



Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program Terms of Participation Guide

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Contents

Introduction to the Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program 2

Overview 3

Program Administrator 3

Program Benefits 4

Visual Studio Benefits – Developer Tools..... 6

Azure Services Benefits 7

Technical Support Benefits 7

Marketing Benefits 7

Refund Requests 8

Retaining Legacy Competency Benefits 8

Partner Support 9

Introduction to the Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program

The Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program (formerly known as the Microsoft Cloud Partner Program) is a place for all partners—whether they build and sell services, software solutions, or devices—aligned with the core solutions and technologies required to grow their own environments, migrate to the cloud and deliver success for their own customers. Base membership is the foundation of engagement, with opportunities for members to differentiate and showcase their capabilities with various programs. Program benefits are provided to support you as you grow your business and to help you, our partner, with:

- Encouraging business development;
- Increasing customer reach;
- Expanding technical skilling and enablement.



Overview

This guide is intended to provide an overview of the Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program (Partner Program) rules and benefits use terms to partners who purchase a membership program or offer (including but not limited to Microsoft Action Pack, Solutions Partner) or who retain silver or gold competency ("legacy competencies") benefits. Benefits are provided to partners once they have met the eligibility criteria and purchased the appropriate offer.

Partners must comply with the use terms and policies regarding benefits and license use rights and limitations about each software product or online service as outlined herein. Program information herein is subject to change and should not be interpreted as an offer, endorsement, guarantee, commitment or any other type of representation on the part of Microsoft. All decisions pertaining and related to your business needs including but not limited to strategies, solutions, partner selection, implementation, etc. rests solely with your business. **Be sure to review the benefits information in Partner Center before paying the annual fee.**

Program Administrator

An administrator within a partner organization collaborates across their organization to manage Partner Program membership including enrollment, offer purchase, competency attainment, and benefits assignment to specific users within the organization. **Partners participating in the Partner Program are responsible for tracking use and consumption of licenses and services provided through the program. Partners are also accountable for developing their own method of tracking license/benefit usage.**

[Review documentation about managing your membership.](#)

Program Benefits

Technical Presales and Deployment Services

Technical Presales and Deployment services offer technical guidance based on real-world scenarios via interactive webinars and personalized technical consultations. These services help partners accelerate planning, development, deployment, and sales of Microsoft cloud-based applications and services. Partners must be active members of Partner Program. Access to services varies depending on the type of engagement a partner wishes to have with a Microsoft partner technical consultant. Additional information is available in [Technical Presales and Deployment services Partner Center documentation](#).

Product Benefits Terms of Use

Some programs and offers in the Partner Program include product licenses or keys for software and cloud services that are intended to help partners build innovative Microsoft-based apps and services. Refer to the license tables linked below for insight as to the associated product benefits. The product benefits you will receive are what's listed in Partner Center at the time you attain an eligible program, offer or designation. Standard licensing terms (under the [Microsoft Customer Agreement](#) or other applicable licensing terms) apply for the products benefits provided with the Partner Program, unless otherwise noted herein.

- [License table for the Microsoft Action Pack](#)
- [License table for the legacy competencies](#)
- [Solutions Partner Benefits Guide](#)

Each partner is responsible for tracking the consumption and entitlement of product benefits. If a partner organization is selected for a compliance audit, that organization is responsible for presenting records regarding the active program licenses used and compliance to the terms of use. Licenses do not provide downgrade rights or any other Software Assurance services. If you need deployment, management, and other similar services, [learn more about Software Assurance](#).

Product benefits granted can be used for:

- Demonstration purposes. Sales and marketing employees of the partner organization can use product benefits to showcase products to your customers, but demonstration products cannot be installed on customer hardware or infrastructure and must be used with partner supervision.
- Solution or services development purposes, including the development, testing and demos of solutions and services.
- Internal training, used for training internal employees only. Use for customer training is not permitted.
- Internal use in a development, test, demo, sandbox, or production environment for general internal business purposes and not for any type of commercial purpose.

Product benefits granted to partners cannot be used for:

- Direct revenue-generating activities such as hosting a customer's applications or development of custom solutions for a specific client.

- Employee personal use.
- Installation of solutions or services at a customer site.
- Customer training (except for learning partners).
- Resell or transfer to any third party.

Product Keys and Tokens

Some products and cloud services require a product key for installation and/or activation. Product keys for cloud services may also be referred to as tokens. Keys are issued per organization and not per end user of the organization.

Not all product benefits require product keys for installation or activation. Partners can use any combination of methods and keys they have acquired through various Microsoft programs to activate machines, depending on their business and infrastructure needs, so long if the systems are properly licensed and appropriate use rights are applied.

On-premises Software Installation and Activation

If a product requires a product key for installation, the end-user will be prompted to enter a product key during the installation process. If a product key is not required, "Not Required" will be noted in the Product Key column.

Although some products require the entry of a product key during the installation process, not all products require product activation. Product activation is required for Windows server and client operating systems and all Microsoft Office client applications.

Some product keys issued are Multiple Activation Keys (MAK) . These products have finite number of installations, activations, or seats. A product key will stop working when all installations and activations have been consumed. Additional activations for these product keys will not be granted. Consumption behavior of activations on a product key differs between partners with an Action Pack and partners with a competency:

For the Microsoft Action Pack, the product key activation behavior is based on scenario:

- If the software is installed on a new machine, one product activation is consumed against the product key.
- If the software is installed on the same machine with no significant hardware changes, product activation is not consumed against the product key.
- If the software is installed on the same machine with significant hardware changes, product activation is consumed against the product key.

For partners who attain a Solutions partner designation or renew legacy competency benefits, each time a machine is activated, one of the product activations for that product key is consumed. This includes situations in which the same machine is reimaged and activated. Product keys may only be used in the license grant combinations as provided. For example, one 25 seat key cannot be adjusted to 5 different 5 seat keys.

On-premises software licenses issued are not perpetual. Partners are entitled and have the right to use these licenses only during their membership. Partners who renew their Partner Program membership or offer may need to manually reactivate their license keys at the renewal date. Partners who opt not to renew their Partner Program membership will need to obtain license rights via [Commercial Licensing](#) or uninstall any on-premise software obtained via the Partner Program.

Cloud Services Activation

Tokens are issued for cloud services. Partners may have multiple tokens for each online service. Tokens must be used in the format provided. For example, a 25-seat token cannot be split into 5 different 5 seat tokens so that the cloud service can be consumed under different tenants. **Program administrators who manage benefits must pay close attention during activation, because each token may only be activated one time. Once a token has been activated for seats on a tenant, those seats may not be moved to another tenant.**

The issuing of replacement tokens will be considered within 30 days of activation and is subject to review by Microsoft. If authorized upon review, replacement tokens will be issued as a one-time exception. **Microsoft reserves the right to refuse the issuance of tokens.**

Use rights for cloud services subscriptions terminates at the end of Microsoft Action Pack subscription or at the end of a competency enrollment year. **Although Partners may continue to have access to cloud services past their program enrollment end date, they will no longer have use rights through the program.**

Each year when an organization re-attains (renews or re-enrolls) into a membership program or offer with associated product keys/tokens, a new set of tokens will be issued based on the organization's entitlement at the time of re-attainment. Partner program administrators are required to enter these new tokens on the Key Redemption Portal each program year to avoid a lapse in cloud services. Partners who do not re-attain their membership will need to obtain license rights via [Commercial Licensing](#).

Visual Studio Benefits – Developer Tools

Visual Studio Enterprise subscriptions are included with certain Solutions Partner designations and legacy competencies. The Microsoft Action Pack subscription includes Visual Studio Professional subscriptions. All Visual Studio subscriptions are licensed per user and must be assigned and activated to be valid.

Sharing sign-in credentials is prohibited.

Visual Studio subscriptions allow designated employees in the partner organization to use the software and cloud services included within the Visual Studio subscription to design, develop, test, and demonstrate internal applications.

The products included in these Visual Studio subscriptions cannot be used for direct revenue-generating activities, such as providing consulting services, customizing a packaged application for a specific customer, or building a custom application for a customer, for a fee. They can be used for indirect revenue-generating activities, such as

building a packaged application on the Microsoft platform, which is then marketed and sold to customers.

Assigning subscriptions

Visual Studio subscriptions may be reassigned from one subscriber to another if 90 days have passed since the time of the original assignment.

Sharing

License entitlements are defined per organization. Your organization can share licenses across your associated locations. Partners cannot share licenses across separate organizations including affiliates and acquired companies that are not associated within the Partner Program membership profile of the partner who has Product License rights.

Azure Services Benefits

Partners may be eligible for either monthly or yearly bulk credits, based on the Solutions Partner designations they attain or through legacy benefits.

- Monthly Credits – Learn more here: [Azure Benefit](#)
- Yearly Credits – Learn more here: [Microsoft Azure Sponsorship Offer Details](#)

Technical Support Benefits

As part of Partner Program benefits, partners may receive two types of tech support incidents: Product Support Incidents and Signature Cloud Support (SCS) Incidents. While Solutions partners and partners renewing legacy competency benefits may have access to both tech support incidents, Action Pack partners have access to product support incidents only. Learn more in [Partner Center documentation](#).

Product Support Incidents are subject to N-1 policy (see [MPN Partner support N-1 policy for on-premises products](#) for policy details). The N-1 support policy enables only newer on-premises products. N-1 includes the current product (N) and the previous product version (N-1). Older (N-2) products and any product where mainstream support has ended (see [Microsoft Lifecycle Policy](#)), are not covered by Product Support Incidents. Signature Cloud Support provides partners with cloud support to help keep their customers' services operating smoothly. Signature Cloud Support handles technical support scenarios for Microsoft Office 365, Microsoft Dynamics CRM Online, and Microsoft Azure. Learn more via [Microsoft Support](#).

Marketing Benefits

Marketing benefits (or go-to-market services) include a portfolio of best-in-class marketing platforms, content, and resources that help you accelerate time to market, drive demand, and expand your business. We operate at a global scale, empowering you to unlock new growth opportunities for your business and leverage our vast

ecosystem. Some marketing benefits are included for all Partner Program partners. In addition there are incremental marketing benefits provided to partners with Solutions Partner designations or those renewing legacy competency benefits.

[Learn more about go-to-market services or get started.](#)

Refund Requests

Refund requests for membership programs or offers and the associated fees should be raised within 30 days of initial purchase. Refund requests are subject to a review and will be considered if no Benefits were consumed or tokens viewed. Microsoft reserves the right to refuse the refund.

Note: Benefits swap from Microsoft Action Pack to Learning Action Pack , or vice versa, can be performed one time only, within 30 days after the Action Pack has been purchased, and if no benefits were consumed or tokens viewed. The benefits swap is subject to a review. Microsoft reserves the right to refuse the benefits swap operation.

Retaining Legacy Competency Benefits

Legacy competencies and associated badges are no longer valid after September 30, 2022. However, you will retain your legacy benefits (benefits you received based on the competency you held on September 30, 2022), until your next anniversary date.

On your anniversary date after October 3, 2022, you will have the following options based on your Solutions Partner qualification status:

Does qualify for Solutions Partner designation at the time of anniversary:

Partners will have two options relating to benefits and they can only pick one option. **A partner must choose option #1 or #2** in order to keep the Solutions Partner designation **and can't choose both options**.

- Option #1: To receive the Solutions Partner designation benefits partners will pay the the associated annual fee. Annual fees for Solutions Partner designation will be aligned to the legacy gold competency associated annual fees; OR
- Option #2: Retain your legacy silver or gold competency benefits and pay the associated annual fee. Annual fees for legacy silver or gold competency benefits will be aligned to the legacy silver and gold competency associated annual fees.

Does not qualify for designation at the time of anniversary:

- Option: Retain your legacy silver or gold competency benefits and pay an annual fee. Annual fees for legacy silver or gold competency benefits will be aligned to the legacy silver and gold competency associated annual fees.

Note: Partners who had both legacy silver and gold membership offers (for instance, within a year of a silver membership offer being upgraded to a gold membership offer) prior to the launch of the Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program will only be able to renew the benefits associated with their legacy gold membership and not the benefits associated with both their legacy gold membership offer and their legacy silver membership offer.

Learn more with the [Solutions Partner FAQ](#).

Partner Support

Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program is not a commercial licensing channel. This means that our partner support teams don't support product benefits acquired through the Partner Program in the same way Microsoft supports products and licenses acquired through commercial licensing.

- Product benefits do not come with licensing support; we do not provide technical guidance or support around activation, tenants, subscriptions or any other technical situation.
- The supported scenarios refer to the overall Partner Center experience (benefits provisioning according to the Program Benefits Guide, user assignment/removal to/from usage-based subscriptions, product key/token redemption, software download, or any other issue with the Benefits Workspace), which means we do not provide support for the experience occurring in other portals outside Partner Center (such as Azure Portal, M365 Admin Center, Visual Studio portal, etc.)

A common misconception about product benefits is that they can be used in place of licenses acquired through other Microsoft commercial licensing channels or agreements. For example, a partner with an Enterprise Agreement may not reduce the number of licenses in that agreement by counting their product benefits.
