1 Identifying value-added market opportunities

As a ONE STOP Microsoft Solutions and Services Aggregator, our objective is to support the Partner Channel across Africa in positioning digital transformation technologies to customers. For partners to remain competitive and support their businesses customers to transition to cloud based technologies, First Distribution is here to assist with various Microsoft Licensing Programs and workloads to the cloud. Our opportunity as a collective Cloud Channel in supporting SMBs, SME's, Corporates and Enterprise business to leverage Microsoft technologies is a great value add. First Distribution assists partners on various levels through our Cloud Catalyst program to create a strong working knowledge of the cloud, what is available to customers and how to assess, scope and migrate businesses to the cloud in the most efficient, effective, and successful way.

Another opportunity where First Distribution plays a active role is supporting our strategic and endorsed partners in driving demand and scale. How do you scale and pivot form transacting with one customer to five customers, five to ten and ten to 25?

First Distribution is the leading value-added distributor in Africa. Our product portfolio includes global leading Datacentre, Cloud, Networking and Security products and services, with hybrid solutions that provide access to any combination of on-premise, private cloud and public cloud end-to-end solutions from multiple vendors. The portfolio, highly skilled staff to support and manage vendors, and an unrivalled level of expertise ensures our partners have all the key elements required for success. We host one of the largest technology partner-to-partner networks in Africa, allowing partners to extend their reach across the continent.
As a Microsoft Indirect Cloud Solution Provider Program Provider (2-Tier CSP), our focus has always been the recruitment and enablement of a partner ecosystem across all South African and MCC territories with our key focus areas on East, West and North Africa, SADC and Indian Ocean Islands (IOI).

Our emphasis is on delivering Microsoft Cloud offerings and enabling partners across both the Modern Workplace and Azure portfolios. The SureStep Program has been CLOUD FOR ALL, LARGE AND SMALL, helping partners scale not only in Enterprise segments but also enabling all segment-focused growth strategies.

We assist our partners build out their relevant Modern Workplace, Dynamics 365 and Power Platform as well as Azure Practices. We have invested in supporting partners with end-customer events and through focused marketing offers, in which content is designed, mailers created and delivered to partners in html format to deliver to their relevant customer bases. We have also invested in digital campaigns that drive direct sales-qualified leads. The delivery of ROI through this type of support has yielded significant results.

2 Implementing differentiated value-added solutions

Based on our extensive experience in the African market, we have identified these two fundamental challenges, and our focus has been on **enablement** and driving **demand** and **scale.**

- **Sales, Product and Technical Enablement:** We recognise that channel partners know that they need to start t heir cloud journey, but they aren't always sure where to begin: what should they offer to customers, where do they begin, what do they need in place and how does it differ from their current offering?

  First Distribution's primary focus has been to drive partner enablement across three clouds: Modern Work and Security, Business Apps (Dynamics 365 with PowerApps /Power Platform) and Azure. We have selected partners who have the inhouse skills, expertise, and customer service ethics to support our overall strategy in the market.

- **Demand and Scale:** How well do our partners unpack their value propositions? Can they evolve their brand messaging in line with Microsoft's messaging? How well do they generate leads, and can they successfully convert those leads?

3 GTM strategies and delivering ROI for our channel partners

Very closely aligned with Microsoft, First Distributions strategic focus areas include:

- Investing from a time, content, and funding perspective in GTM (go to market) planning and execution with our partners, supporting them in driving awareness and demand to the end customer Helping our partners scale through the right GTM activities.

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Microsoft

First Distribution & Microsoft Solutions & Services Aggregator

4 Up-selling, cross-selling and increasing demand

First Distribution realizes that cloud computing is not a just a useful facility for enterprise customers. Our services are therefore fully enabled for partners transacting with various business sizes. Over the past year we have put significant focus on increasing Net-Customer Adds, specifically driving a run rate business in SMB/SME as one of our key objectives.

Our messaging to the market has been specific to increase demand in the smallest businesses in leveraging productivity and collaboration tools by using Microsoft.
This is amplified by the message that Microsoft Cloud is for every organization: cloud is for all – Large and Small.

Further, we have invested in capabilities to enable resellers to transact with First Distribution as seamlessly as possible. Some of these tools include our License Central capability, or First for Cloud.

First for Cloud is part of First Distribution's objective in aligning with the Microsoft SureStep Program in growing partners throughout their journey and lifecycle. We encourage our partners to have a webstore because this capability helps them to manage their customers, reducing and adding licenses and spinning up new tenants on the fly.

Managing cloud licenses is made easier through this ecommerce solution.

5 Reducing churn and driving longevity

To prevent churn, we focus on ongoing communication with our partners through relationships with associated account managers, enablement, and the continuous evolvement of our own value proposition.

Our processes identify customer licenses that are due for renewal 90 days in advance. We inform our partners, and they can then proactively target their customers to facilitate a seamless renewal process and prevent churn.

Because of rate of exchange, we manage ROE forward cover on behalf of our partners, which also helps them to seamlessly transact with their customers, who benefit from fixed monthly costs.

6 SureStep and business growth

The SureStep Program has been CLOUD FOR ALL, LARGE AND SMALL, helping partners scale not only in Enterprise segments but also enabling SME-focused growth strategies.
We facilitate co-marketing with our partners to drive awareness and lead generation and have enabled PROFESSIONAL SERVICES through GoFirst Services.

A key differentiator has been our trademarked eCommerce solution, First for Cloud. The enablement of a webstore used as an extension of the partner's webstore and CI, with direct API integration into Microsoft, has been a unique value-add. Our First for Cloud solution enables each partner to not only transact CSP by creating new tenants, but also gives them full management capability of their customers. These operational efficiencies
ensure quick delivery on customer requirements, 24/7.

First for Cloud also enables multiple transaction methods like credit card and PayPal transaction models, and each partner can add their own products and services with Microsoft SKUs to amplify their own value propositions.

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FIRSTfor CLOUD™
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7 Taking the cloud to market

A key differentiator of First Distribution is our trademarked eCommerce solution, First for Cloud. The enablement of a webstore used as an extension of the partner's webstore and CI, with direct API integration into Microsoft is a unique value-add.

Our First for Cloud solution enables each partner to not only transact CSP by creating new tenants, but also gives them full management capability of their customers. These operational efficiencies ensure quick delivery on customer requirements, 24/7.

First for Cloud in action

First for Cloud enables multiple transaction methods like credit card and PayPal transaction models, and each partner can add their own products and services with Microsoft SKUs to amplify their own value propositions.

Partners are able to use this capability to either manage their customer's requirements or alternatively expose their webstore publicly for customer self-service.

Aligning with the Microsoft SureStep Program

The First for Cloud offering is part of the First Distribution's objective in aligning with the Microsoft SureStep Program in growing partners throughout their journey and lifecycle. We prefer for partners to have a web store because this capability enables them to manage their customer accounts, reducing and adding licenses and spinning up new tenants on the fly. Managing cloud licenses is made easier through this ecommerce solution.

By investing heavily in operational, sales and brand resources, our partners get the best service. We have enabled 24/7 support as well as Advanced Support, which our partners can leverage to ensure priority on any query which may arise.

Over the past year, First Distribution has set the right goals and exceeded in expectations from an execution perspective. The consolidation of our tools, the way in which we service the channel, our consistency in delivering and exceeding the expectations of our partners has set us apart from the rest.

Our goal is for partners to support their customer in meeting critical business objectives, so time to market and fulfilment are dramatically increased when partnering with us on taking the cloud to market.

Microsoft Azure

8 Why Azure?

Move seamlessly to the cloud with Azure, Powered by First Distribution.

Leverage our FREE assessments, scoping and migration opportunities for your end user customers.

Our team of Cloud experts can assist you with any workload, whether you are looking for a lift and shift into the cloud or a brand-new Azure deployment. Our solution assessment team is here to help you prepare and determine your readiness to move to the cloud.

Expand beyond the limits of your current computing platform with the freedom to build, manage, and deploy your applications anywhere with Azure. Use your preferred languages, frameworks, and infrastructure—even your own datacenter and other clouds.

With help from Azure, you have everything you need to build your next great solution.

Invent with purpose.

Designed especially for driving Azure demand, leverage the Azure Sales plays we have designed specific to the Africa market:

View Azure Sales Plays

Be future-ready: Continuous innovation from Microsoft supports your development today, and your product visions for tomorrow.

Build on your terms: You have choices. With a commitment to open source, and support for all languages and frameworks, build how you want, and deploy where you want to.

Operate hybrid seamlessly: On-premises, in the cloud, and at the edge—we'll meet you where you are. Integrate and manage your environments with tools and services designed for hybrid cloud.

Trust your cloud: Get security from the ground up, backed by a team of experts, and proactive compliance trusted by enterprises, governments, and startups.

Microsoft

9 Microsoft Services

First Distribution has now enabled Microsoft Services across our Modern Work, Security and Azure platforms to assist partners with these 3 critical steps to move your customers workloads into the Cloud.

Our Microsoft Services catalogue offers you multiple different pre-defined deployment options for Modern Work and Security as well as scope-based offers specific to Azure. These offers are available on your webstore, you merely need to activate them.

Let us help you Assess, Migrate and run the implementation through our new Professional Services offering.

View Professional Services

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10 Cloud Motivation & Objectives

1. Adapt quickly to new business events

- Datacenter exit
- Mergers, acquisition, or divestiture
- Reductions in capital expenses
- End of support for mission-critical technologies
- Regulatory compliance, data sovereignty requirements
- Reduce disruptions and improve IT stability

2. Take advantage of the Cloud benefits

- Cost Savings
- Reduction in the vendor or technical complexity
- Optimisation of internal operations
- Increase business agility
- Prepare for new technical capabilities
- Scale to meet market & geographic demands

3. Scale faster and motivate Innovation

- Prepare for new technical capabilities
- Build new technical capabilities
- Scale to meet market & geographic demands
- Improve customer experiences/engagements
- Transform products or services
- Disrupt the market with new products or services

Microsoft

11 Cloud Adoption

Find guidance for each phase of your cloud adoption journey.

Develop a cloud adoption strategy

The cloud delivers fundamental technology benefits that can help your enterprise execute multiple business strategies. By using cloud-based approaches, you can:

- Improve business agility
- Reduce costs
- Accelerate time to market
- Enable expansion into new markets

To take advantage of this great potential, start by documenting your business strategy in a way that's both understandable to cloud technicians and palatable to your business stakeholders.

The following steps help you document your business strategy efficiently. This approach helps you drive adoption efforts that capture targeted business value in a cross-functional model. Then, you can map your cloud adoption strategy to specific cloud capabilities. You can also map business strategies to reach your expected state of transformation.

Get started with the Cloud Adoption Framework

The Cloud Adoption Framework can help you get started with several different getting started guides. This article groups the guides to help you find the one that best aligns with your current challenges.

Each of the following links takes you to questions that are typically asked when an organization is trying to accomplish a certain goal during their cloud adoption journey.

- Choose the cloud adoption scenario that best supports your strategy.
- Examine antipatterns across methodologies and their solutions.
- Align foundational concepts to onboard a person, project, or team.
- Adopt the cloud to deliver business and technical outcomes sooner.
- Improve controls to ensure proper operations of the cloud.
- Establish teams to support adoption and operations.

Develop a cloud adoption plan

Cloud adoption plans convert the aspirational goals of a cloud adoption strategy into an actionable plan. Your collective cloud teams can use the cloud adoption plan to guide their technical efforts and align them with your organization's business strategy.

Use the following exercises to help you document your organization's technology strategy. These exercises support cloud adoption efforts by capturing prioritized tasks. At the end of this process, your cloud adoption plan will map to the metrics and motivations defined in the cloud adoption strategy.

1. Digital estate: Inventory and rationalize your digital estate based on assumptions that align your organization's motivations and business outcomes.
2. Initial organisational alignment: Establish a plan for initial organisational alignment to support the adoption plan
3. Skills readiness plan: Create a plan for addressing skills readiness gaps within your organisation.
4. Cloud adoption plan: Develop a cloud adoption plan to manage change across skills, the digital estate, and your organisation.

What business outcomes are associated with transformation journeys?

The most successful transformation journeys start with a business outcome in mind. Cloud adoption can be a costly and time-consuming effort. Fostering the right level of support from IT and other areas of the business is crucial to success. This article series is designed to help customers identify business outcomes that are concise, defined, and drive observable results or change in business performance, supported by a specific measure.

During any cloud transformation, the ability to speak in terms of business outcomes supports transparency and cross-functional partnerships. The business outcome framework starts with a simple template to help technically minded individuals document and gain consensus. This template can be used with several business stakeholders to collect a variety of business outcomes, which could each be influenced by a company's transformation journey. Feel free to use this template electronically or, better still, draw it on a whiteboard to engage business leaders and stakeholders in outcome-focused discussions.

12 Solutions Partner Designation Certification Support

First Distribution understands how critical the new Solutions Parnter Designations as well as the various benefits that these competencies offer Partners, especially when it comes to being competitive and increasing profitability. First Distribution gives partners the opportunity to Opt-In to ROLE-BASED certifications aligned with these new Solution Partner certification requirements. We understand how critical it is to ensure that your resources are adequately enabled, and certified and that you have the competitive edge.

First Distribution is offering the opportunity for your team to get certified where it matters to you depending on the 6 Solution Partner designations. We are providing the opportunity on each of our portfolios including Modern Work, Security, Dynamics 365, and the various Azure designations.

This will need to include more imagery as they page is going to look bare or we would need to move some of the others down a bit.

Microsoft

New Solutions Partner Designations

The Solutions Partner designation is the first opportunity for you to set yourself apart from the competition by demonstrating your organisation's breadth of capabilities in solution areaswith high customer demand and opportunities to scale.

Easily identifiable

Customers want to work with partners who have the right skills and capabilities to meet their needs.
A Solutions Partner designation identifies partners with specific capabilities and experiences in high customer demand solution areas.

Choose one or more

Partners can choose to earn one Solutions Partner designation, or more, if applicable to your organisation.
Once you attain a Solutions Partner designation, subsequent designations can be attained, after requirements are met, with no additional fee.

Opportunity

There are significant opportunities for partners in this new world of work—whether you build and sell services, software, or devices.
We're continuing to invest in new designations to differentiate solutions based on partners' technical maturity and customer success.

Distinguish yourself with Solutions Partner designations

- Solutions Partner for Business Applications — Microsoft Solutions Partner: Business Applications
- Solutions Partner for Data & AI (Azure) — Microsoft Solutions Partner: Data & AI Azure
- Solutions Partner for Digital & App Innovation (Azure) — Microsoft Solutions Partner: Digital & App Innovation Azure
- Solutions Partner for Infrastructure (Azure) — Microsoft Solutions Partner: Infrastructure Azure
- Solutions Partner for Modern Work — Microsoft Solutions Partner: Modern Work
- Solutions Partner for Security — Microsoft Solutions Partner: Security
- *Solutions Partner for Microsoft Cloud — Microsoft Solutions Partner: Microsoft Cloud

Designations aligned to the Microsoft solution areas recognize your broad technical capabilities and demonstrated success delivering technology solutions.

Benefits aligned to your Solutions Partner designation include product benefits, go-to-market services, co-sell eligibility, skilling and sales enablement resources, and customer-facing badges to help you market your expertise.

Specializations further validate deep technical expertise after you attain a Solutions Partner designation and set you apart from the competition.

*Partners who attain all six Solutions Partner designations receive a Microsoft Cloud badge, recognizing your capabilities across .