



Market Insight Report Reprint

Microsoft and VMware join forces to offer Azure Spring Cloud Enterprise Tier

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Introduction

Microsoft and VMware are teaming up to create a fully managed Kubernetes-based service aimed at enterprise developers and lines of business. The new Azure Spring Cloud Enterprise Tier, launched into private preview at the SpringOne conference on September 1, features managed multicloud services based on VMware's Tanzu portfolio, advanced configuration tools, premium support and native integration with Azure.

THE 451 TAKE

Microsoft and VMware are building on their Azure Spring Cloud collaboration to launch a premier offering for the many enterprises that want the goodness of Kubernetes but not necessarily the hassle of configuring, tuning and managing it. This is truly a 'better together' story. Spring developers creating business and back-end apps get an enterprise-grade landing zone for hybrid workloads (including those already built using Azure Spring Cloud) and first-party integration with Azure cloud services; VMware gets to add commercial capabilities to components of its Spring open source development framework and fold them into the Tanzu portfolio; and Microsoft taps into another rich vein of developer know-how in modernizing complex enterprise applications for hybrid deployment. The two companies have long been strong in partnerships. If the cost ends up being in line with the value to customers even as deployments become larger and more complex, this arrangement could give a jolt to Kubernetes adoption.

Details

Two years ago, Microsoft and Pivotal launched Azure Spring Cloud into private preview, delivering managed infrastructure for Spring Boot Java apps as a first-party service on Azure. After purchasing Pivotal in late 2019, VMware and Microsoft co-released the service into general availability in September 2020.

For many Java developers, Spring Boot and Spring Cloud have helped address the challenges of bringing Java workloads into Azure, providing a platform with well-established patterns for developing and operating microservice applications. Azure Spring Cloud automates source-to-container builds with components of Tanzu Build Service and out-of-the-box integration with Azure monitoring and tracing tools. By enabling Java developers to run their applications natively in Azure, without the toil of installing and managing Spring Cloud and Azure Kubernetes Services, the platform brings VMware customers to Azure and provides upselling opportunities for VMware.

The two companies cite strong momentum in the Spring ecosystem, with over half of Java developers using Spring Boot and nearly three-quarters of Spring developers using the framework for business and back-end applications, primarily in large enterprises.

Azure Spring Cloud Enterprise Tier aims to package open source Spring components into enterprise-grade Tanzu offerings. The goal is to address pain points arising as Spring applications increasingly land in hybrid public/on-premises environments. Developers want to use managed services to compose applications, but handling dependencies becomes a big issue in microservices-based deployments. IT teams want to curate developer tools for compliance purposes, but they lack insight into how the Spring roadmap may affect their projects. And building and life-cycling applications across on-premises and the cloud is difficult.

The new Enterprise Tier has three Tanzu services in preview at launch, with more to be added over time:

- **Tanzu Build Service** components enable automated creation, management and governance of application containers.
- **Tanzu Application Configuration Service** offers Kubernetes-native configuration management.
- **Tanzu Service Registry** allows applications to dynamically discover and call registered services.

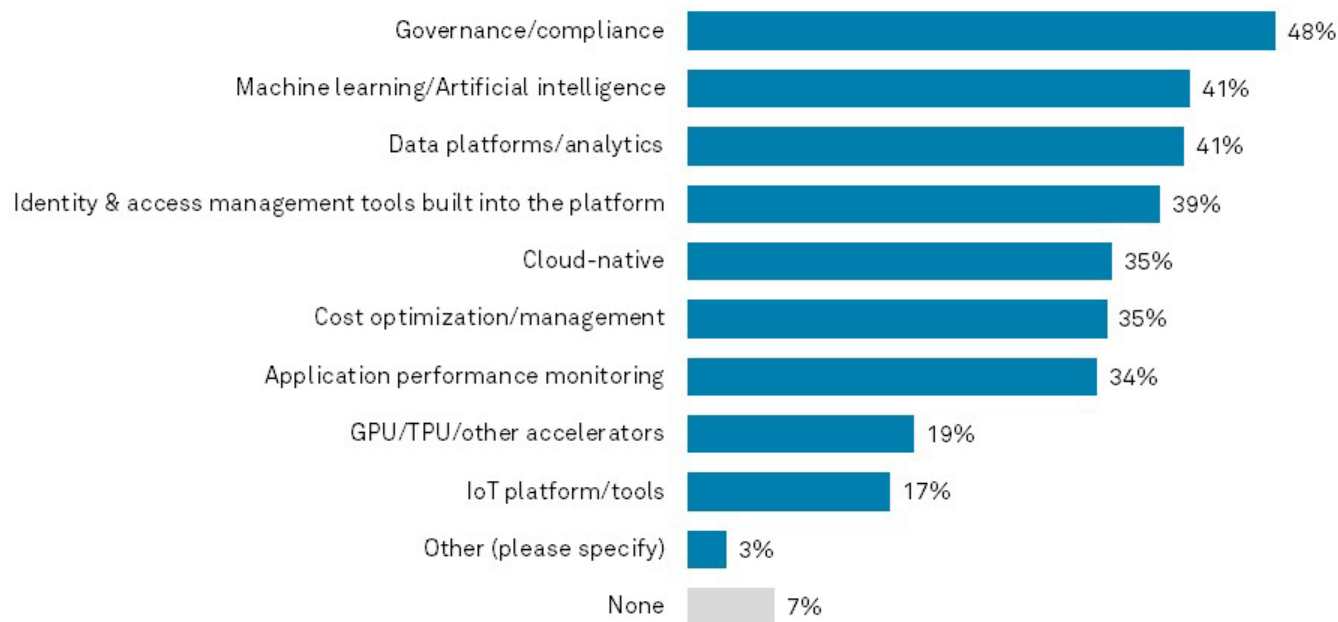
Azure Spring Cloud Enterprise Tier support will be provided by both companies, with VMware handling Spring Runtime issues and Microsoft being the first point of contact for Azure Spring Cloud. For pricing, two line items will appear on the customer's bill: the cost of Azure Spring Cloud including the underlying Azure infrastructure, and a VMware IP license fee. Customers can pay for the service on-demand (hourly) or receive discounts for one-year commitments (in alignment with VMware practice). Procurement will happen via the Azure Marketplace and, for longer-term contracts, via VMware sales engineers.

As they help stand up cloud-native environments and shoulder the operational burden of managing them, the two companies believe that customers will find the benefit of the Enterprise Tier well worth the cost for many workloads, with access to Microsoft's and VMware's combined Spring, Kubernetes and Azure expertise being a big driver.

451 Research's Voice of the Enterprise: Cloud Hosting & Managed Services, Vendor Evaluations 2020 survey shows that IT decision makers are willing to pay extra for many of the infrastructure and platform services that typically require heavy lifting to implement and lots of cycles to maintain, including governance/compliance, IAM (identity and access management) and cloud-native (container management, Kubernetes, etc.). Between them, Azure (with Active Directory and compliance certifications) and VMware (with Spring Cloud and Tanzu) can cover many of these bases, both on-premises and off, with a joined-up offering.

Services Public Cloud IaaS/PaaS Users Are Willing To Pay Extra For

Which of the following does your organization **believe are worth playing extra for** (i.e., above and beyond the base cost of the cloud infrastructure service) for use with your IaaS/PaaS public cloud environment? Please select all that apply.



Sample Size = 252

Base: Uses or plans to use IaaS/PaaS/public cloud

Source: 451 Research's Voice of the Enterprise: Cloud, Hosting and Managed Services, Vendor Evaluations 2020

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