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Microsoft plans to establish new cloud datacenter region in Qatar

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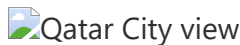
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Microsoft today announced plans to establish a new cloud datacenter region in Qatar to deliver its intelligent, trusted cloud services and expand the Microsoft global cloud infrastructure to 55 cloud regions in 20 countries. The new region is anticipated to be available starting with Microsoft Azure in 2021, and Office 365, Dynamics 365 and Power Platform to follow.

The announcement was made by HE Minister of Transport and Communications Jassim Saif Ahmed Al-Sulaiti and EVP and President, Microsoft Global Sales, Marketing and Operations, Microsoft Corp., Jean-Philippe Courtois.

HE the Minister said in his opening remarks, "This collaboration with Microsoft comes as part of accelerating the efforts led by the Government of Qatar to implement the country's digital transformation agenda and build a knowledge-based economy as laid down in the Qatar National Vision 2030."

Government entities, organizations, public and private enterprises and developers will have access to scalable, highly available, and resilient cloud services to accelerate their digital transformation journeys – better engage customers, empower employees, optimize operations, and transform products and services – from the new cloud region in Qatar.

“The new Microsoft cloud region will deliver unprecedented opportunity for government and businesses in Qatar to successfully embark on their digital transformation journey,” said Courtois. “Intelligent cloud services are at the heart of our efforts to help establish the country as a knowledge and innovation hub, and builds on our investments to develop a cloud region in Qatar. We expect it will also help drive economic growth, upskill the workforce, and provide a foundation for the country in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030.”

Courtois added, “The new datacenter region will enable public and private enterprises to access more comprehensive, resilient and reliable cloud services, in addition to stimulating creativity and innovation across all industries providing better services for citizens, residents, and visitors.”

The new cloud region is anticipated to play a pivotal role in bridging the skills gap in Qatar. Microsoft is also collaborating with the Qatar Digital Government to launch a nationwide upskilling program that will train government employees enhancing their technical acumen in cloud technologies.

The new cloud region will adhere to Microsoft’s trusted cloud principles and become part of one of the largest cloud infrastructures in the world, already serving more than a billion customers and 20 million businesses. Microsoft’s cloud services are compliant with the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and are certified for a large portfolio of international security and privacy standards, some of which form the basis of Qatar government policies, including the Ministry of Transport and Communications’ National Information Assurance Policy and the Cloud Security and Information Privacy Protection regulations.

Government entities, large organizations, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), as well as startups across all industries in Qatar are making the most out of Microsoft’s cloud solutions. A few of these include the Ministry of Transport and Communications (MOTC), Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI), Qatar Foundation and Aspire.

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The new Microsoft region in Qatar will offer Microsoft's scalable, trusted and reliable cloud services combined with in-country customer data residency. Microsoft will help empower customers through its deep expertise in protecting customer data to meet extensive security and privacy requirements as well as the broadest set of [compliance certifications \(https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/trust-center/compliance/compliance-overview?rtc=1\)](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/trust-center/compliance/compliance-overview?rtc=1) and attestations in the industry.

This news follows the recent announcement at QITCOM 2019, where MOTC announced its choice of Azure as its preferred cloud platform – a collaboration the two sides see as an opportunity to encourage government entities and institutions in Qatar to embark on or continue their digital transformation journey.

Microsoft Azure is an ever-expanding set of cloud services that offers computing, networking, databases, analytics, and Internet of Things (IoT) services. Office 365 enables cloud-based productivity with email, collaboration, conferencing, enterprise social networking and business intelligence. Dynamics 365 and Power Platform is the next generation of intelligent business applications that enable organizations to grow, evolve and transform to meet the needs of customers and capture new opportunities.

Microsoft has accelerated the pace of global expansion with the opening of cloud regions in five new markets in 2019, including being the first global cloud provider to deliver services from datacenter regions located in Africa.