

Cloud Decision Checklist

A 20-minute exercise for picking AWS, GCP, or Azure — before you commit to one.

What this is

Not a feature-by-feature comparison chart. A decision-forcing exercise built on the same three questions as the guide it's paired with: who you're hiring, who you're selling to, and what you're actually building. Work through it as a team, in one sitting, and come out the other side with an answer instead of another open tab.

How to run it

- 1 Get your founders and engineering leads together — this takes about 20 minutes, no more.
- 2 Work through Section A (page 2) and Section B (page 3) together — answer what's true today, not what you wish were true.
- 3 Add up both sections on page 4, make the call, and sign off on it as a team.

Before you start, have ready

- ☐ A rough list of your team's current hands-on cloud experience
- ☐ A one-line description of who buys from you today
- ☐ A one-line description of what your product actually does under the hood

Team / company _____ Facilitator _____ Date _____

Who are you hiring?

AWS has the deepest, fastest-to-hire talent pool. A niche stack narrows who you can hire quickly. Answer these as a team.

A1 • Current hands-on experience

Where does your team already have real, working experience today?

☐**AWS**

Most hands-on
experience

☐**GCP**

Most hands-on
experience

☐**Azure**

Most hands-on
experience

☐**None yet**

Starting from scratch

A2 • Hiring urgency

How fast do you need to grow the engineering team?

☐**AWS**

ASAP, need the broadest pool

☐**Doesn't swing it**

Within a quarter, some flex

☐**Doesn't swing it**

No rush, can train up

A3 • Kubernetes

Does the team already run Kubernetes day-to-day, or want to?

☐**GCP**

Yes, Kubernetes-native today or the goal

☐**Doesn't swing it**

No, not a priority

A4 • Stack background

Where is the team's engineering background strongest?

☐**Azure**

.NET / C# / Microsoft stack

☐**Doesn't swing it**

Linux / open-source stack

Section A tally

AWS

GCP

Azure

Who are you selling to, and what are you building?

The guide's other two questions, split into three concrete ones. Enterprise buyers on Microsoft lean Azure; heavy data or ML workloads lean GCP. Everything else is close enough that it shouldn't decide it.

B1 • Buyer, and their stack

Who buys from you today, and what are they already standardized on?

☐

Doesn't swing it

Startup / SMB buyer

☐

Doesn't swing it

Mid-market buyer

☐

Doesn't swing it

Enterprise, not on
Microsoft

☐

Azure

Enterprise, on
Microsoft 365 / AD /
.NET

B2 • Core of the product

What does your product actually do at its core, under the hood?

☐

Doesn't swing it

General app or API, no heavy
data/ML

☐

GCP

Data pipelines & analytics are core

☐

GCP

ML training or inference is core

B3 • Managed data / ML tooling

Would a managed analytics or ML platform meaningfully simplify your roadmap?

☐

GCP

Yes, that would meaningfully help

☐

Doesn't swing it

No, or not sure yet

Section B tally

AWS

GCP

Azure

Add it up, then handle the basics

Combined scorecard

	AWS	GCP	Azure
Section A (hiring)	_____	_____	_____
Section B (buyer & workload)	_____	_____	_____
Grand total	_____	_____	_____

Highest total wins. Tied, or everything near zero? Default to AWS — the safe, hire-anywhere choice the guide leads with.

Security & ops basics — do these regardless of which cloud wins

☐ Least-privilege access set up from day one — no shared root or admin logins

☐ Budget alerts configured before you start spending

☐ One named person owns cloud security — not "everyone's job"

☐ A basic backup / recovery plan for anything customer-facing

A well-run account beats a "right" provider every time — and the reverse is just as true.

Our decision

Chosen provider _____

Why, in one line _____

Reviewed by _____ Date _____