Why Scalability and Flexibility Matters
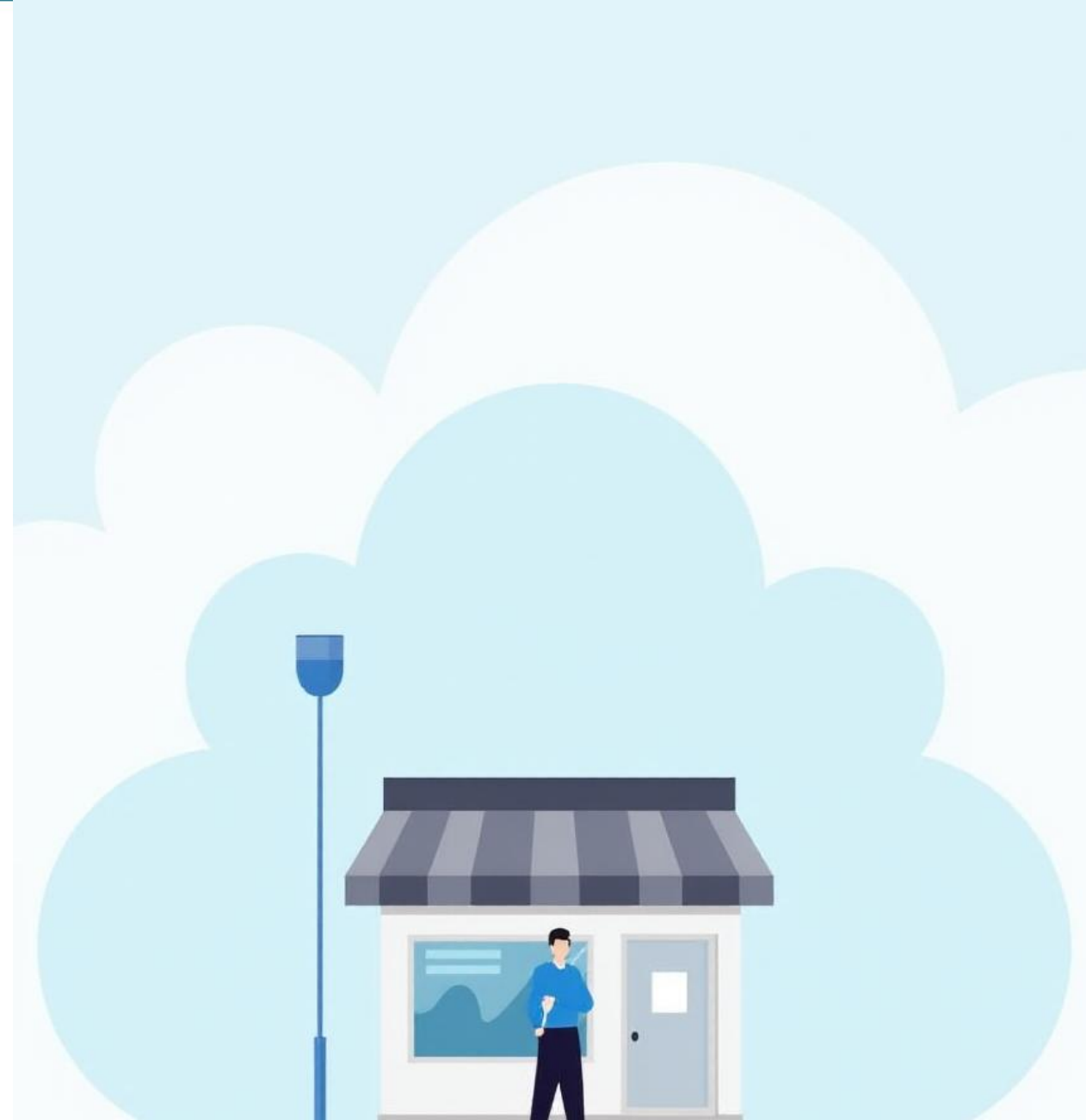
Enterprise-Grade Power on an SMB Budget

- On-Demand Scale

- Global Reach

- Competitive Edge

- Affordability

Azure Enables Enterprise-Scale Ambitions

SMBs Punching Above Their Weight

- Performance at Scale

- High Availability

- Security & Compliance

- Continuous Innovation

Cloud Adoption Stages

Where are you on the journey?

- Legacy (On-premises)

- Hybrid Cloud

- Public Cloud

- Cloud-N

If you're wondering if Azure is "flexible" it's provided everything from Black Friday support for big retailers to "Pigeon Migration" tracking. It really is… a platform for everything.
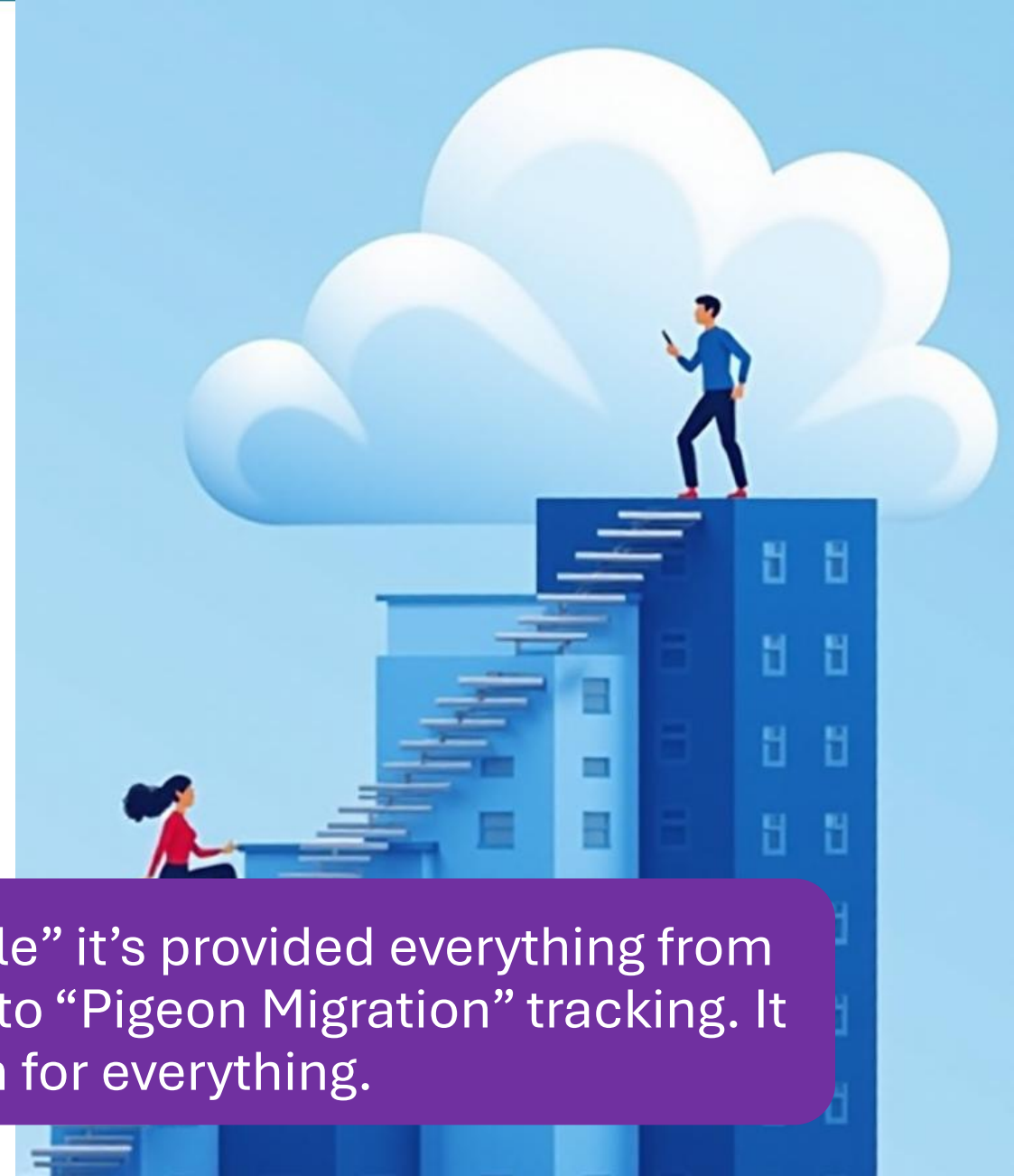
SMB Cloud Transition Challenges

Bridging the gaps

- Legacy → Hybrid

- Hybrid → Cloud (Migration)

- Cloud → Cloud-Native

- Common SMB Pain Points
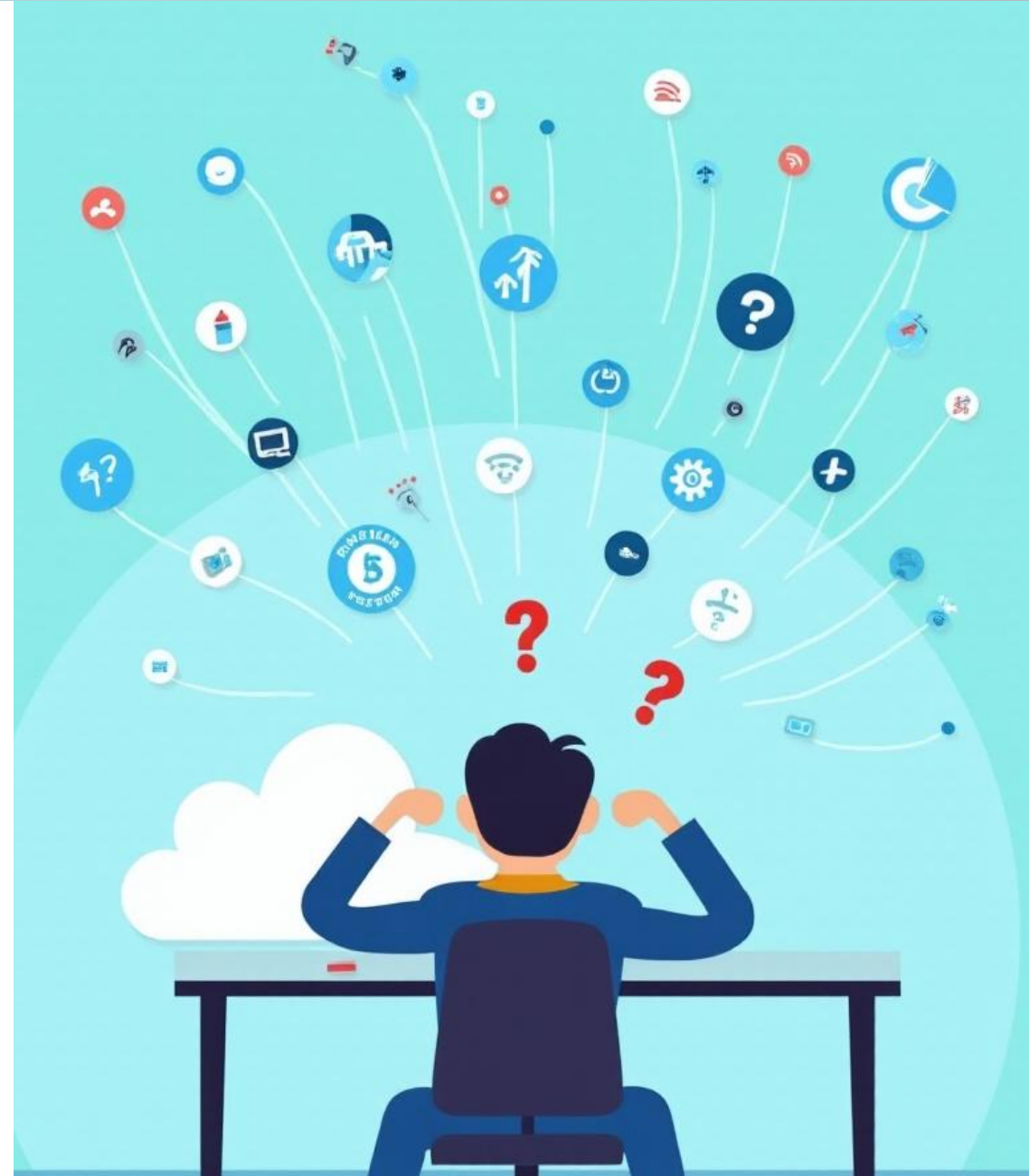
Real-World Outcomes of Cloud Adoption

What SMBs Gain – and What to Watch Out For

- Business Benefits Witnessed

- Operational Benefits

- Cloud → Cloud-Native

- Common Pitfalls:

  - Lift-and-Shift without Optimisation

  - Ignoring Governance

  - Partial Migrations

Avoiding the Lift-&-Shift Pitfall

Avoiding the Lift-&-Shift Pitfall. Optimise, don't just migrate.

Scenario: An SMB moves a server app to an Azure Virtual Machine identical to on-prem specs (same 8 CPU, 32 GB RAM VM as their old server). It works – but they later see high cloud costs and underutilised resources.

Why It's a Problem: Cloud allows finer tuning. The on-prem server was sized for peak usage that rarely happens. Running that 24/7 in Azure means paying for mostly idle capacity

Better Approach: Right-size in Azure – maybe a 4 CPU VM with auto-scale rules to add capacity at peak times, or move the app to Azure App Service or Azure Functions, which scale automatically and cost nothing when idle

Azure Services Overview

Azure Virtual Machines (VMs): *"Your server in the cloud."* Choose CPU/RAM, deploy in minutes. Add more VMs or increase VM size as needed or use **VM Scale Sets** to automatically scale out VMs based on load. Great for lifting existing apps to cloud with full control.

Azure App Service: *"Managed web hosting."* Run web apps or APIs without managing the servers. Auto-scale instances up/down based on traffic – ideal for websites, e-commerce, mobile backends (SMBs can handle big traffic spikes easily)

Azure SQL Database / Azure Cosmos DB: Fully managed databases that **scale on demand**. (Cosmos DB, for example, can elastically scale throughput globally – ensuring fast access for users anywhere.) These eliminate maintenance and can adjust capacity with a simple slider in the Azure portal.

Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS): Managed Kubernetes for containerised apps. Let's you run and orchestrate Docker containers. Think of containers as lightweight, portable versions of your apps – AKS handles the complex scheduling so your app can run reliably across many machines. Kubernetes will add or remove containers automatically under load. Azure's service means you don't have to be a K8s expert to benefit.

A quick note on "Containerisation"

- What is it?

- Who uses it?

- Why do they use it?

- Why is it good?

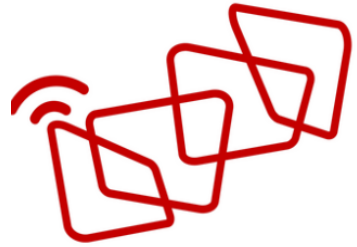# Serverless & Hybrid – More Ways to Stay Flexible

Azure Functions (Serverless): *"Code on-demand."* Write a function (snippet of code) and let Azure run it in response to events (web request, queue message, etc.). Functions automatically **scale out to thousands of instances** if needed, then scale to zero when not in use, you're only billed per execution. Even a small dev team can handle sporadic heavy loads (like processing bursts of orders) without prepping servers in advance. No infrastructure to manage at all.

Azure Monitor Autoscale: Built-in feature to **automatically adjust resources** based on metrics or schedules. Applies to VM scale sets, App Service plans, etc. *Use case:* Ensure your app always has enough instances to handle load but also winds down to control cost during off-peak times – all hands-free.

Azure Arc: *"Azure beyond Azure."* Extends Azure's management to **on-premises or other clouds**. You can project your local servers, Kubernetes clusters, or even other cloud VMs into Azure and manage them together. *Benefit:* If you must keep some things in-house (for compliance or legacy reasons), you **still get a single control plane**. For example, an SMB with a factory server on-site can manage updates and monitor it from the Azure Portal alongside their Azure resources. Arc even lets you deploy Azure services like Azure SQL Managed Instance on your own hardware – *Azure truly anywhere.*

Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD): (Brief mention) A fully scalable desktop virtualization service. *Scenario:* Enable remote work by hosting your employees' Windows desktops in Azure – scale number of desktops up or down as staff count changes. Manageable from a phone (tie-in to mobile management).
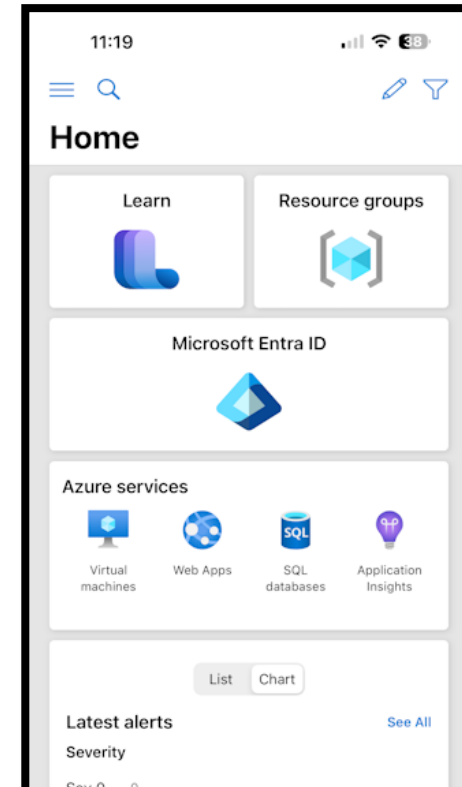
Case Study – Small Screen Casinos

Case Study – ASOS, Global retail, at scale.

Managing Azure from Anywhere

Azure Management on the Go

- Azure Mobile App

- Real-World Use

- Automation & Alerts

- Benefits to SMB IT Admins

It would be about £30,000... an hour.

Azure Automation

- Autoscaling Rules: Define thresholds (CPU, queue length, etc.) that automatically trigger adding/removing resources. The system self-adjusts to traffic without manual intervention – e.g., an online store auto-spins up extra instances during a flash sale at midnight.

- Auto-shutdown Schedules: For dev/test environments – schedule VMs to shut down after hours and restart in morning to save costs. Azure Automation can script this. Trim your bill by ensuring nothing "runs hot" when not needed.

- Event-Based Functions: Use Azure Functions to automate workflows. Example: When a new customer registers (event), a Function can automatically send them a welcome email, add an entry to CRM, and invoke a database scale check. All of that happens behind the scenes.

- Update Management: Azure can automatically apply security patches to VMs (Windows and Linux) during preset maintenance windows. Ensures you stay secure without late-night patch marathons by IT staff.
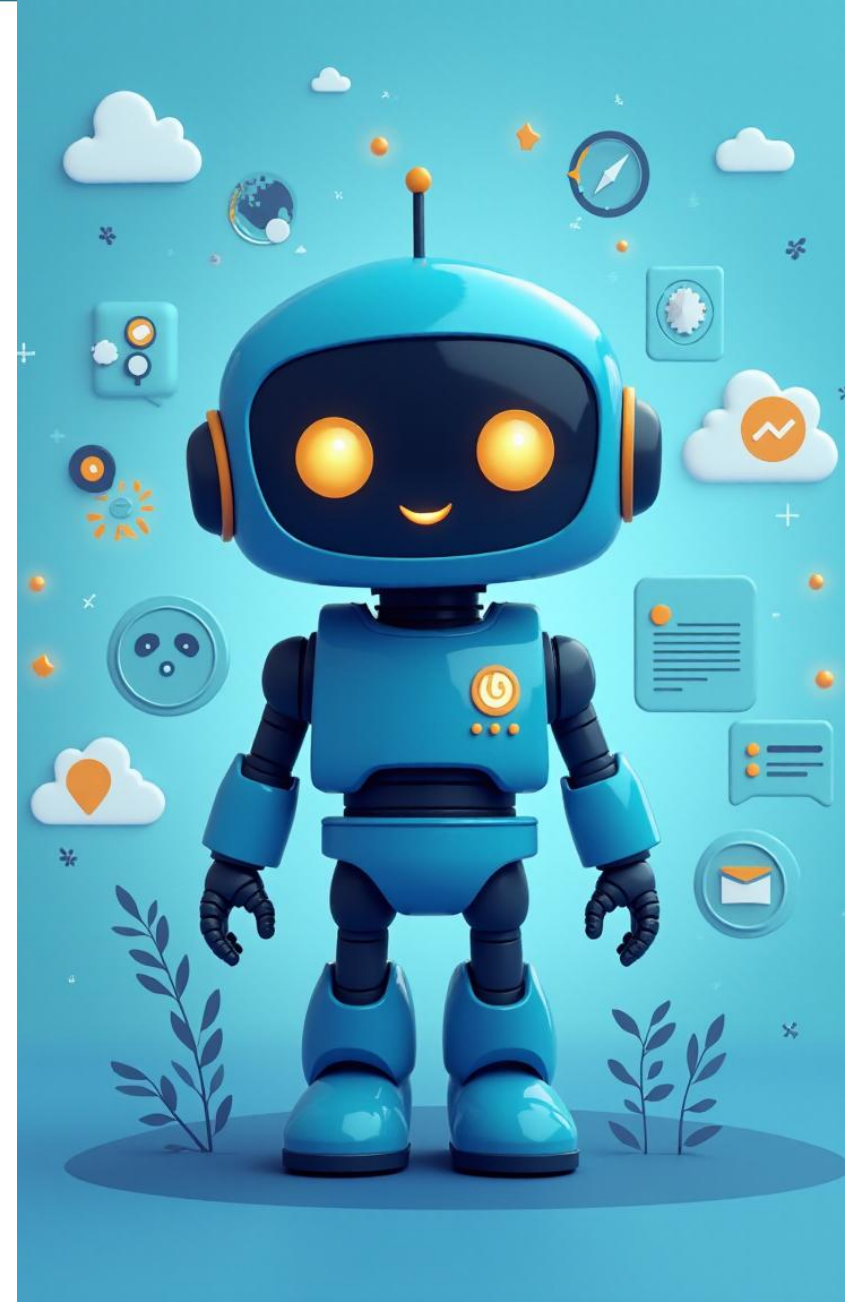
How to Get Started

Practical Next Steps for SMBs

- Start Small, Start Smart

- Use the Azure incentives (Free tier, POC etc)

- Leverage Azure Migrate & CAF

- Engage the Experts!

- Training and Culture

- Plan for Governance

How to Get Started – Quick ideas

Practical Next Steps for SMBs

- Enhance Security with Entra ID

- Cloud Backup & DR

- Move a Website, or an App

- Remote Work Pilots

- Database to Azure

Key Takeaway

Azure = Opportunity: Every SMB client with growth ambitions or IT pain points is a potential Azure success story. How can Azure address your specific needs – whether cost savings, new capabilities, or eliminating your IT headaches.

CTA: Have "one" conversation.

Q+A / Wrap-up

Here's what we've covered:

- Introduction – Why scalability and flexibility matter for SMBs

- The Cloud Adoption Journey – From legacy systems to cloud-native

- Understanding Scalability & Flexibility in Azure

- Common Challenges & Myths – Addressing concerns

- Customer Case Studies

- Managing Azure from Anywhere

- Getting Started, and On-Demand Services

- Q+A

Thank You!

Have more questions?
Contact your TD SYNNEX Microsoft CSP Team:

CSP.UK@TDSYNNEX.COM

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