



Microsoft Promotions

Microsoft New Promotions 27 July #177

For the 1st time in a decade, Microsoft has added a [new Suite known as E7](#), which is a Step up from E5.

This is Microsoft's big bet on winning over corporate wallets to invest in CoPilot and Azure, and of course you will see many promotions that will try to drive greater adoption.

Part of the Microsoft strategy to win over customers will be many offers, incentives, promotions and discounts, some of them could be quite complicated to unpack to see if you really do benefit (or not)!

This is a new section of TOP STORIES dedicated to telling about these promotional offers where almost every offer will need to be unpacked for YOUR specific situation to determine whether you could really benefit (or not), so connecting with your First Technology Account manager will be essential.

Nobody wants to hear afterwards that there was a Microsoft promotion available that you could have benefited from....

Below is a link list of offers.

Microsoft Global Promo NCE Readiness Guide

Microsoft has published a guide to its NCE promotions currently in effect.

This is quite a long list, so please make sure you connect with your First Technology Group account manager to VERIFY that you qualify!

It can get a bit mysterious - for example, you may need some assistance in understanding what "Dark to Cloud" means and if that is relevant to your situation. Unfortunately, the document is marked "confidential to Microsoft partners only", so you need to call your First Technology Group account manager to figure out if any apply to you, including what "Dark to Cloud" means!

Microsoft Promotions PDF - Link Not Published

Considering moving SQL to Azure?

Microsoft could write you a cheque!

Microsoft has launched the Azure Frontier Offer designed to fund customers moving SQL Server databases and related data workloads to Azure.

This means that if you are planning to modernise your SQL environment, move databases into Azure, start using Microsoft Fabric, or build new AI-ready data platforms, Microsoft could fund the project by subsidising the deployment and initial running cost.

This is not just another "Microsoft has renamed something again" announcement, though of course they have wrapped it in Microsoft terminology to frighten even a licensing specialist!

We may be able to help with this Microsoft offer to cost of the move in two main ways (including decrypting the "Microsoft Speak").

Professional services funding

This can help pay for the specialist work required to plan, migrate, modernise and deploy the solution properly. According to the offer information shared with us, this can be up to \$500,000 for qualifying projects.

Azure credits

These help offset Azure usage costs.

This is especially useful during the awkward phase where you may need to run your old environment and your new Azure environment at the same time.

Databases do not magically move themselves over a weekend, no matter how optimistic the project plan looks.

Microsoft's public "Azure Accelerate" material explains that Azure credits and partner engagement funding can help lower project costs from planning through deployment, and that Azure Accelerate for Databases includes delivery funding and Azure credits designed for AI-ready data modernisation.

The offer is aimed at genuine Azure data and platform projects.

More than half of the new first-year Azure usage needs to come from database, Microsoft Fabric, or Azure AI Foundry-related workloads. So, this is not a random "move something small and claim a cheque" type of offer.

Azure Accelerate projects cannot simply be claimed by a customer browsing Microsoft portals. Customers can register interest, but partner-led Azure Accelerate engagements need to be assessed, structured and nominated through Microsoft's approved partner workflows, either by a qualified Azure partner in Partner Centre or by Microsoft's account team. Eligible partners include **Azure Expert MSPs** and partners with relevant Azure specialisations, with selected benefits also available to partners holding Azure Solutions Partner designations.

Within First Technology Group, customers have access to Microsoft Azure Expert MSP capability through our group companies, and Microsoft Solutions Partner for the Microsoft Cloud.
This places us in a VERY small, highly differentiated group of Microsoft Azure partners globally.

Contact your First Technology Group account manager so we can connect you with the right Azure specialists, check whether your project qualifies, and help structure it properly before the opportunity disappears into the Microsoft ether.

If you are already looking at any of the following, you should pause before you sign off the project:

- SQL Server modernisation.
- Database migration to Azure.
- Microsoft Fabric adoption.
- AI-ready data platforms.
- Azure AI Foundry projects.
- Analytics modernisation.
- Dual-running old and new environments while you migrate.

This could be one of those situations where planning a few weeks earlier can make a very material difference to the cost of the project.

Microsoft Azure Accelerate reference

Glossary - your guide to Microsoft Acronyms and Terminology

"Microsoft Speak"	"Human-friendly" wording
Azure Frontier Offer	Microsoft funding offer for Azure data and AI projects
SQL to Azure PayGo	Move SQL databases to Azure and pay for what you use
ACR	Expected first-year Azure usage/spend
ECIF	Microsoft funding to help pay for professional services
ACO	Azure credits to help offset Azure usage costs
Dual-run costs	The cost of running the old and new environments at the same time
Database/Fabric/Foundry workloads	Databases, analytics, Microsoft Fabric, or AI platform projects
2:1/5:1 ROI	Microsoft needs to see that the funding makes commercial sense against the expected Azure usage. For every \$2 spend on Azure, Microsoft is willing to fund up to \$1 where the first milestone is completed by 30 June 2026. Thereafter, they will invest \$2 for every \$10 spent on Azure

