

# Quick Facts & FAQ's

# Economical, Expert Microsoft Support



US CLOUD

## Who is US Cloud?

US Cloud is the only Gartner-recognized independent third party providing a legitimate, full replacement for Microsoft Premier & Unified Support. (See Aug 2021 Gartner Market Guide for Independent third-party Support for IBM, Oracle, SAP, and Microsoft).

US Cloud is 100% focused on offering a legitimate support alternative to Microsoft Premier and Unified Support. As an Inc 5000 Company, we spent 20+ years as a Microsoft partner offering in-depth Microsoft managed services. Simply put, we provide high-quality, fanatical Microsoft Support for less.

## Why consider switching to US Cloud?

- 30% to 50% savings vs. Unified Support
- FASTER Initial Response, Sr. Engineer Engagement, and Time-to-Resolution (all severities)
- Financially-backed Service Level Agreements (SLA's)
- Senior Microsoft-certified engineers staffed around the clock (Level II – Level IV / DSE)
- 100% US-based, domestic engineers. ZERO offshore – Support Sovereignty
- 85% of tickets resolved in-house, including cloud technology like Azure and O365
- Managed Microsoft escalation available through priority Microsoft Premier Support for Partners
- True Technical Account Managers (TAM) vs. MSFT Customer Service Account Managers (CSAM)

## Can US Cloud really support your company?

Yes, we can support virtually any Microsoft Premier or Unified client in all major industries. We fully replace Microsoft Support for many Fortune 500's, complex multi-nationals, and companies across North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, 24/7/365. We provide quality Microsoft support to mid-size companies as well.

Some current US Cloud Clients include **Under Armour, Harley-Davidson, Quest Diagnostics, The US Department of State, Siemens, United Health Services, Garmin, the American Cancer Society, TripAdvisor**– and hundreds more.

**\$625M**

IN CLIENT SAVINGS

\$625 Million in US Cloud client savings over 5 years for Microsoft Support

**51**

MAJOR BRANDS SERVED

51 Fortune 500 and Global 2000 enterprise clients served by US Cloud

**4.2M**

USERS SUPPORTED

4.2 Million users in finance, healthcare, insurance, tech, gov, edu and more

**28**

COUNTRIES

28 countries with enterprises supported 24/7/365 by US Cloud

MSFT says, “US Cloud can’t escalate tickets to MSFT because they aren’t a partner.”

**False:** We can escalate any type of ticket to Microsoft and work with them every single day. Ask us, we’ll tell you how.

**True:** US Cloud left the MSFT Partner Network after 20 years in order to compete with the MSFT Support monopoly.

## How can US Cloud compete with Microsoft and still support them?

Although new for the Microsoft ecosystem, independent third-party support is a well-established model for other enterprise software platforms. 100% of our revenues come from our Premier and Unified Support replacement service and we have built the technical, legal and business structures specifically for that service. We do it all day, every day, and have been successfully converting and keeping Microsoft support clients of all sizes for years.

## What about cloud products? Don’t you need tenant access?

US Cloud resolves cloud tickets (O365, Azure, etc.) over 77% of the time with no escalation (if you include on-premise it’s 85%). The majority are issues that do not need code or tenant access. For those issues that do need Microsoft involvement, we escalate tickets via Microsoft Premier Support for Partners through our proprietary network of elite MSFT partners. We also have written, contractual SLA’s governing when and how tickets get escalated to MSFT.

## You claim to save 30%-50% vs. Microsoft. How is that possible?

US Cloud is a Microsoft Support specialist, with streamlined operations headquartered in the Midwestern United States. Because Microsoft support is our entire business, not just another service line, we have been able to drive significant efficiencies and scale into our operations. We are privately owned and invest extensively in engineering, automation, and quality improvement initiatives.

## Do US Cloud rates rise above the “entry price” as we go?

Nope. US Cloud offers “Rate Lock” as a standard benefit in your service agreement. This means that you pay the same rate for additional service hours with no penalty — up to 50% of your original annual purchase. We also offer two- or three-year contracts that further protect against inflation pressure.

## Will I have to sacrifice quality to save money with US Cloud?

We do not sacrifice quality for lower prices. New clients often test us head-to-head against Microsoft’s support and most of the time we are faster to respond and resolve a ticket, with less effort for the client. Our “Initial Response Times” and “Time to Resolution” are on average 2x-4x better than Microsoft’s. Our communication and service are better as well, with 4.6 / 5 customer satisfaction scores.

MSFT says, “US Cloud requires delegated admin rights. Your security group isn't going to allow that.”

**False:** Microsoft corrected this technical issue in their Client Portal in early 2022. US Cloud and our partners were part of the early beta for this feature. “GDAP” or Granular Delegated Admin Privileges, eliminates the old security concerns.

### Can I get expedited access to Microsoft in an emergency?

Yes. Moving to an independent provider for your Microsoft product support does NOT mean you no longer need Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) involvement. Bug-fixes, security patches, tenant access, extreme edge-cases – it is important for third-party support providers and Microsoft clients to be able to engage Microsoft. US Cloud offers rapid response and managed escalation to Microsoft when necessary.

### What is Delegated Admin? Why is it no longer a problem?

Due to an oversight in Microsoft's Client Admin Portal, prior to 2022 companies were required to grant Delegated Admin (DA) permissions to a partner, like a Communications Service Provider (CSP), for them to open a service or support ticket. The problem was that granting DA is the same as granting Global Admin rights – a major issue for security and compliance teams in many larger organizations. Now fixed, Granular Delegated Admin Permissions (GDAP) totally replaces DA and ONLY allows a partner to create a service ticket with NO other access or abilities. This eliminates the security issue.

### Won't I lose access to key Microsoft technology experts?

It depends on what kind of “MSFT resource” you are engaging. If you are not opening a ticket through the portal, it's NOT going through the Unified Support structure. If your expert is accessed through Unified, it is often possible to create a separate engagement via Microsoft Consulting Services. US Cloud offers high-level DSE's and other specialists that can also support you. But if there is truly a singular Microsoft resource you need, there is an option to keep a Microsoft DSE using Premier Support for Partner hours, which we can provide at our cost.

### Does my security risk change by leaving OEM support?

Well, yes. But in a good way in this case. Unlike Microsoft, US Cloud doesn't utilize offshore third-party vendors or ship your sensitive unsecured information outside the USA. US Cloud has also never been breached (such as the leak of 250k Premier Support client records in 2019) and we guarantee all client information is encrypted both in motion and at rest. Built to the standards necessary for our US Federal clients, US Cloud systems and operations were designed to be ultra-secure and compliant.

**NOTE:** To see if the engineers you are working with are outsourced third-party vendors, look in support ticket email signatures. If the sender or CC'd supervisors have “V-” in their signature line, they are a non-Microsoft vendor – most often with out of India.

MSFT says, **“You get big \$\$\$ for proactive consulting support as part of Unified.”**

**False:** MSFT often misrepresents Unified’s “included proactive support,” touting hundreds of thousands in consulting value. In reality, these are primarily online, DIY tools and resources.

Your team can’t implement solo? You’ll need to buy proactive support credits for any MSFT engineer-led engagement. Plus, a 30% TAM fee.

## How do US Cloud engineers compare to Microsoft’s?

Even if Microsoft wasn’t shipping most of your support overseas to third-party vendors, our engineers can compete at the highest level. We employ 100% domestic, US-based senior MSFT-certified engineers (L2-L4 and DSE) across the entire MSFT stack. They average 14+ years Microsoft-specific experience and are staffed on all three shifts. In addition, many are former Microsoft employees.

## Isn’t an unlimited hours model better?

Under Unified Support only reactive and online DIY tools are unlimited. Engineer-led proactive support, DSE, engineer advisories, Azure Rapid Response, TAM auto-charges – and a host of other add-ons drive up the price quickly. Plus, your system only “breaks” so often. With US Cloud you only pay for the hours you need. Nothing else. And since you can add hours without penalty, you can estimate hours conservatively.

## Does US Cloud provide proactive services?

Yes. US Cloud has a full Proactive Support Catalog for things like system health-checks, readiness assessments, project advisory support, training and workshops, deployment or migration assistance, mitigation planning and support, and much more.

## Can US Cloud offer Dedicated Support Engineers?

Yes. We can provide high-level DSE support across the entire spectrum of Microsoft technologies. And if we do have a rare gap in a niche area, we have some of the top Microsoft Gold Partner specialists in our proprietary network to support you. Often these are the same experts Microsoft white-labels for high-level project work.

## Would I get a TAM with US Cloud or just a customer service rep?

As Microsoft continues to swap its Technical Account Managers (TAM’s) for less technical Customer Service Account Managers (CSAMS’s), US Cloud is going the other direction. All our clients get a TAM dedicated to their account as well as a specialized onboarding team and operations specialists.

MSFT says, **“Leaving Unified Support will damage your relationship with Microsoft.”**

**False:** Of the hundreds of Microsoft Support clients we have transitioned, NONE have reported difficulties negotiating their Enterprise Agreement or with their relationship. Product and Support teams are separate entities at Microsoft.

## What infrastructure does US Cloud use?

US Cloud runs our operation on the best-in-class ConnectWise ticket and account management platform that is fully integrated into our Salesforce CRM and Sage client accounting software. In addition, we have built client-specific integrations with ServiceNow to allow seamless adoption in client organizations.

## Does US Cloud offer no-risk trials?

Yes. US Cloud has formal no-risk Proof of Concept (POC) trials. It offers peace of mind to companies who want to try something outside the Microsoft monopoly for the first time. Our standard POC trial is 30-days and allows cancellation for any reason, no questions asked. Only pay for the service hours used.

## How disruptive is a transition away from Microsoft Support?

For most clients, the move from Microsoft Premier or Unified to US Cloud is less disruptive to IT operations than they expected. On average, we bring on 20-30 new clients a month, giving us a lot of experience in how to avoid pitfalls and onboard any size client efficiently.

## Does US Cloud have an onboarding process?

Yes. US Cloud has a comprehensive onboarding process run by your TAM and account service staff. Our team will coordinate live Teams video onboarding sessions with your stakeholders (as many sessions as desired). They will create your account profile in our system, set up your dedicated client portal, and enroll any number of users you designate. We typically have new clients submitting tickets within 7-14 days of contract execution.

## What about current tickets or projects we have going with Microsoft?

No problem. US Cloud's comprehensive onboarding process includes full ingestion planning to take over any outstanding Microsoft PRS tickets or engineering engagements.

## Do I have enough time to decide?

It depends on the size and complexity of your organization. Most Fortune 500's require one to two months of runway to get through the evaluation and legal processes. However, we have streamlined our contracting practice and sales process to help prospective clients up against their resubscription deadline. In addition, Microsoft often grants extensions to resubscription if pressed.