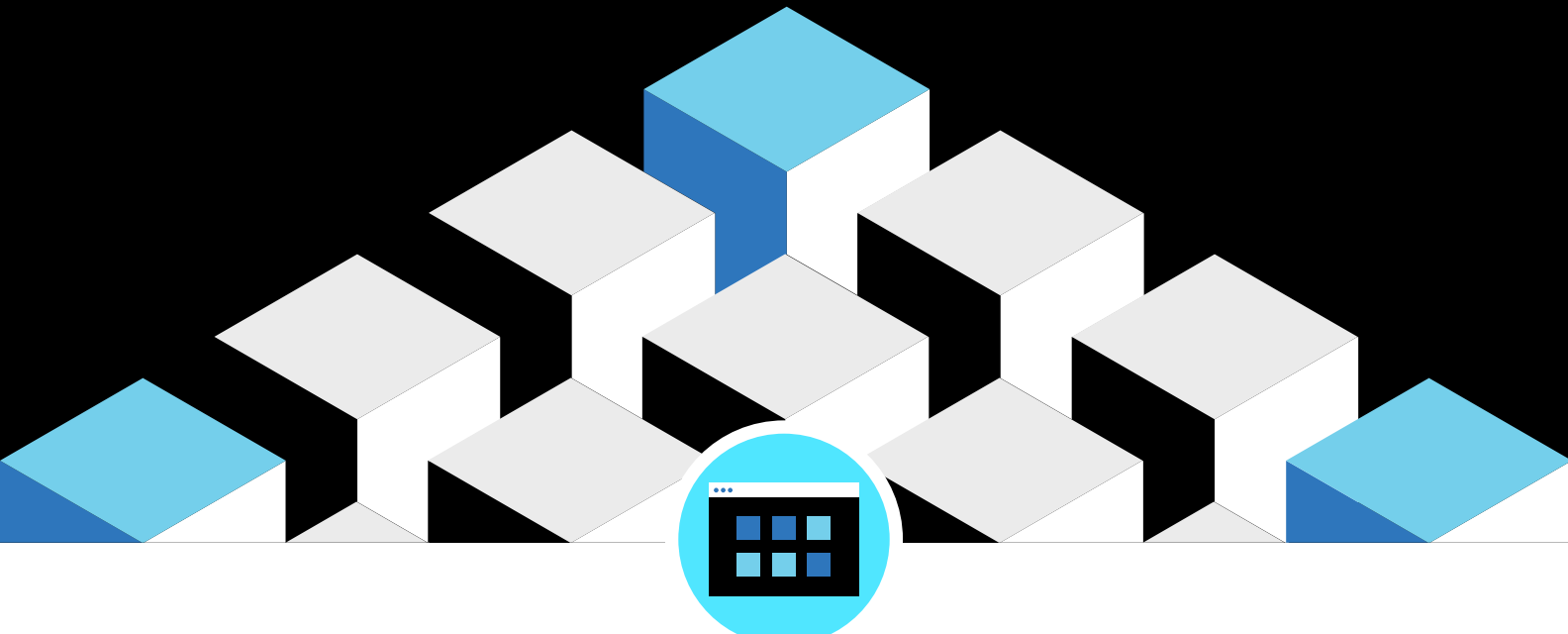## Microsoft Azure

How to Choose the Right Azure Services for Your Applications —It's Not A or B

If you have been working with Azure for any period, you might have grappled with the question: which Azure service should I run my apps on? This is an important decision because the services you choose will dictate your resource planning, budget, timelines, and ultimately the time to market for your business. It impacts the cost for not only the initial delivery, but also the ongoing maintenance of your applications.

Traditionally, organizations have thought that they must choose between two platforms, technologies, or competing solutions to build and run their software applications. For example, they ask questions like, "Do we use Web Logic or WebSphere for hosting our Java Enterprise applications?," "Should Docker Swarm be the enterprise-wide container platform or Kubernetes?," or "Do we adopt containers or just stick with virtual machines (VMs)?" They try to fit all their applications on platform A or B. This A or B mindset stems from on-premises practices based on the constraints of the on-premises world, such as packaged software delivery model, significant upfront investments in infrastructure and software licensing, and long lead times required to build and deploy any application platform. They bring the same mindset to Azure and spend a significant amount of time identifying and preparing that one Azure service that can host as many applications as possible, if not all, and then trying to force-fit all their applications into this single platform introducing delays and creating unnecessary roadblocks. But there is a better approach possible in Azure that will yield better results.

As you transition to Azure, where you spin up and destroy resources on an as-needed basis, you don't have to choose between A or B. Azure makes it easy and cost effective to take a different approach, the A+B approach.

> **Azure enables you to shift your thinking from an A or B to an A+B mindset, which has many benefits.**

An A+B mindset simply means choosing the service(s) that best meet your application needs instead of limiting yourself to a predetermined service. Thus, you choose the right tool for the right job.
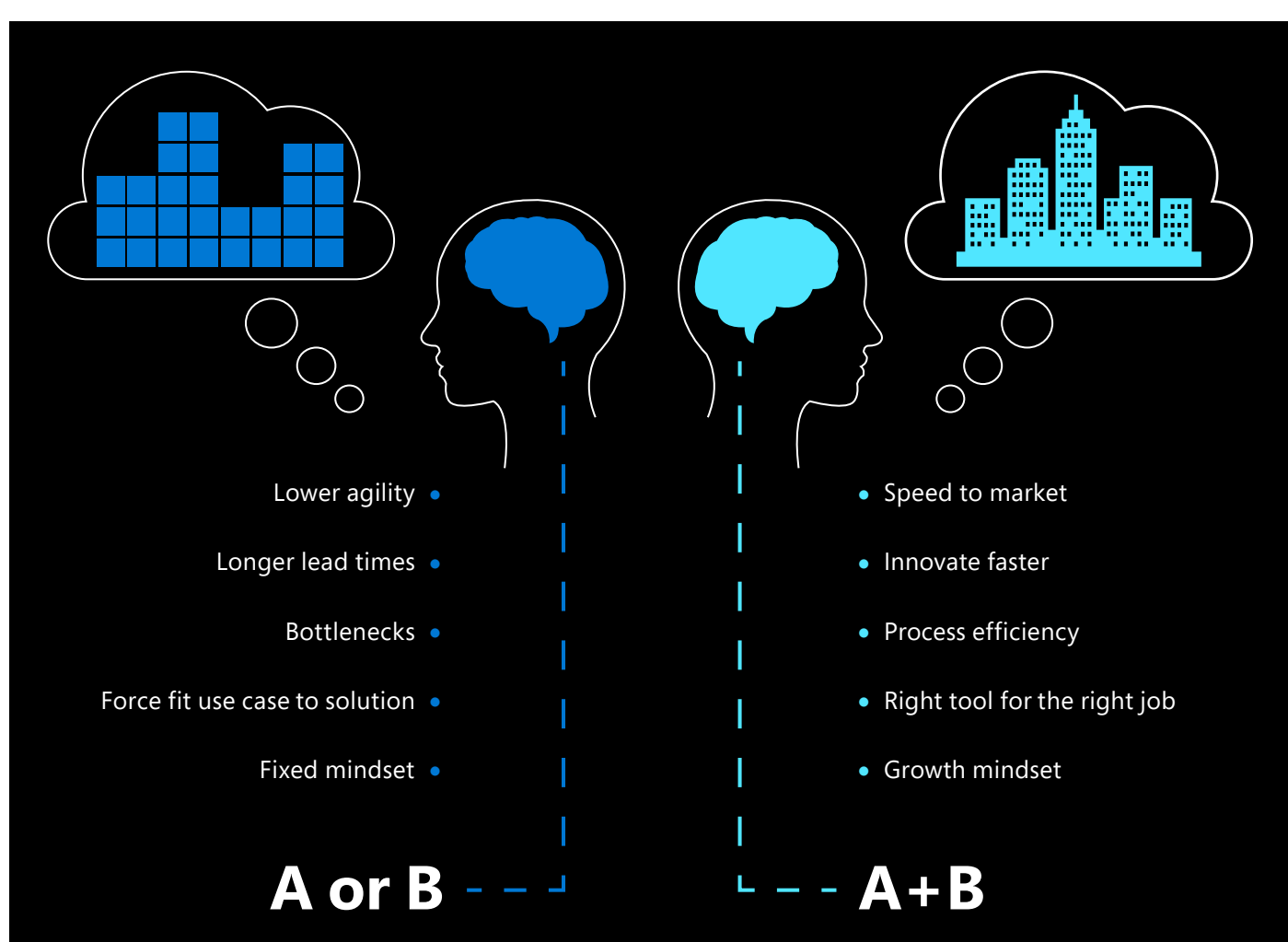

A or B	A+B
Lower agility	Speed to market
Longer lead times	Innovate faster
Bottlenecks	Process efficiency
Force fit use case to solution	Right tool for the right job
Fixed mindset	Growth mindset

Figure 1: A or B versus A+B mindset

Current industry trends

Organizations are gradually transitioning from A or B mindset to an A+B mindset for choosing the services for hosting their applications. In our recent survey with Java customers, many organizations said they would use more than one cloud service for hosting their applications.

Barracuda's strategy is to use the Azure service that best meets their need

Barracuda provides email and data protection and application, cloud, and network security to more than 220,000 customers worldwide, in addition to its on-premises and cloud backup solutions. The company's customers wanted to be able to find sensitive, personally identifiable information stored in Microsoft 365. So, in collaboration with Microsoft and building on top of Microsoft Azure services, Barracuda developed Data Inspector, which uses AI to discover sensitive categories of information to make compliance easier.

> **Our primary customers and partners are Microsoft users, so when we first started designing the solution, we chose to use Azure as much as we could. If an Azure service can perform or augment a function that we need, we use it."**
> Andy Blyler, vice president of engineering for data inspector at Barracuda

The solution relies on a core set of Azure services, including Azure Cosmos DB, Azure Blob Storage, Azure Functions, Azure App Service, Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS), Azure Pipelines, Azure DevOps, Azure Front Door, and Azure Content Delivery Network. Data Inspector uses Azure Cognitive Services and its optical character recognition (OCR) capabilities to extract text from images. Using all these Azure services, Barracuda was able to get to the market faster and invest engineering resources in building customer value into the solution.

This is one example of forward-thinking companies embracing the A+B mindset for faster innovation and greater speed to market, and better customer value.

Practical guidance for building an A+B mindset

Get the free _e-book_ to learn more about the key principles of the A+B mindset that your teams and organizations can use to choose the right destinations in Azure for your applications.