.

The Microsoft Cloud comprises of the following products and solutions that are industry leaders on their own but are even more powerful when combined through unmatched integration: Azure, Microsoft Security, Microsoft Power Platform, Microsoft 365, Dynamics 365, GitHub, and LinkedIn. Together, they enable a robust set of customer solution areas spanning application infrastructure; data and AI; developer tools and services; security, compliance, identity, and management; productivity and collaboration; as well as business process.

The Azure cloud platform is more than 200 products and cloud services designed to help organizations bring new solutions to life that solve today's challenges and create the future. Organizations can build, run, and manage applications across multiple clouds, on-premises, and at the edge, with the tools and frameworks of their choice. By moving to Azure, organizations are able to innovate in new ways by adopting a cloud operations based model on infrastructure as a service (IaaS) technologies and take advantage of further opportunities for innovation by modernizing with fully managed platform as a service (PaaS) offerings.

Cloud migration and modernization is a continuous process that involves significant organizational change management spanning people, processes, and technology. Taking a holistic approach will not only help organizations navigate the journey successfully but also helps ensure that they realize new benefits, including efficiency, agility, and scale once their workloads are running on the cloud.

With 60+ regions, Azure has more global regions than any other cloud provider that offer the scale and data residency options organizations need to bring their apps closer to their users around the world. Microsoft has made strategic investments in the Middle East and Africa region, with operational data centers in UAE and South Africa and announced data centers in Qatar and Israel. Microsoft is committed to empowering organizations and developers in the region with access to scalable, highly available and resilient cloud services and enabling them to innovate without compromising on data residency, security, and compliance requirements.

Why migrate and modernize with Azure?

IDC was informed that moving to Azure enables organizations to achieve cost and operational efficiencies and improves their agility and resilience to quickly take advantage of new opportunities and thrive in the face of new challenges.

Here are a few reasons to consider Azure:

1. Migrate workloads to achieve operational efficiency: Financial and technical guidance from Azure helps customers to choose the right short- and long-term cloud solutions and get greater return on their cloud investment. From on-premises Windows Servers and supported Linux distributions to databases including SQL Server, MySQL and PostgreSQL, virtual desktops and environments running on SAP and VMware, organizations can migrate their mission-critical workloads to Azure. Adopting a cloud

operational expenses (OPEX) model with [Azure Cloud Economics](#) enables adopters to better manage their cash flow and respond faster to business changes. Business continuity can be achieved by mitigating business disruptions for maximum resilience with built-in high-availability and disaster recovery options.

2. [Modernize applications and data to accelerate innovation](#): Microsoft team informed IDC about how the adopters of Azure can modernize to accelerate time to market, deliver innovative experiences and improve security and reliability. Organizations can achieve built-in scalability, high availability, enterprise-grade SLA, and cost optimization by modernizing .NET, PHP, and Java websites and apps to fully managed PaaS services like Azure App Service and Azure Spring Cloud. They can accelerate app development cycles, simplify deployment, and quickly scale by containerizing their existing apps with Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS) and modernize .NET, Java, and Linux-based app back ends with fully managed Azure SQL, Azure Database for MySQL, and Azure Database for PostgreSQL.
3. [Move to the cloud with hybrid flexibility](#): The adopters of Azure can consistently manage, secure, and govern the Linux, Windows, and SQL workloads that they are not ready to move yet or are sequenced to move later by using Azure Arc. Deploying and running apps on Azure and/or on-premises with Arc-enabled Kubernetes enables consistent app development practices and enhanced velocity in hybrid environments. Microsoft informed IDC that clients can benefit from hybrid flexibility as they move their assets by reusing existing Windows Server and SQL Server licenses on the cloud with the Azure Hybrid Benefit, that now applies to Red Hat and SUSE Linux, too.
4. [Protect assets with trusted cloud security](#): Microsoft has made strategic investments in creating competency to help its customers safeguard their business assets, involving a team of more than 3,500 global security experts and investments of over \$1 billion in Azure cybersecurity investments. Organizations can comply with regulatory requirements with the broadest set of cloud compliance certifications.
5. [Build the right technical skills](#): Microsoft informed IDC that it provides its customers technical upskilling and certifications to create a culture of innovation and digital resilience. Microsoft offers technical upskilling through a variety of programs such as Microsoft Virtual Training Days, instructor-led courses, [Microsoft Certifications](#), and free learning paths from [Microsoft Learn](#) that are customizable based on skill level and job role.

How to get started on a cloud journey with Azure?

Azure customer enablement programs maximize the value organizations get from Azure with a clear path forward for their cloud journey.

1. [Achieve cloud value with proven cloud tools and guidance](#): IDC was informed about how Microsoft helps its customers to build their cloud strategy and deployment plan on the proven foundations of the [Microsoft Cloud Adoption Framework for Azure](#). The [Microsoft Azure Well-Architected Framework](#) enables customers to optimize the quality of their cloud workloads using a collection of technical guidance, tools, and resources centered on the five pillars of cost optimization, operational excellence, performance efficiency, reliability, and security.
2. [Leverage the power of programs and partners](#): Customers can achieve success on Azure with direct help from cloud adoption experts including Azure engineers, consultants, and verified cloud partners. The [Azure Migration and Modernization Program](#) provides the right mix of expert help an organization needs

to plan and move confidently using proven end-to-end methodologies, tools, and resources, while taking advantage of unique offers and incentives to reduce your costs.

Azure Migration and Modernization Program (AMMP)
Get support with your migration and modernization needs across Apps, Data, and Infrastructure

The right mix of resources and expert help at every stage of your cloud journey

- Proven approach: Microsoft Cloud Adoption Framework and Well Architected Framework
- Cost-effective offers and incentives
- Technical skill building
- Free tools/automation: Azure Migrate
- In-depth assistance from FastTrack for Azure engineers
- Expert help from specialized services partners
- Support environmentally sustainable initiatives

The graphic features a dark background with light blue icons and text. It is organized into two rows of benefits, each preceded by a small icon: a document for the first benefit, a dollar sign for the second, gears for the third, a gear for the fourth, a double-headed arrow for the fifth, two people for the sixth, and a globe for the seventh.

Figure 11: Azure Migration and Modernization Program (AMMP)

Source: Microsoft

Essential Guidance

Digital business transformation is driving a wide variety of applications, business services, and data sources deployed on diverse platforms including on-premises, private cloud, hybrid, public cloud, and multi-cloud environments. These facilities are being accessed directly by end users using a variety of handheld and mobile devices.

Providing competitive consumer-like responsiveness to end users without slowdowns, interruptions, or crashes is a critical success factor for IT organizations to meet ongoing digital business imperatives. IT departments are also being faced with increased challenges driven by the growing adoption of microservices and container-based technologies as well as the need for increased speed in applications delivery and deployment. Organizational constructs like DevOps and Agile, and the need for analytics and automation, are driving the need for IT teams to manage and reduce complexity, while increasing speed and agility for the business. The points mentioned below are important to keep in mind when a CIO considers taking their organization on a cloud adoption journey.

- **Be Aware of the Pitfalls of an Incomplete Cloud Adoption Strategy:** Cloud is a strategic initiative. A tactical response to cloud can create an island of a cloud instance in an organization's IT landscape. It is difficult to create an enterprise-wide cloud adoption strategy, since business departments might have legacy systems deployed on-premises and be unwilling to adopt cloud due to fear of an unplanned downtime or loss of service to their customers. However, it is important to bring IT, business users, and support functions on the same page before starting a cloud journey. Conducting an architecture review and assessment is critically important before embarking on the cloud journey.
- **Hybrid Cloud is the future:** IDC's study reveals that organizations are adopting cloud deployment options depending upon the techno-commercial fitment. This means a hybrid cloud ecosystem will exist in an organization's IT landscape. Therefore, it is inevitable to explore technology vendors and partners that help the CIOs interoperate workloads smoothly and leverage the power of hybrid while providing necessary support.
- **Understand Your Cloud Migration Needs Clearly:** When it comes to migrating to the cloud, quick wins will instill confidence in skeptics of cloud adoption. Even if a cloud migration project fails, the impact is limited to a specific workload that you were planning to migrate. Have a structured approach when it comes to migration of critical workloads. Micro-planning is always of great help when an organization migrating its business-critical workloads (such as ERP, CRM, payment systems, etc.) to the cloud.
- **Conduct Thorough Assessments:** Critically assess the available vendors and internal stakeholders before embarking on an enterprise-wide cloud journey and consider various options. Explore the total cost of ownership for the majority of the workloads for at least a period of three years. Assume steady increases in consumption of cloud services and prepare a commercial working model. A techno-commercial assessment will help an organization shortlist a vendor and prepare the team before starting the journey. Also explore the product/innovation road map, commitment to the Middle East and Africa region, the industry that the organization operates in, and references and success stories in the region and industry before deciding on a cloud vendor.
- **Evaluate the Partner Ecosystem:** A Hyperscaler or a cloud vendor can offer deep capabilities, and if selected well, can transform the organization drastically. Selection of a right cloud vendor in this regard is vital. Look for a vendor that has pre-built migration frameworks. The partner should have

an ecosystem of strong implementation partners that can have a long-lasting impact and contribute to organizational goals and strategy. In addition to a techno-commercial assessment of cloud vendors, look at the ecosystem of its certified partners. A comprehensive partner ecosystem speaks volumes about a vendor's client and partner relationships. The industry-specific frameworks created by a vendor's partner can accelerate the deployment time, reduce cost, and provide the organization with industry best practices.

An organization can look at cloud adoption not only as a deployment option but also as an opportunity to transform its business and build a resilient, crisis-proof organization. Sustained business growth demands continuous learning, and organizations that are looking at innovating and winning consistently can explore public cloud.

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