

# *The Aktion Hosting Advantage*

## *Cloud Services delivered by industry experts*



### Let's Compare: Aktion Cloud Services vs AWS vs Microsoft Azure

As more and more businesses decide to move critical IT operations into the cloud, the number of cloud services providers keeps pace.

Microsoft's Azure platform and Amazon Web Services are two of the most well-known options for companies looking to explore hosting. The platforms they offer are generally software agnostic – and often pretty basic, with some additional features available for additional cost.

Aktion Associates has developed offerings to address the need for cloud services while focusing on the capabilities required to accommodate specific software packages

For customers running one of our Sage, Infor, Acumatica, or Viewpoint products, Aktion has an environment designed, maintained, staffed, and supported by knowledgeable engineers with a great deal of experience in these applications. The level of product-specific support the Aktion team offers is something the other, more generic hosting providers simply cannot provide.

#### The Aktion Hosting Advantage Defined

##### Granular Resources

Aktion owns and maintains our own data center, which means we spec servers out exactly as needed to optimize hosted applications. This ensures that our hosting customers purchase the right amount of RAM, CPU, and storage that they require– with the option of increasing (or reducing) these, as needed, in precise increments.

AWS and Azure work from more of a SKU model, and as servers grow in these environments, customers will be required to swap out one SKU for another which contains the additional resources needed – sometimes much more than is needed.

##### Storage Capabilities: SSD vs. SAS Storage

Solid State Disk (SSD) is the fastest storage type, with the highest performance and reliability. Data is stored in integrated circuit arrays / chips that have no moving parts. Serial Attached SCSI (SAS) technology is older, with disk drives that have spinning platters and read arms that limit speeds and experience wear.

All three environments offer options to use either type of storage for hosting, but Aktion uses SSD for all primary storage and SAS for archival storage.

##### Geo-redundant Disk

All of our hosted disk storage is replicated to a second geographical location to protect against regional disaster. We currently replicate from our primary data center in Maumee, Ohio, to a secondary center in Toledo, Ohio. In Q3, Aktion also plans to go-live with an additional Data Center in our Charlotte, North Carolina location. AWS and Azure do offer this type of replication, but at an additional cost.

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## Backup Inclusion

Even in a cloud environment, backup is an important piece of a total protection strategy. All Aktion Cloud Services installations include backups with a 6 week retention policy, with 7 daily and 5 weekly backups available for recovery. This protects hosted installations against errors, file corruption, or other issues which might impact mission-critical data. Amazon Web Services (AWS) doesn't offer any backup options at all, with customers being forced to install their own 3rd party product to manage backups, while Azure only offers a paid option for backup.

## Bandwidth

This is the amount of data that can flow through a given network in a specified period of time. Amazon and AWS will monitor this network traffic, and bill or limit it based on the user's subscriptions. On the other hand, Aktion does not set limits or fees on network traffic, ensuring a consistent budget even in high volume months.

## OS Management

Operating systems don't exist in a vacuum or specific point in time – they need to be monitored, patched, and updated regularly to minimize the risk of compromise or loss of functionality. This service is included with Aktion's hosting, for maximum uptime. Neither AWS nor Azure offers OS Management.

## Help Desk

The Aktion Help Desk is staffed by engineers who, along with having a great deal of expertise with regards to cloud infrastructure, are experienced and knowledgeable in the software products Aktion supports. For issues relating to the hosted environment, support via helpdesk is completely included in the Aktion monthly subscription. If an environment issue is impacting the functionality of an Aktion hosted installation, we will take care of it. Our commitment is to work proactively, on the front end, to prevent downtime – but to assist without additional charge if an environment issue requires it.

## Disaster Recovery

Disasters do happen. Files get accidentally deleted, users fall victim to ransom-ware, and vendors push out conflicting updates or changes. We can assist to restore, repair, or roll back where something like this is affecting a running software instance. This type of support, often specific to our hosted applications, can be included in all hosting agreements. AWS and Azure cannot offer disaster recovery at this level, because they have no knowledge of what it takes to keep a Sage, Infor, Acumatica or Viewpoint instance running.

## Onsite IT / Help Desk Support

Sometimes, businesses require support for their local network, or equipment that they have on-premises, in order to get or maintain access to a hosted environment. That support can take the form of a visit by a technician, or use of the Aktion help desk. Aktion is pleased to offer this type of support for customers,

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whether through a managed services contract or simply on a per incident basis. This isn't an option that's offered by the competitors.

### Application Specific Support

The same number that's used for hosting support at Aktion can be used to log support requests for these applications (for Aktion software support customers). This gives Aktion customers a single point of contact for assistance, with no finger pointing between vendors. This benefit is not available from AWS or Azure, given that they generally have no familiarity with these.

### 3rd Party App Support

Aktion also knows the 3rd party packages installed alongside Sage, Infor, Acumatica, or Viewpoint. We support the environment for these, and also offer application and configuration support through our software support channels. This type of support is not offered elsewhere at any price.

### Server Management Timeline

The ongoing, active support of servers is something we do as part of every hosting agreement, for no additional charge. Typically, this type of service runs between \$250-\$500 per server for on-prem or even where a 3rd party manages Azure or AWS hosted machines. For multiple server installations, this is a significant advantage in using Aktion's Cloud Services.

### Why Aktion?

Not only does Aktion Cloud Services provide the security of proactive server management and monitoring, but our customers also enjoy peace of mind knowing that their hosted servers are maintained and supported by engineers with application-specific expertise. Both hosting and software support can be obtained from a single point of contact. With a large number of Aktion Cloud Services customers running the same supported software packages, common issues are familiar to us, resulting in expedited resolution of those issues.

In business since 1979, Aktion delivers industry-specific applications, Cloud and Managed Services, infrastructure and next generation technology solutions. Aktion partners with global technology innovators to deliver a complete technology solution. More than 4,900 clients reward us with their partnership and choose Aktion as their technology advisor.

A privately-held company headquartered in Maumee, OH, Aktion employs more than 185 technology professionals including application and network engineers; industry experts; and sales and support personnel. Aktion has three satellite offices staffed with certified professionals who deliver local support with world-class expertise. Our two, secure, military-grade data centers host/back up hundreds of customer workloads.

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