# Analyze cost and features for roughly 2 TB or digital object storage comparing Azure Blob Storage, DigitalOcean Spaces, Amazon S3, Preservica, and Alma Digital/Specto.

Here's a practical, order-of-magnitude comparison of cost and capabilities for ~2 TB of object storage across the options you listed. All dollar figures are approximate list pricing for standard "hot" storage in a single region, excluding taxes and discounts.[1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] [11] [12] [13] [14]

## Cost for ~2 TB storage

Assume 2 TB ≈ 2,000 GB, stored all month, with modest egress (tens of GB/month) and "normal" request volumes.

| Service | Approx monthly storage cost at 2 TB | Notes on pricing model |
|---|---|---|
| Amazon S3 (Standard) | ~2,000 GB × 0.023 ≈ **46 USD/month** for storage only.[8] [11] | Tiered per-GB pricing, plus request and data-transfer-out fees; multiple storage classes (Standard, Intelligent-Tiering, Glacier, etc.).[8] [11] [6] |
| Azure Blob (Hot) | ~2,000 GB × 0.023 ≈ **46 USD/month** (hot tier list rate very similar to S3).[9] [2] [6] | Tiered per-GB pricing; lower hot-tier GB price than S3 in some regions, but similar order of magnitude; separate transaction and egress fees.[9] [2] [6] |
| DigitalOcean Spaces | Base $5 includes 250 GB, remaining 1,750 GB at $0.02/GB → 0.02×1,750 + 5 ≈ **40 USD/month**.[1] [12] [14] | Flat $5 for first 250 GB with 1 TB outbound included, then $0.02/GB storage, $0.01/GB egress; no per-request fees; bundled CDN option.[1] [12] [14] |
| Preservica (Starter-type SaaS) | Starter Plus listed around **~300 USD/month** for "from 250 GB"; 2 TB typically requires capacity upgrades or enterprise contracts, often pushing well into **hundreds to low thousands USD/month**.[3] [13] [7] | SaaS preservation platform; pricing bundles software + storage + preservation features; S3/Glacier storage in AWS Marketplace example is $1,525/TB/year S3 and $580/TB/year Glacier, on top of software (~$16,770/year).[7] |
| Alma Digital / Specto | Storage is an add-on subscription parameter rather than public per-GB pricing; 2 TB typically means moving to a higher storage band, so **significantly more than raw S3/Azure but wrapped into Alma/Specto license**.[5] [10] [4] | Uses AWS-backed storage under the hood; cost folded into Alma Digital or Specto subscription tier, with Alma Analytics report to track used/remaining TB.[5] [10] [4] |

For pure “cheap bits,” S3, Azure Blob, and DigitalOcean Spaces are all in the same tens-of-dollars/month ballpark at 2 TB, with Spaces slightly cheaper and simpler to estimate. Preservica and Alma Digital/Specto are a different category: you’re buying a preservation/digital-repository SaaS wrapped around storage, so per-TB cost is much higher but includes workflow and policy features.[3] [4] [5] [7] [8] [9] [12] [13] [14] [1]

### S3, Azure Blob, and Spaces: features

For a technical storage-only use case, these three are broadly similar but differ in ecosystem and pricing complexity.[2] [6] [8] [9] [11] [12] [14] [1]

- Amazon S3
  - **Pros**: Very mature ecosystem, rich IAM and policies, multiple storage classes (Standard, IA, Glacier, Deep Archive) for lifecycle cost optimization, broad 3rd-party tool support.[6] [8] [11]
  - Cons: Pricing complexity (requests, transitions, egress), can be more expensive if you do a lot of small object traffic; AWS-specific IAM model.
  - Fit for you: Maximum flexibility, tight integration with other AWS services, easy to script against with your Python/CLI workflows.
- Azure Blob Storage
  - Pros: Comparable features to S3 (hot/cool/cold tiers, lifecycle policies, RBAC), often slightly lower hot-tier GB price and competitive archive classes.[9] [2] [6]
  - Cons: Similar pricing complexity to S3; best value if you are already in Azure (AD, VMs, Functions).
  - Fit for you: Good if you want to leverage Azure AD and possibly integrate with other Microsoft stack services.
- DigitalOcean Spaces
  - Pros: S3-compatible API, flat, predictable pricing, built-in CDN, no per-request charges.[12] [14] [1]
  - Cons: Fewer regions and services than AWS/Azure, fewer advanced security/compliance and lifecycle options, smaller ecosystem.[1]
  - Fit for you: Simple S3-style object store for web apps or static assets where you value predictability over fine-grained tuning.

### Preservica: preservation-oriented storage

Preservica is a hosted digital preservation system, not just object storage.[7] [3]

- Cost model
  - Starter Plus around $300/month “from 250 GB” with option to upgrade to 1 TB+ via sales; scaling to 2 TB usually requires commercial negotiation.[13] [3]
  - On AWS Marketplace, pricing separates software (~$16,770/year) from per-TB S3 and Glacier allowances ($1,525/TB/year S3, $580/TB/year Glacier).[7]

- Features (beyond raw storage)
  - OAIS-style preservation workflows, fixity checks, automated migration rules, access portal, branded public site, access control, analytics, and support.[3] [7]
  - Deep integration of lifecycle management, including use of Glacier-type storage for cost-efficient long-term retention.[7]

For a college archives/digital collections context, Preservica's value is in preservation and access workflows rather than storage cost per TB.

### Alma Digital and Specto: library-integrated storage

Alma Digital and the new Specto product are positioned as part of Clarivate's library platform rather than commodity storage.[4] [5] [10]

- Cost model
  - Alma licensing is subscription-based; storage is a parameter (e.g., 0.5 TB, 1 TB, etc.), and increasing TB requires a subscription adjustment instead of metered per-GB billing.[10]
  - There is no public per-GB rate; 2 TB would be realized as moving to a higher Alma Digital or Specto storage band.[4] [10]
- Features
  - Tight integration with Alma inventory, metadata, and fulfillment; Alma Analytics report "Total Digital Space Usage" lets you monitor used vs. remaining digital file capacity.[5] [10]
  - Specto is intended as a new cloud-native digital collections/repository solution; Alma Digital customers will be able to transition to Specto Essentials as it releases (late 2025/early 2026).[4]

For you, the advantage is unified workflows with Alma/Primo and analytics, at the cost of higher effective per-TB pricing than raw S3/Blob.

### How to choose for ~2 TB

Given your environment and skill set:

- If you want lowest-friction, lowest-cost storage for custom apps or preservation pipelines you run yourself, S3, Azure Blob, or Spaces (with your own preservation tooling) will be far cheaper than Preservica or Alma Digital/Specto at 2 TB.[8] [14] [9] [10] [12] [1] [3] [7]
- If deep preservation functionality and a turnkey access portal are primary, Preservica justifies its higher cost.[3] [7]
- If tight coupling with Alma metadata, user management, and discovery is paramount, Alma Digital or Specto make sense despite the opaque storage pricing.[5] [10] [4]

If you share your intended workload (primary access vs. dark archive, expected egress, multi-region needs), I can sketch concrete monthly cost scenarios and possible hybrid approaches (e.g., S3 + Alma Digital front-end) for the 2 TB target.

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1. https://www.digitalocean.com/resources/articles/amazon-s3-vs-digitalocean-spaces
2. https://blog.purestorage.com/purely-educational/aws-s3-vs-azure-blob/
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