



TIP SHEET

3 Options for Managing SQL Server on Azure

In July of 2022, Microsoft ended support for SQL Server 2012, and with its end, many businesses were faced with the difficult choice of either upgrading to a later version and risking the same end of support at a later date or making the move to migrate to the cloud. For many organizations, it can seem overwhelming to move business-critical databases as it means immense preparation and a high level of technical proficiency. Establishing a solid plan for migrating your SQL Server workloads to Azure can dramatically reduce the effort required and the amount of strain it puts on your organization.

Your specific goals, whether they be cost savings or wanting to minimize your administrative work, can have a huge impact on your choice for which SQL Server data platform you decide on. **There are 3 primary options for managing SQL Server in Azure:**

1

Azure Virtual Machines

Using this method, you use Azure VM as infrastructure as a service (IaaS) to operate SQL Server inside a virtual machine (VM) in Azure. If your goal is to migrate on-premises SQL Server databases and applications with minimal or no changes to your database, this is a lift-and-shift option. It also allows for total control over your database engine, and with it, the added responsibility of fully managing the VM.

2

Azure SQL Database

With this option, you use Azure SQL Database as a wholly managed platform as a service (PaaS) created to maintain SQL Server workloads. This method incorporates numerous database management elements, such as upgrading, patching, backups, high availability, performance, scalability, and intuitive query processing abilities.

3

Azure SQL Managed Instance

This is another platform as a service (PaaS) option for SQL migration, and an ideal option for migrating to the cloud if your organization wants to have the opportunity to create new applications or gain access to the latest cloud features. While this is also a lift-and-shift method, it allows organizations to maintain all PaaS capabilities like automatic patching, updates and backups, and high availability that reduce both cost and overhead.