

Azure Promotions

*Frequently
Asked Questions
for CSP*



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Overview

1. What is changing?

Azure promotions are a new, time-bound way for partners to access discounted pricing on eligible Azure usage and purchases for their customers. A promotion can apply to eligible pay-as-you-go (PAYG) usage or to Reserved Instance purchases. Check each promotion's details to see which it covers in Partner Center UX, Partner Center API or Azure Promo Readiness.

The promotions affect the price Microsoft charges the partner, while partners remain responsible for setting the final customer price.

What this means for you as partner:

- Win more deals with competitive pricing at the right moment.
- Accelerate Azure workload adoption.
- Drive additional services and long-term revenue.
- Act on time-bound offers in a more scalable, partner-led way.

2. What resources are available to me to leverage with my customers?

Leverage the **Azure CSP Promo BoM** (aka.ms/AzurePromoPartner) for promotion details, partner opportunity decks, customer pitch decks, readiness materials, and sales guidance. Azure CSP promotions align directly to the FY27 SMB conversation pillars:

- **Create a Competitive Edge with AI** (aka.ms/FY27SMBCreateacompetitiveedgewithAI)
- **Modernize Your Data to Drive Results with AI** (aka.ms/FY27SMBModernizemydata)

Explore the conversation pages above for additional customer-facing assets and messaging.

3. How do partners find available promotions?

Partners can find promotions through:

- **Partner Center:** View and download available promotions in the **Benefits** section of the **Pricing** workspace.
- **Partner Center APIs:** Retrieve promotion products, SKUs, and availabilities through the catalog APIs.
- **Azure portal:** View promotions available for a specific customer.
- **Azure Promo Readiness Guide:** Review current and upcoming CSP promotions, eligibility requirements, and discounts.

4. Are Azure promotion capabilities restricted to certain markets?

No. The promotion capability itself is not restricted to specific markets. However, individual promotions may have their own regional eligibility requirements and services are subject to regional availability. Partner Center shows only the promotions available in your customer's market, and checks eligibility when you acquire.

Eligibility

5. How is customer eligibility determined?

Each promotion's eligibility criteria are set by Microsoft and are based on the customer's history, such as past usage or spend over a lookback period. Eligibility applies to the customer you acquire the promotion for, and by default a promotion can be acquired once for each customer.

Examples of eligibility criteria include:

- **Region-based targeting:** Customer must have active workloads in a specified Azure region to qualify.
- **Usage-based targeting:** Customer must meet threshold conditions (e.g., consumed >1,000 database transaction units (DTUs) of Azure SQL Database) or absence conditions (e.g., has not used Azure Backup).
- **Spend-based targeting:** Customer's billed amount falls within a threshold over a lookback period.

6. What is region-based targeting vs. region-based application?

These are two different concepts:

	Targeting (who qualifies)	Application (where discount applies)
Purpose	Determines if a customer is eligible	Determines which resources get the discounted price
Example	Customer must have workloads in East US 2 to qualify	Discount applies only to resources deployed in East US and West Europe

Once a customer qualifies through targeting, the discount may apply more broadly unless application rules limit it to specific regions.

7. How do I check if my customer is eligible?

Partners can use Partner Center or Eligibility API to determine whether a customer is eligible at the time of the check. However, customer eligibility can change over time as their consumption and other qualifying characteristics change. As a result, an API response does not guarantee that a customer will be eligible when the partner attempts to acquire the promotion. Eligibility is automatically revalidated during the promotion acquisition process, and that acquisition-time check is the final determination of eligibility.

Documentation on the Eligibility API is available [here](#).

Additionally, CloudAscent will be adding potential Azure promotional eligibility to support partner planning. Please note that appearance on the CloudAscent reporting as potentially eligible for a promotion does not guarantee that a customer will be eligible when the partner attempts to acquire the promotion.

Resellers can learn more at aka.ms/CloudAscent. Distributors should work with their PDM to obtain access to CloudAscent data.

8. What if a customer wasn't eligible when I checked, but becomes eligible later?

Eligibility is evaluated against current promotion rules and is finalized at the time you acquire the promotion, so a customer who didn't qualify earlier may qualify later as their usage or spend changes. Re-check eligibility in Partner Center or via the Eligibility API before acquiring, and acquire while the sign-up window is still open.

9. I have a customer who isn't showing as eligible but I believe should qualify. Can I nominate them?

Eligibility is enforced automatically during the acquisition flow, so partners can't manually add a customer to a promotion. If you believe a customer should qualify, raise it with your Microsoft field contact, distribution partner, or PDM. Microsoft Support can't nominate or override eligibility.

10. Can I check eligibility for all my customers at once?

The eligibility API checks one customer per call, so to check several customers, call it for each one. Each promotion's eligibility criteria are also returned by the catalog API, so you can screen customers against your own usage data first and call the eligibility API for the ones likely to qualify.

Acquisition

11. How does a partner acquire a promotion for a customer?

Azure promotions are not applied automatically. A license-based promotion attaches to a subscription you buy. An Azure promotion is a product in its own right: you acquire it for each customer, at no charge, and it then discounts that customer's eligible usage.

In Partner Center UX, go to the customer and select Add subscription. Select Azure, then Benefits, then Azure promotions. Choose the Azure subscription and resource group to assign the promotion to, add it to the cart and check out.

At checkout, you review the promotion details and accept its terms and conditions. You can do the same through the Partner Center API.

12. Which Partner Center roles can acquire a promotion?

In Partner Center, a user with Admin agent, Billing admin, or Sales agent role can acquire promotions.

13. Does my customer need to agree before I acquire for them?

Microsoft doesn't ask your customer to take any action. You accept the promotion's terms and conditions at checkout on your customer's behalf. Your customer must already be on the Azure plan, which means they have accepted the Microsoft Customer Agreement.

Whether you agree to it with your customer first is up to you and your agreement with them. A promotion can't be cancelled, and its discount duration starts on the day you acquire, so align on the timing with your customer before you do.

14. I am an indirect reseller. Do I acquire this promo, or is it my distributor?

Your distributor acquires it. A promotion is acquired by the partner that buys from Microsoft, which in the indirect model is your distributor, and the discount reduces the price Microsoft charges them.

Talk to your distributor about which of your customers are eligible and when to acquire. Pricing between you and your distributor, and between you and your customer, works as it does today.

15. Why is the discount not applied automatically?

Acquiring is how you choose which customers get a promotion and when it starts. An Azure promotion isn't attached to something you buy, as a license-based promotion is. It's a product you acquire for each customer, at no charge.

The discount duration starts on the day you acquire, so you can time it to when your customer is ready to use the eligible service. Acquiring also confirms that your customer is eligible at that point and records your acceptance of the promotion's terms.

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Once acquired, the discount applies automatically to your customer's eligible usage for the full discount duration.

16. Why must a partner select a subscription and resource group when acquiring a promotion?

The promotion is stored as an Azure resource in the subscription and resource group you choose. That location does not limit which usage receives the discount, which applies to the customer's eligible usage wherever it runs.

You can move a promotion to another subscription or resource group during its duration without affecting eligibility or the discount.

Choose a subscription the customer expects to keep. If the Azure subscription a promotion is assigned to is cancelled, the promotion is cancelled too.

17. Will acquisition fail if the selected resource group contains no eligible resources?

No. The subscription and resource group selected when the promotion is acquired are used only to store the promotion object. The promotional benefit applies to eligible usage associated with the customer's billing profile, regardless of whether eligible resources are in the selected resource group.

18. What is the acquisition window vs. promotion duration?

Concept	Definition
Acquisition window	The dates during which a partner can acquire the promotion for an eligible customer.
Promotion duration	The period after acquisition during which the discount applies to eligible accrued usage charges.

19. Does a partner need to acquire the promotion every month on behalf of the customer?

No. The partner acquires the promotion once on behalf of the customer during the acquisition window. The promotional benefit then applies to eligible usage throughout the stated benefit duration.

20. How much notice do I get before a promotion opens?

Upcoming promotions, with their acquisition windows, are published in the Azure Promo Readiness Guide before they open. Check the guide each month.

Promotion Lifecycle

21. What happens after acquisition?

Once acquired, the promotion applies automatically for its stated duration to eligible consumption charges or purchases for the transacting partner's customer. No per-subscription or per-resource assignment is required, but each charge must continue to meet the promotion's product, region, and application rules.

Acquired promotions appear in Partner Center under Subscriptions, then Azure, then Benefits, with their status, discount percentage, and start and end dates. The Benefits API returns the same information for each customer, so you can track promotions, including those about to end, in your own tools. The discount is applied to eligible usage charges at the end of each billing period.

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22. Which usage receives the promotional price?

The promotional price applies to eligible accrued usage charges or eligible purchases for the transacting partner's customer, subject to the promotion's product, eligibility, region, and duration rules.

Eligible resources do not need to reside in the resource group selected during acquisition.

23. How does the promotion apply to PAYG?

The discount applies to eligible per-unit usage rates for the promotion's duration, starting on the date you acquire it. Standard pricing resumes when the duration ends.

24. How does the promotion apply to Reserved Instances (RIs)?

For promotions applicable to RIs, the discount applies to the RI purchase price (upfront or monthly). The RI's base discount remains unchanged.

Example: A partner purchases a one-year SQL Database RI for a customer on December 20 during the December 1–31 acquisition window and receives 20% off the RI price for the full one-year commitment term, whether they chose monthly or upfront billing.

25. Will a promotion renew automatically?

No. An acquired promotion does not renew automatically and cannot be canceled. It continues for the stated benefit duration and applies whenever consumption charges or purchases meet the promotion's application rules. Any later eligibility depends on the promotions available at that time.

26. What happens if a customer changes their partner of record during an active promotion?

Azure promotions cannot be transferred between partners. If a customer's Azure resources move to another partner, any promotion on them is cancelled under the original partner.

The new partner can acquire a promotion for that customer if the customer is eligible at that point and the acquisition window is still open.

27. What happens if I acquire a promotion but the customer consumes little or nothing during the discount period?

There's no penalty for low or no usage. The discount simply applies to whatever eligible usage occurs during the discount duration. However, because a promotion cannot be canceled and the duration runs from the acquisition date, unused time still elapses. Acquire when the customer is ready to consume so they capture the full benefit.

28. What happens at the end of the promotion period?

When a promotion's discount duration ends, the promotional pricing stops applying and eligible usage reverts to standard pricing. Any consumption already discounted during the duration is unaffected. Once the sign-up (acquisition) window closes, the promotion can no longer be acquired for new customers. Future discounts depend on the promotions available at that time.

29. Can a customer cancel the promotion, or is there a refund window?

No. You cannot cancel an acquired promotion, and there is no refund window, which is different from some license-based offers. It runs for its full duration.

The exception is the Azure subscription the promotion is assigned to. If that subscription is cancelled, every promotion assigned to it is cancelled too.

30. What happens if I don't use a promotion?

If a partner does not acquire an eligible promotion during its acquisition window, standard pricing applies and the opportunity is lost.

Pricing and Economics

31. How do promotions impact my Partner Earned Credit (PEC)?

Your Partner Earned Credit eligibility and calculation are unchanged. PEC is calculated first against the list price, and the promotional discount is then applied to the price after PEC. You are invoiced at the final price after both.

32. Do I earn CSP incentives while a customer is in the discount window?

If eligible, partners can continue to qualify for CSP incentives during a customer's discount window period. CSP incentives are applied to consumption net of both Partner Earned Credit (PEC) and/or promotional discounts on a customer's consumption.

Note: You must be eligible to receive CSP incentives. Learn more about CSP incentives: aka.ms/partnerincentives

33. Do I have to pass the promotional discount on to my customer?

The promotion reduces the price Microsoft charges the partner. You remain responsible for setting the final customer price and may decide whether to pass through some, all, or none of the discount, except where Microsoft's discount passthrough requirements apply. For qualifying Public Sector orders, including Government, Education, and State-Owned Entity customers, the discount must be passed through in full to the end customer. Leading with a deployment or adoption offer, rather than the discount alone, is where the durable services and consumption earnings come from.

34. Can PAYG promotions be combined with other offers?

- PAYG promotions do not stack with other promotions on the same workload. If multiple PAYG promotions are eligible for the same usage, the largest discount applies and the smaller discount is suppressed.
- A PAYG promotion applies only to eligible pay-as-you-go usage. It doesn't apply to Reserved Instance or savings plan purchases, or to usage already covered by a Reserved Instance, savings plan or pre-purchase plan. Usage above that coverage is billed at pay-as-you-go rates, and the promotion's discount applies to that.
- PAYG promotions do not apply to Spot instances.

35. Can a partner acquire multiple promotions for the same product on behalf of a customer?

A partner may acquire different active promotions for the same product on behalf of a customer when the customer meets each promotion's requirements. The same promotion cannot be acquired more than once for the same customer. When multiple promotions could apply to the same usage or purchase, the largest eligible discount applies and the lesser discount is suppressed.

36. Will promotional prices appear in the Azure pricelist?

Promotional prices aren't shown in the Azure plan price list in Partner Center, which lists standard prices. Each promotion's discount, dates and terms are in the Pricing workspace: select Benefits, then choose Azure consumption promotions from the Benefit type dropdown.

37. Is there a tool to estimate what a promotion is worth?

There's no promotion-specific estimator. You can work out the value from the Azure plan price list in Partner Center:

1. Start with the list price of the eligible service.
2. Apply your Partner Earned Credit, if you receive it.
3. Apply the promotion's discount percentage to the price after PEC.
4. The difference between the price after PEC and the price after the promotion is the saving per unit. Multiply it by your customer's expected eligible usage over the discount duration.

For illustration only: at a list price of \$100 and a PEC rate of 15%, the price after PEC is \$85. A 10% promotion brings it to \$76.50, a further \$8.50 per unit. Only usage that meets the promotion's product and region rules is discounted.

Customer Experience

38. What will my customer see, and what can I tell them?

Microsoft doesn't tell CSP customers about promotions or their eligibility. Whether you tell your customer, and how, is up to you.

Your customer pays the price you set. A promotion changes what Microsoft charges you, not your price to your customer.

Your customer can see a promotion once you acquire it. It's stored as a resource in the subscription and resource group you choose, so anyone with access to that resource group can see it. Tell your customer it's there before they find it.

If you've turned on Cost Management for your customer, they see costs at pay-as-you-go retail rates. Those don't include discounts on your price, so a promotion doesn't change what they see there.

Billing & Reporting

39. What is the aggregated reconciliation file for Azure promotions?

The aggregated reconciliation file is a companion to the standard reconciliation file where the partner can check the price breakdown. It contains only the usage lines where a promotion was applied. For each line it shows the list price, the price after PEC, the final price after the promotion, and the promotion's identifiers. It is available 24–48 hours after the standard reconciliation file is released.

Every field is described at <https://learn.microsoft.com/partner-center/billing/usage-aggregated-reconciliation-files>.

40. Does the aggregated reconciliation file replace the existing reconciliation file?

No. The standard reconciliation file remains the primary billing record and includes the final net price after PEC and promotion discounts. The aggregated reconciliation file is a companion report that provides the additional pricing breakdown and promotion details. Partners can also use the existing Unbilled Daily Rated Usage and Billed Daily Rated Usage reports, which include the price after PEC and before the promotion, along with the promotion identifier when applicable.

41. How will promotions show in Azure Cost Management exports?

The Partner Center reconciliation files are the documented record of promotional pricing. The unbilled and billed daily rated usage files show the discounted effective unit price and the promotion's benefit ID on each discounted line, and the aggregated reconciliation file shows the full price breakdown. Use these files to reconcile promotions.

Resellers and customers who view costs in the customer tenant see pay-as-you-go retail rates, which don't include promotional discounts.

Operational Readiness

42. What should I do differently and operationally prepare for?

Eligibility, planning, and selling

- Ensure your teams can evaluate eligibility before selling and understand why a customer may qualify or be ineligible.
- Know that once a promotion is acquired, the customer account retains the promotion for its full duration even if they no longer meet the original eligibility criteria.
- Review the Azure Promo Readiness Guide each month as the authenticated source for in-market and upcoming CSP promotions, including eligibility requirements, discount details, and acquisition windows.
- Act during the acquisition window: If the window closes before acquisition, the opportunity is lost.
- Use promotions strategically: Focus on migration, expansion, and new workload adoption where targeted offers can accelerate growth.

Acquisition flow

- Prepare teams to review the pre-acquisition promotion details, including: promotion name, discount percentage, promotional period, acquisition window dates, best-discount logic, and when standard pricing resumes.
- Proceeding with acquisition serves as acknowledgment of the promotion details. No separate attestation is required.

Billing readiness

- Stay current on your billing and reconciliation artifacts, including any new fields or supplemental reports introduced for promotions.
- Review and update automated billing, reconciliation, and customer-invoicing processes before using promotions in production.

Sandbox testing

- Validate end-to-end promotion flows (eligibility check, acquisition, etc.) in sandbox before acquiring promotions.