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D485 Cloud Security

Cloud Security Implementation Plan

A. Executive Summary

SWBTL LLC's Microsoft Azure cloud environment exhibits numerous securities issues and fails to meet the company's business needs. The following points details the discrepancies between the current security environment and the company's business requirements:

- Compliance with Applicable Regulations and Standards: SWBTL LLC holds contracts with the U.S. government and processes card transactions daily. Therefore, it must adhere to the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) and the Payment Card Industry Data Security (PCI DSS). Presently, SWBTL LLC's existing cloud environment does not meet these regulatory requirements.
- Azure Resource Groups and Azure Role-based Access Control (RBAC):
 SWBTL LLC requires that departmental resources be accessible only to users within the respective department, adhering to the principle of least privilege.

 However, the current cloud environment does not meet this requirement.
- 3. <u>Azure Key Vaults and Encryption of Data-at-Rest and Data-in-Transit:</u>

 Currently, There are no services in place to encrypt data-at-rest or data-in-

transit. Azure key Vaults can be utilized to secure encryption keys when implementing services like Azure Disk Encryption and Azure SQL Database TDE for data-at-rest. For Data-in-transit, Azure Key Vaults enforce transport-level encryption to safeguard data transferred between Azure Key Vault and Clients.

- 4. <u>Backups:</u> SWBTL LLC has specific business requirements for backups, including their frequency, retention, and recovery objectives. Currently, there are no policies or configurations in places that meet these requirements.
- 5. <u>Vulnerability Scanning:</u> The current vulnerability scans are outdated, and it is unclear whether they include the cloud environment.

Overall, SWBTL LLC's cloud environment lacks the essential security controls needed to meet its business requirements and comply with regulations and standards. The company must implement corrective actions to secure the cloud environment properly.

B. Proposed Course of Action

The recommended course of action for SWBTL LLC involves adopting Microsoft's Azure Government Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) solution. This will provide the company with a FEDRAMP/FedRamp+ authorized product that is also approved at DOD Impact Level (IL) 5. Additionally, this service model aligns with the company's needs by enabling the deployment and management of multiple operating systems, virtual machines, and custom applications, all supported by on-demand compute, storage, and network resources.

Applicable regulatory compliance directives include the following:

- <u>Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA):</u> As a U.S government contractor, SWBTL LLC must adhere to the information security standards and guidelines mandated by FISMA, which includes those developed by the national Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) (NIST, 2016).
- Federal Risk and Authorization Management program (FedRAMP): This program utilizes NIST standards to establish uniform security requirements for cloud services (FedRAMP, n.d.). Microsoft Azure Government aligns its controls with NIST Sp 800-53 Rev. 5 to achieve compliance and FedRAMP authorization (Microsoft, 2024).
- Department of Defense (DoD) Cloud Computing Security Requirements Guide

 (SRG): Developed and maintained by the DoD's Defense Information Systems Agency

 (DISA), this guide outlines security requirements for cloud solutions. Compliance with these SRG and DoD FedRAMP+ controls grants cloud solutions a DoD provisional authorization. The Microsoft Azure Government solution, for instance, is classified as DoD Impact Level 5 (IL 5) (Microsoft, 2023).
- Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS): PCI DSS applies to any organization that stores, processes, or transmits cardholder data. According to the Company Overview and Requirements are relevant to SWBTL LLC handles card transactions daily. Therefore, PCI DSS requirements are relevant to SWBTL LLC, The operational aspects of their systems involved in processing transactions (PCI Security Standards Council, 2018).

Security Benefits of Microsoft Azure government IaaS:

The Microsoft Azure government IaaS solution offers numerous security advantages. The following outline the benefits essential for SWBTL LLC:

- Azure Resource manager: This solution allows for the creation and management of resource groups. It also includes a tagging feature to identify resources associated with these groups.
- Azure RBAC: This service manages access to resources by restricting permissions based on a need-to-know basis. Implementing Azure RBAC ensures that the principle of least privilege is upheld.
- Encryption in Transit: Azure Storage allows data encryption during transit using transport-level encryption, wire encryption, and client-side encryption.
- Encryption at Rest: Azure Storage enables data encryption at rest through storage service encryption, client-side encryption, Azure Disk Encryption, and Azure SQL Database Transparent Data Encryption (TDE).
- Azure Backup: This solution offers backup services that allow authorized users to back up and restore virtual machines, files, folders, SQL databases, and more. This service is crucial for securely recovering any lost data following accidental deletion (Microsoft, 2022).

Security Challenges of Microsoft Azure Government IaaS:

Despite the many security benefits of the Microsoft Azure Government IaaS solution, a significant challenge is the potential misconfiguration of security controls in the cloud environment. Security is a shared responsibility between the cloud service provider (CSP) and the customer. This underscores the necessity for customers to implement security controls according to industry's best practices and to thoroughly test these controls for

quality assurance. Improper implementation of security controls can have serious consequences for confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the cloud environment.

C. Role-Based Access Control

The following three recommendations can be implemented for RBAC:

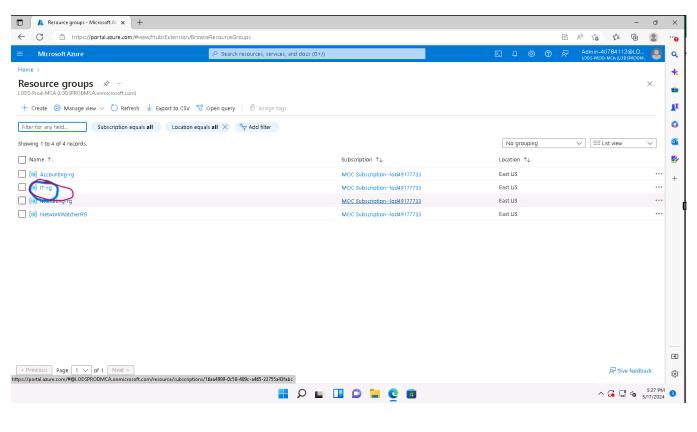
- To enforce the principle of least privilege, the Accounting Department at SWBTL LLC Accounting Department at SWBTL LLC should not access to the resources of the IT or Marketing Departments. Similarly, the IT and Marketing Departments should only have access to their own respective resources.
- 2. To enforce the principle of least privilege, the Microsoft Azure Government IaaS cloud solution includes built-in roles, such as "Contributor," that can be assigned to different departments.
- 3. These roles, along with the departmental users assigned to them, should be reviewed and updated regularly in accordance with regulatory timeframes.

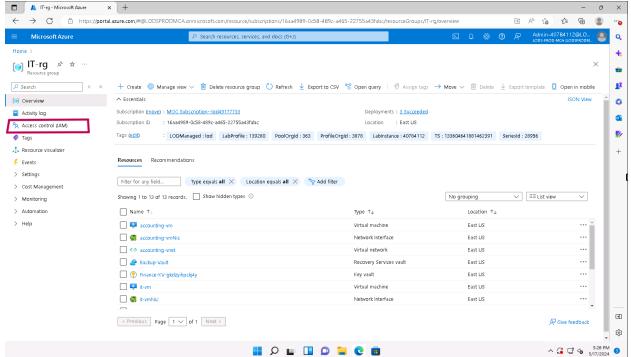
The following screenshots illustrate the complete steps for configuring RBAC for the IT

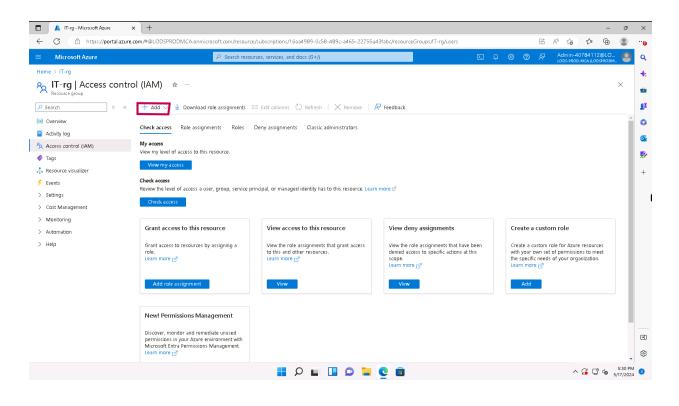
Department, beginning with the Resource Groups area. These steps will then be repeated for the

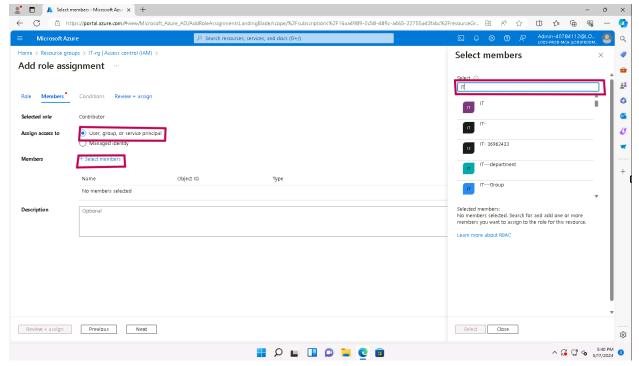
Accounting and Marketing Departments.

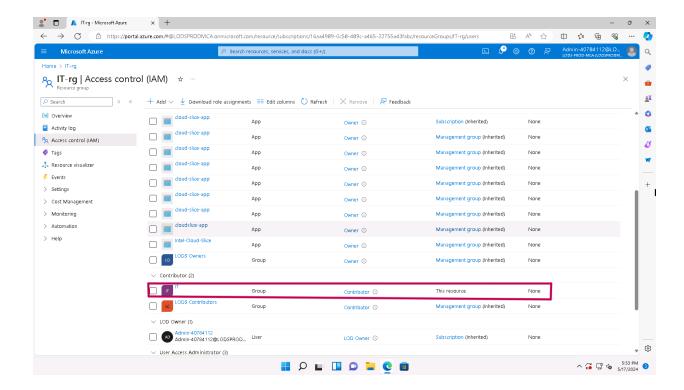
IT Department:



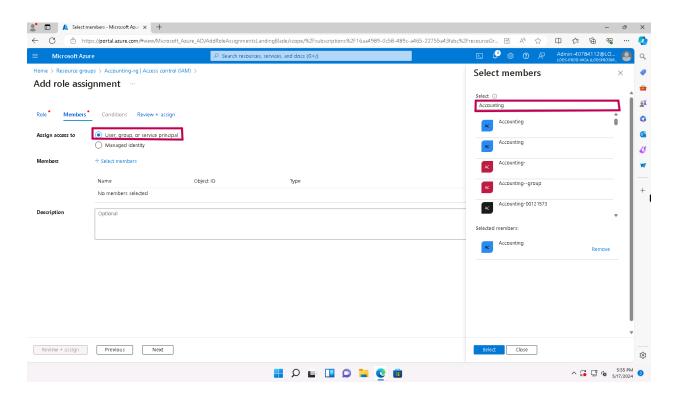


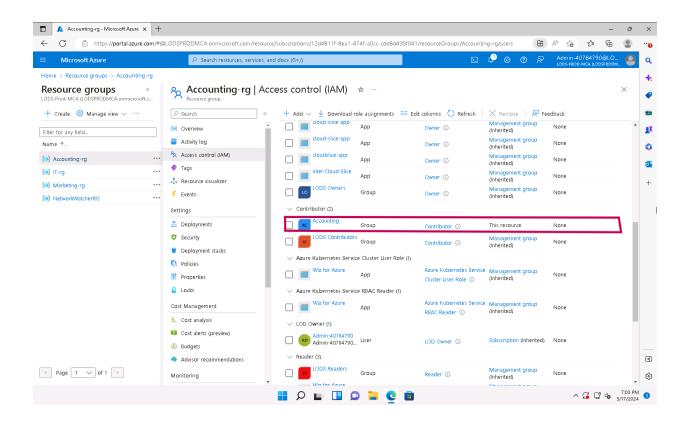




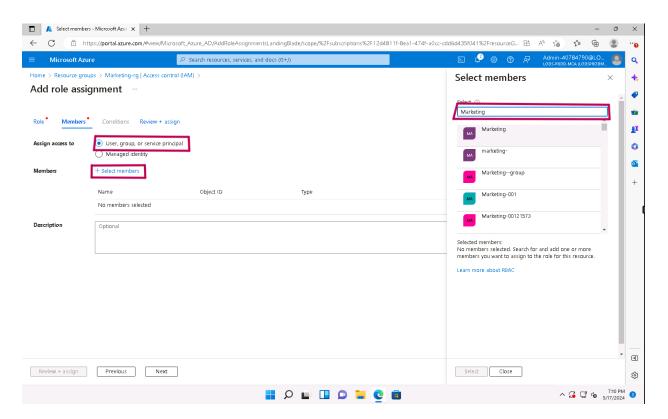


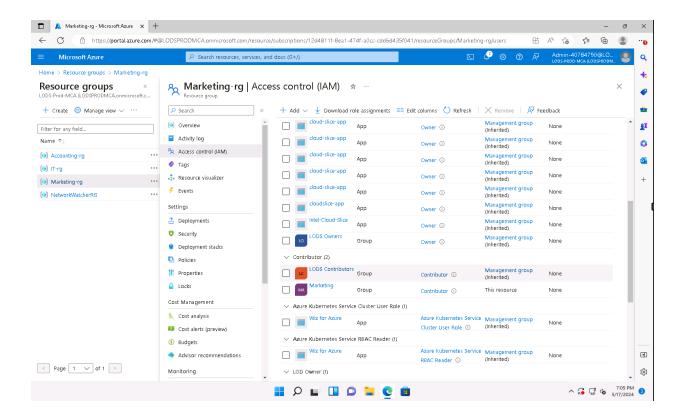
Accounting Department:





Marketing Department:





D. Encryption

Two best practices to implement in relation to Azure key Vaults includes the following:

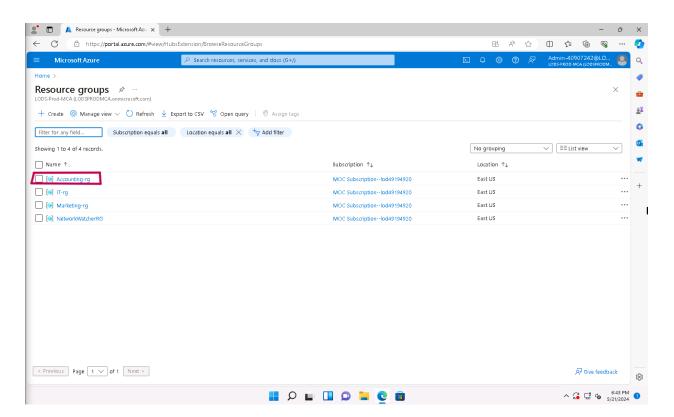
- Key Rotation Policy: A policy should be set up automatically generate new keys after a specified period. This ensures the company's encryption keys remain secure.
- Resource Group Isolation: Each Resource Group should have its own dedicated Key Vault, ensuring that only users with access to those Resource Groups can access their respective departmental Key Vaults.

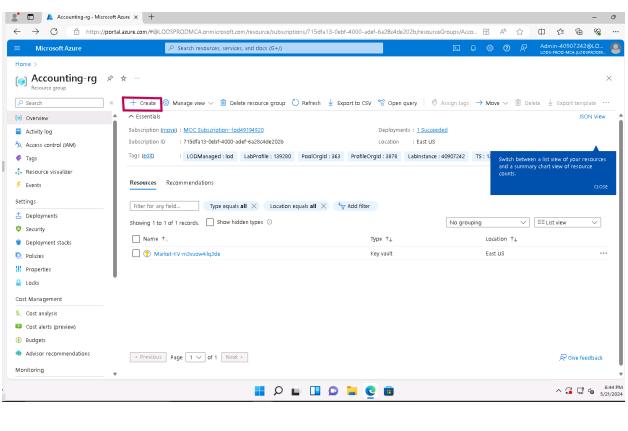
Two recommendations for using Key Vaults to encrypt both data at rest and data in transit are as follows:

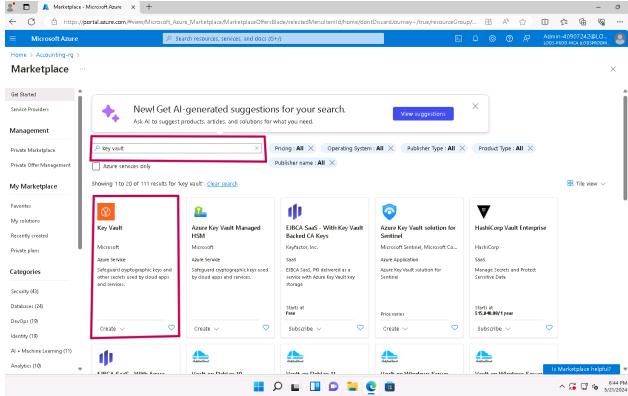
 Data in transit: Azure Key Vaults apply transport-level encryption to protect data transmitted between the Key Vault and Clients. Data at rest: Azure Key Vaults can be utilized to safeguard encryption keys when using Azure Disk Encryption and Azure SQL Data Transparent Data Encryption services for securing data at rest.

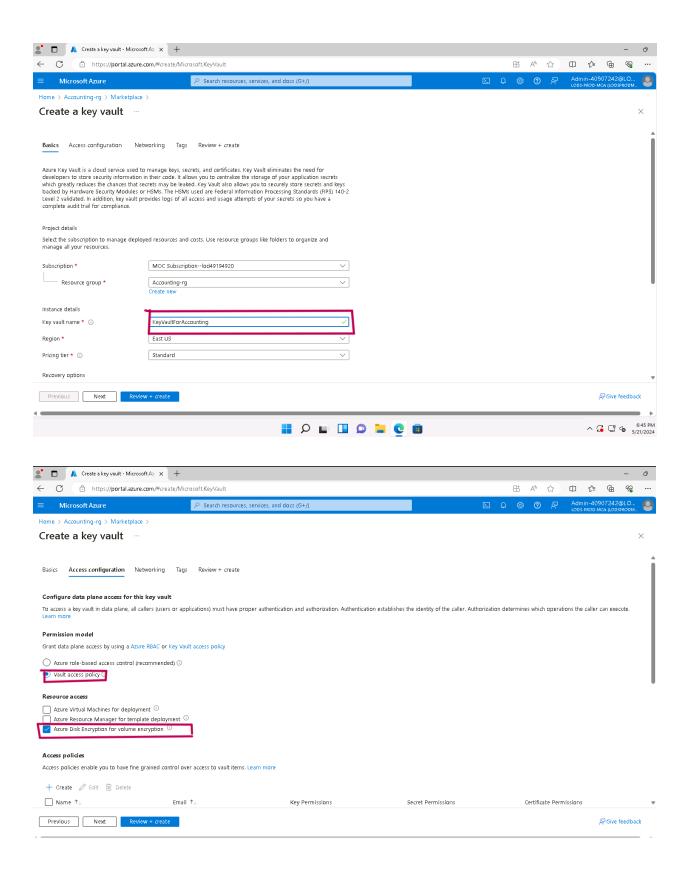
The following screenshots demonstrate the complete steps to configure Key Vaults for the Accounting Department, beginning with the Resource Groups area. These steps will then be repeated for the IT and Marketing Departments:

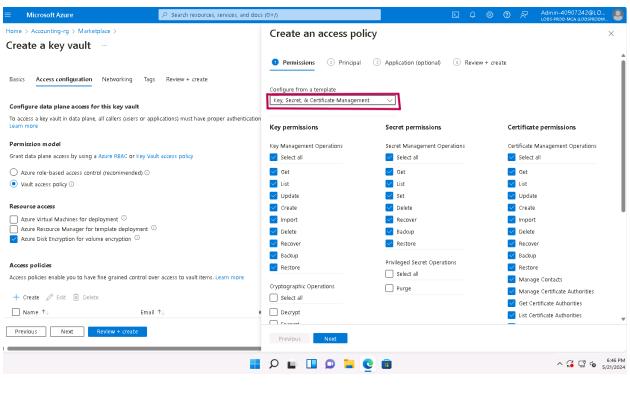
Accounting Department:

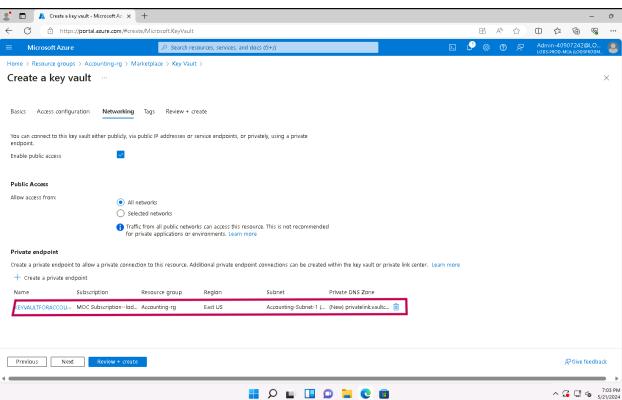


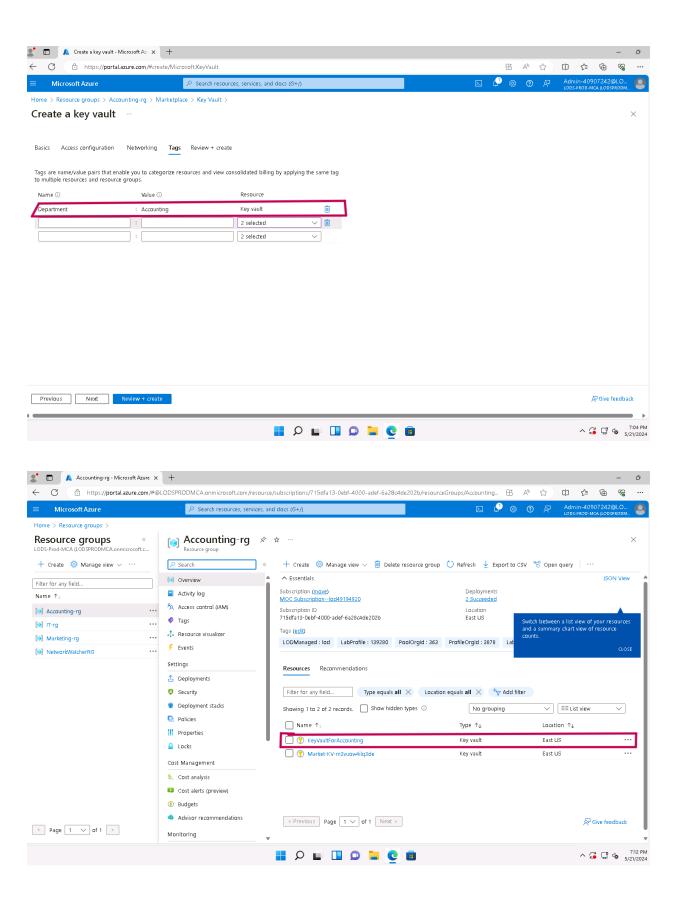




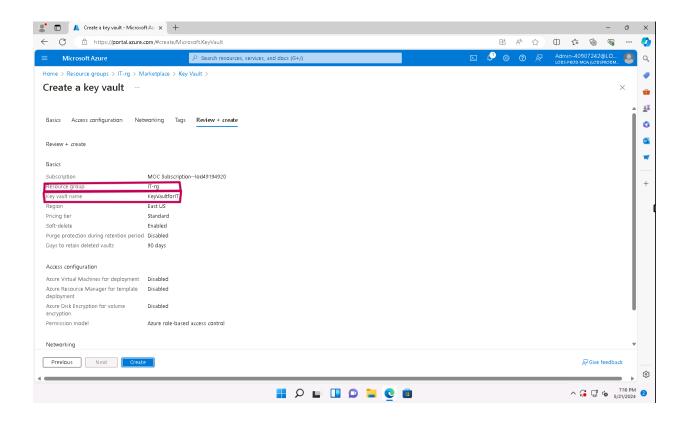


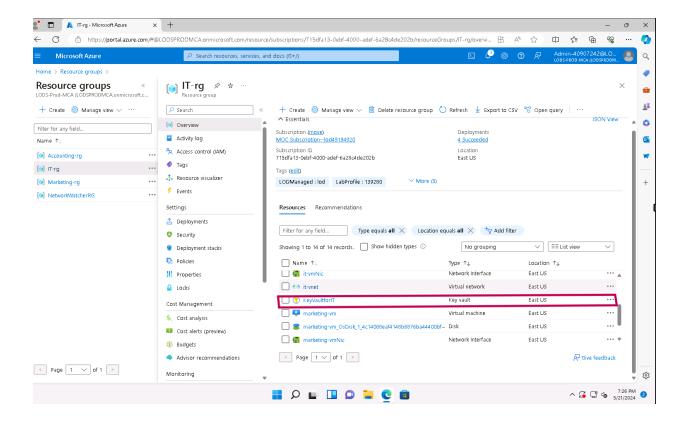




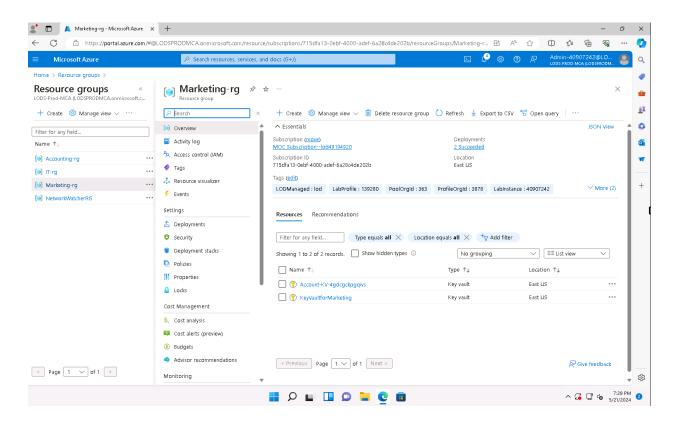


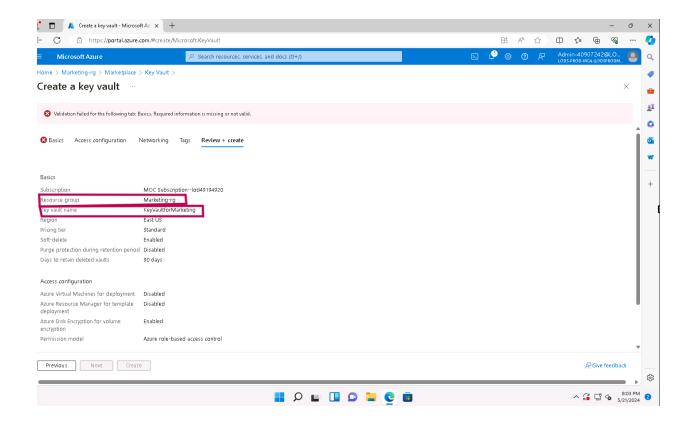
IT Department:





Marketing Department:

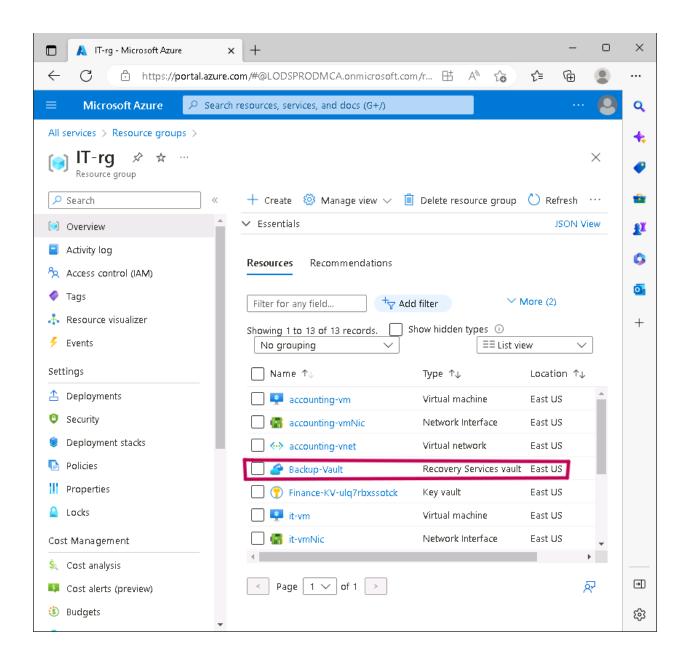


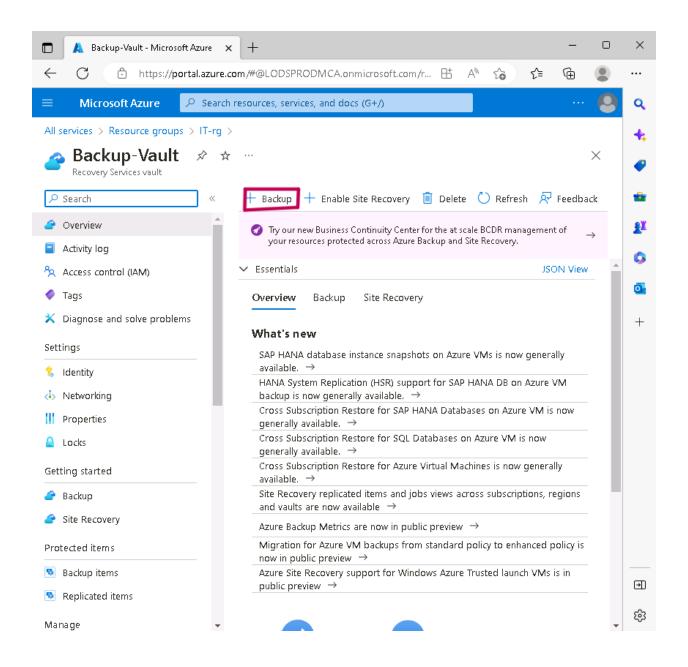


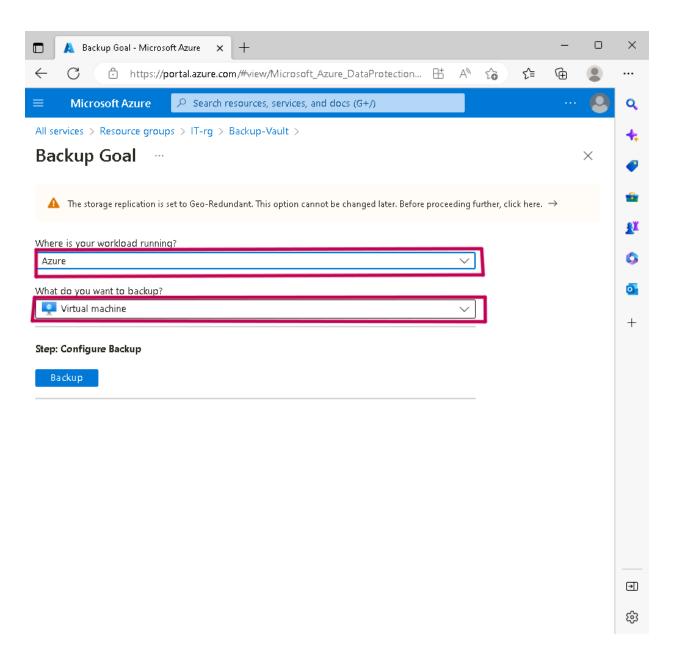
E. Backups

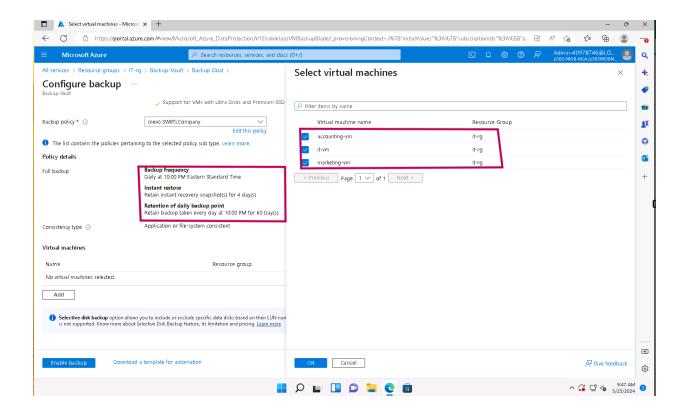
Configuration of File Backup Settings:

- The creation of a new backup policy includes the following:
 - o Policy Name: SWBTLCompany
 - o Recovery Point Objective (RPO): 1 day
 - o Time Conducted: 10 P.M Eastern Time (ET)
 - o Retention:
 - Instant Recovery Snapshots: 4 days
 - Daily Backup Points: 60 days









The configuration outlined above are consistent with the company's business needs, as specified in the requirements documentation:

- ❖ The IT department is tasked with executing and verifying backups
- ❖ Each cloud server have a RPO of 1 day
- Backups conducted daily at 10 P.M ET
- Instant Recovery Snapshots for 4 days
- Daily backup points for 60 days
- Backup policy name is "SWBTLCompany"

F. Security Responsibilities

A significant advantage of selecting the Microsoft Azure Government IaaS cloud solution is its FedRAMP authorization. The FedRAMP document, known as the Control Implentation Summary (CIS) and Customer Responsibility Matrix (CRM), outlines the security responsibilities of Cloud Service Provider (CSP), which in this case is Azure, and the customer, SWBTL LLC. With an IaaS cloud solution, SWBTL LLC assumes greater responsibility for security controls compared to Platform as a Service (PaaS) and Software as a Service (SaaS) Solutions.

Here are three potential risks SWBTL LLC might face with an IaaS service model:

- ❖ One risk is the misconception that all security controls are fully managed by the CSP, Microsoft. This misunderstanding can result in security gaps and noncompliance issues, potentially causing significant impact on the company if it solely relies on the CSP for security.
- ❖ A second risk involves the company being unaware of its responsibilities regarding security controls. This lack of understanding can result in security gaps and noncompliance issues, which may significantly impact the company. Even minor issues can escalate into major problems over time.
- ❖ A third risk is the assumption that implementing these security controls will be straightforward and can be handled by any employee. This misconception might lead to the realization that the company lacks staff with the necessary expertise, or it may result in assigning the task to

underqualified personnel. This could lead to improperly implemented security controls. The impact of this risk can vary from low to high, depending on the approach the company takes.

Here are three suggestions to guarantee adherence to the company's cloud security standards:

- Encrypting data both at rest and during transit is crucial, particularly for cardholder information. Since SWBTL LLC handles transactions, encrypting this data is necessary to maintain PCI DSS compliance (PCI Security Standards Council, 2018).
- ❖ Security audits and compliance checks: SWBTL LLC needs to conduct internal audits and compliance reviews to identify any weaknesses in their security measures. Alternatively, the company could hire a Third-Party Assessment Organization to perform these evaluations.
- ❖ Access control policy: SWBTL LLC should adopt Role-Based Access Control (RBAC) in alignment with the principle of least privilege. This approach to access management will help ensure the company's compliance with FISMA and NIST standards.

G. Threats and Countermeasures

Here are three potential threats to the company's updated cloud solution, along with corresponding mitigation strategies:

- ❖ Unauthorized access to data: both insider and outsider threats can compromise data by violating the Need to Know (NTK) principle and the confidentiality component of the CIA triad. Such breaches can result in significant data leaks, damage the company's reputation, and incur financial penalties. To mitigate this threat, a combination of security tools and access control policies should be employed. Implementing a web application firewall (WAF) can restrict access to the cloud environment based on IP address, location, and other criteria. Additionally, configuring Role-Based Access Control (RBAC) according to the principle of the least privilege ensures users have only the necessary access to perform their job functions.
- Cloud Misconfigurations: The complexity of cloud environments means that lacking expert management can have severe consequences. Accidental misconfigurations can result in the previously mentioned threats. To mitigate this risk, conducting regular audits and compliance checks is essential to identify and rectify any security gaps.

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