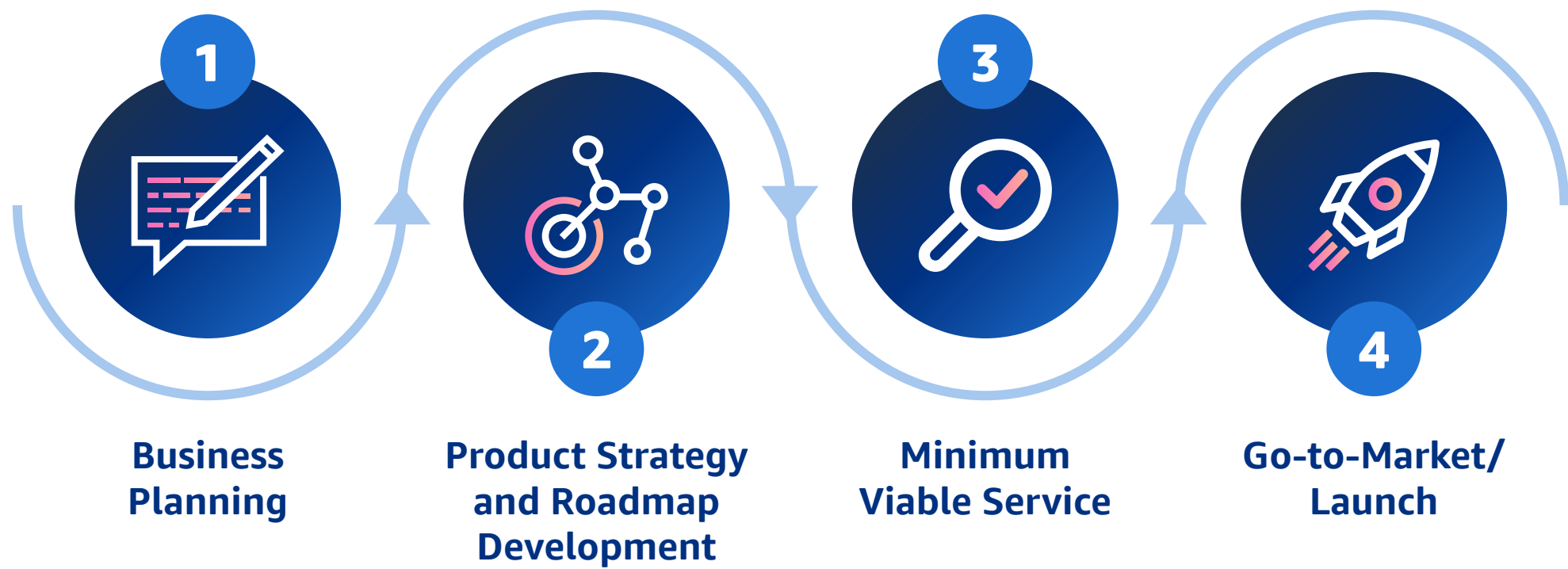




The Journey to SaaS

Whether you've just taken the first steps toward delivering Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) or you're about to launch your first solution, use this guide to accelerate your journey with AWS. Learn how [AWS SaaS Factory program](#) can help today. Subscribe to [AWS SaaS Insights](#) for advice and future events.



1

Business Planning

Actions

- Create unique buyer and user personas based on target market segments
- Complete competitive analysis (inc. pricing, market penetration)
- Prepare pro forma budgets (design/build/sell/operate)
- Prepare commercial projections with SaaS-specific revenue metrics
- Assess the SaaS-specific experience of existing in-house resources
- Explore training opportunities and partner benefit programs for SaaS
- Survey focus group (existing and prospective customers)

Motivations

- Desire to inform tiering strategy with SaaS customer personas
- Financial model should provide funding justification and path to profits
- Ensure budgets and commercial plan include SaaS-specific attributes
- Capture business requirements to inform architecture decisions
- Determine capabilities to build in-house or outsource
- Size the total addressable market
- Understand potential customer lifetime value (CLV)

Questions

- Is our future portfolio SaaS-only or just SaaS-sometimes?
- When will the growth and financial benefits offset the cost and effort?
- How will this impact existing on-prem customers? Will they migrate to SaaS?
- Do we need Systems Integrators (SIs) for staff augmentation?
- How will we fund the up-front investments required?

Pain Points

- Lack of funding
- Lack of skilled resources to design/build/sell/operate
- Ambiguous or unrealistic profitability objectives
- Lack of relevant benchmarking in alignment with tiering strategy
- Executive friction, confusion, or conflict over future SaaS posture
- Verticalized competition with more agility and faster time-to-market

Resources

- [AWS SaaS Factory Insights Hub](#)
- [AWS Cloud Adoption Framework](#)
- [Forrester TEI Study: The Partner Opportunity For Building SaaS On Amazon Web Services](#)
- [AWS Executive Briefing Center](#)
- [Whitepaper: The Journey to SaaS](#)

2

Product Strategy and Roadmap Development

Resources

- [APN Innovation Sandbox Credits](#)
- [AWS Training and Certification](#)
- [AWS SaaS Boost](#)
- [Blog: Building a Multi-Tenant SaaS Solution Using AWS Serverless Services](#)
- [Blog: Building a Multi-Tenant SaaS Solution Using Amazon EKS](#)
- [Whitepaper: SaaS Architecture Fundamentals](#)

Pain Points

- Lack of data from customers and prospects to inform feature design
- Missing feedback loops between technical and business teams
- Few resources to guide research and development (R&D), point of contacts (POCs), and minimum viable service (MVS) design and development
- Insufficient tools for builders and operators
- Ambiguous product release cycle timelines
- Too much focus on feature, function and not enough on value design
- Observability challenges—performance, product adoption

Questions

- What does Product Market-fit look like for each unique tier? Will there be a free trial tier?
- What is the customer expectation for the onboarding experience?
- How will we design and measure value experience and time-to-value?
- How will we approach the multi-tenant aspects of our solution?
- Will we be able to correlate tenant-level activity with the costs we will incur?
- Should there be consumption-based options in our pricing model?
- How do we know that customers truly want to buy these features and services?
- How will we measure agility?

Motivations

- Enable agility and efficient release cycles
- Understand the natural boundaries (functional, performance, isolation, etc.) of tenant profiles
- Map a frictionless, automated, and standardized onboarding experience
- Prioritize observability—fuel a plan to capture tenant-level activity and costs
- Identify KPIs that reflect agility, innovation, and operational efficiency
- Ensure that cost-effective architecture decisions are made

Actions

- Design services to enable value recognition experiences for customers
- Package services and features in alignment with tiering model
- Build an analytics view Customer Journey Map for each tier of service, spanning the customer lifecycle
- Define feature/service roadmap, set time-bound release cycle objectives
- Profile security, geographic, and data protection requirements
- Identify relevant unit economics to inform cost models and pricing model
- Build an analytics view Customer Journey Map to observe tenant-level resource consumption

3

Minimum Viable Service

Actions

- Launch with representative participation from all tiers
- Measure tenant-level resource consumption patterns, correlate these with costs
- Solicit and evaluate customer feedback
- Formalize pricing, packing model, tiering strategy for General Availability (GA)
- Test product-led-growth (PLG) frameworks
- Draft playbook for customer success and professional services
- Measure operational performance

Motivations

- Validate hypothetical forecasts (e.g., costs, resources, time-to-value)
- Realistic assessment of organizational capabilities
- Identify risks, bugs, and weaknesses/potential points-of-failure
- Demonstrate ability to land onboard customers and drive successful adoption
- Establish product adoption KPIs that indicate risk and opportunity
- Finalize organizational structure before GA release

Questions

- Who should participate and what features should be included in this release?
- Can the participants recognize value from the MVS experience?
- How do we measure tenant-level resource consumption and costs?
- Do we have the right tools and operational process in place?
- How will we capture data and feedback from participants?
- What goals should we set for GA release?
- What compromises should we make for the MVS relative to the GA release?

Pain Points

- Inadequate representation from key market segments
- Friction, slow value recognition and time-to-value, inaccurate cost models
- Lack of visibility and observability into tenant-level resource consumption
- Operational capabilities are incomplete
- Too much hand-holding and manual tasks required to integrate/onboard
- MVS features unable to deliver measurable value experiences to customers

Resources

- [SaaS Lens for the AWS Well-Architected Framework](#)
- [AWS Data Lab](#)
- [AWS Application Cost Profiler](#)

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Go-to-Market/Launch

Resources

- [AWS Marketplace](#)
- [AWS Partner Marketing Central](#)
- [Marketing Development Funds](#)
- [AWS ISV Accelerate](#)

Pain Points

- Misaligned compensation incentives, or conflicted by incentives to sell legacy solutions
- Ineffective sales enablement resources
- Inadequate demand and lead generation
- Ad hoc discounting allowed to hit quarterly quotas, leading to low-profitability
- Inefficiency in sales motions and channel partnerships, or lack of experience selling SaaS
- GA solution not delivering on value proposition promised in demo or marketing collateral

Questions

- What lessons were learned during the MVS stage?
- How will we meet new business targets in Year One of GA?
- Should we sell this in the AWS Marketplace?
- How can we incentivize and reward successful product adoption and renewals?
- Will product design and development teams deliver enough new features to support cross-sell quota?
- When should we allow pricing discounts, and for whom?

Motivations

- Establish commercial and operational frameworks for customer acquisition and/or migration
- Develop profitable sales motivations spanning the entire customer lifecycle
- Recoup initial investments (payback) and realize economies-of-scale quickly
- Ensure SaaS-specific forecast accuracy
- Close profitable deals with customers most likely to succeed

Actions

- Define, land, expand, and renew sales and marketing motions
- Set compensation models to reward adoption and renewal
- Finalize budget for customer acquisition, expansion, and retention
- Update the Customer Success playbook and Customer Journey Map
- Develop product marketing campaigns emphasizing value recognition
- Create pre-sales qualification checklist
- Determine the role of the channel partners