FAQ - Microsoft Cloud Solution Provider (CSP) Program

The Microsoft Cloud Solution Provider (CSP) program is a modern-day licensing program delivered by Version 1. This differs from traditional licensing programs that are transactional in nature. Instead, CSP is designed to allow Microsoft partners, with deep technical and licensing expertise like Version 1, to integrate license fulfilment with end-to-end lifecycle managed services - from solutions implementation to support, and billing.

As Microsoft licensing experts with extensive customer experience spanning across all sizes, sectors and industries, we have compiled answers to the most common FAQs about Microsoft CSP.

Q   What is CSP?

A   The Microsoft Cloud Solution Provider (CSP) program enables partners to directly manage their customer's Microsoft software lifecycle (including Azure, Microsoft 365, Dynamics 365 and an ever-increasing portfolio of perpetual and subscription software). Through CSP, partners directly provision, manage, support and invoice their customer subscriptions and associated services.

Q   What's different about CSP compared to my other Microsoft contracts?

A   CSP offers less complexity, with a single evergreen, Microsoft Customer Agreement.

Q   When does it make sense to consider CSP?

A   At any time, but there are also compelling events, such as upcoming renewal of a Microsoft agreement and business needs (e.g. cloud-adoption, specific project, business process changes).

Q   Can I obtain CSP with any Microsoft Partner?

A   There are two tiers of CSP:
- Indirect CSP Reseller (the majority of Microsoft Partners) who transact through a Distributor as a means of supplying subscriptions to customers.
- Direct CSP Provider (such as Version 1) who have invested in operational and accounting systems, technical expertise and accreditations, and have the ability to deliver 1st line support services to fully support customers throughout the software lifecycle.

Q   Is there a great deal of contractual paperwork involved in CSP?

A   No. An evergreen Microsoft Customer Agreement underpins all products and services supplied through CSP.

Q   How do I make sure that I'm always getting optimum value from my CSP?

A   Transparency is key. Version 1 has invested in the systems and operations to ensure customers are kept fully informed of costs and to enable them to retain control and make decisions based on their business needs.

Q   Why should I consider Version 1 as my CSP partner?

A
- Version 1 is a profitable, risk-averse, customer-focused expert system integrator of 30 years standing.
- Version 1 helps customers achieve business objectives through the alignment of suitable technology – which is the foundation upon which the CSP program is built.
- We have invested in the processes to fulfil the supply of products and services effectively and efficiently.
- We have a highly skilled, dedicated Software Asset Management Practice to support customers with recommendations and best practice, good governance and compliance, and the portfolio of technology to help customers fulfil their requirements and objectives.

Q   What sort of benefits will I see with CSP?

A   Effective alignment of technology with business needs; cost transparency; ability to quickly react to changing business needs; measurable return on investment.

Q   When might CSP not be suitable?

A   If a customer does not use and has no plans to use Microsoft products, if they have over 2.5k users or an Enterprise Agreement with multi-affiliate/globally negotiated contract terms, then CSP might not be suitable.

Q   Can I change CSP Partner if I'm not happy with my incumbent and how easy is this?

A   Yes. A customer can change CSP partner or have multiple CSP partners at any time. The customer always retains the right to select, invite and remove partner relationships by written request.

Q   Is my information secure?

A   Maintaining and protecting the integrity of customer information is our highest priority. As a Direct CSP, we have implemented all security measures mandated by Microsoft, including access auditing, Role-Based Access Controls, Privileged Identity Management and Multi-factor Authentication and practice ISO27001 and Cyber Essentials methodologies.

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