



Application Security Best Practices and Scaling Applications on Google Cloud

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Course: Cloud application development

Date: 24.11.2024

Almaty, 2024

Introduction

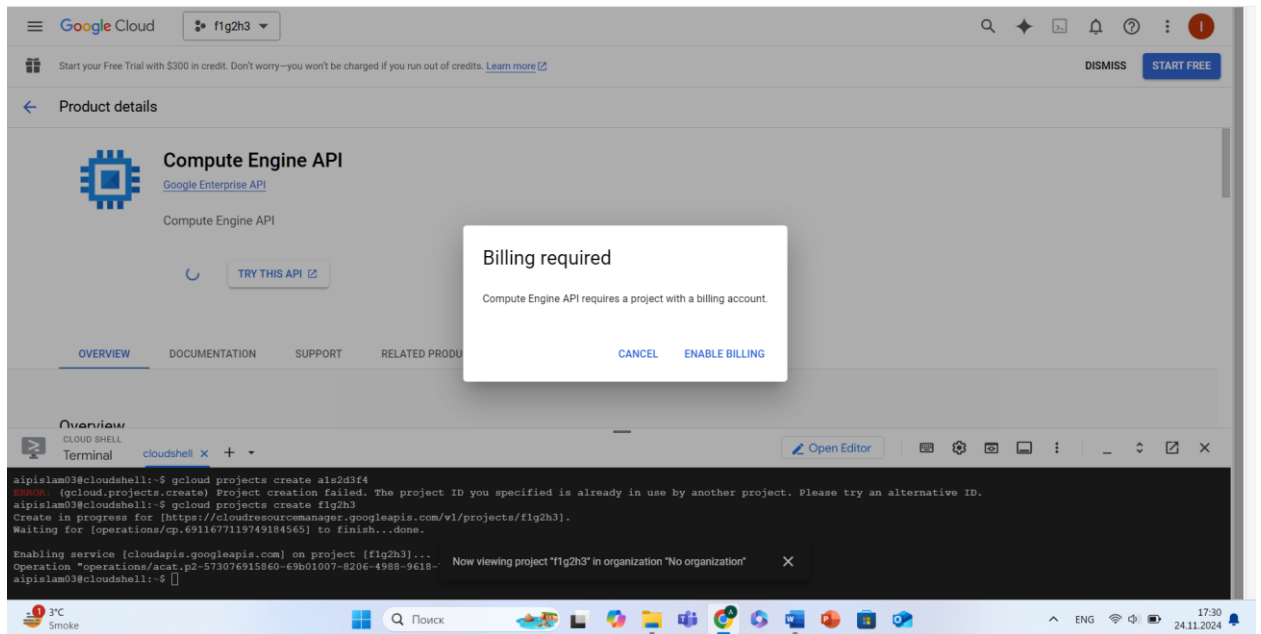
Application Security Best Practices

1. Google Cloud Project

```
aipislam03@cloudshell:~$ gcloud projects create flg2h3
Create in progress for [https://cloudresource manager.googleapis.com/v1/projects/flg2h3].
Waiting for [operations/cp.6911677119749184565] to finish...done.
Enabling service [cloudapis.googleapis.com] on project [flg2h3]...
Operation "operations/acet.p2-573076915860-69b01007-8206-4988-9618-781b049be47a" finished successfully.
aipislam03@cloudshell:~$
```

Let's create a new GCP project and enable all necessary APIs.

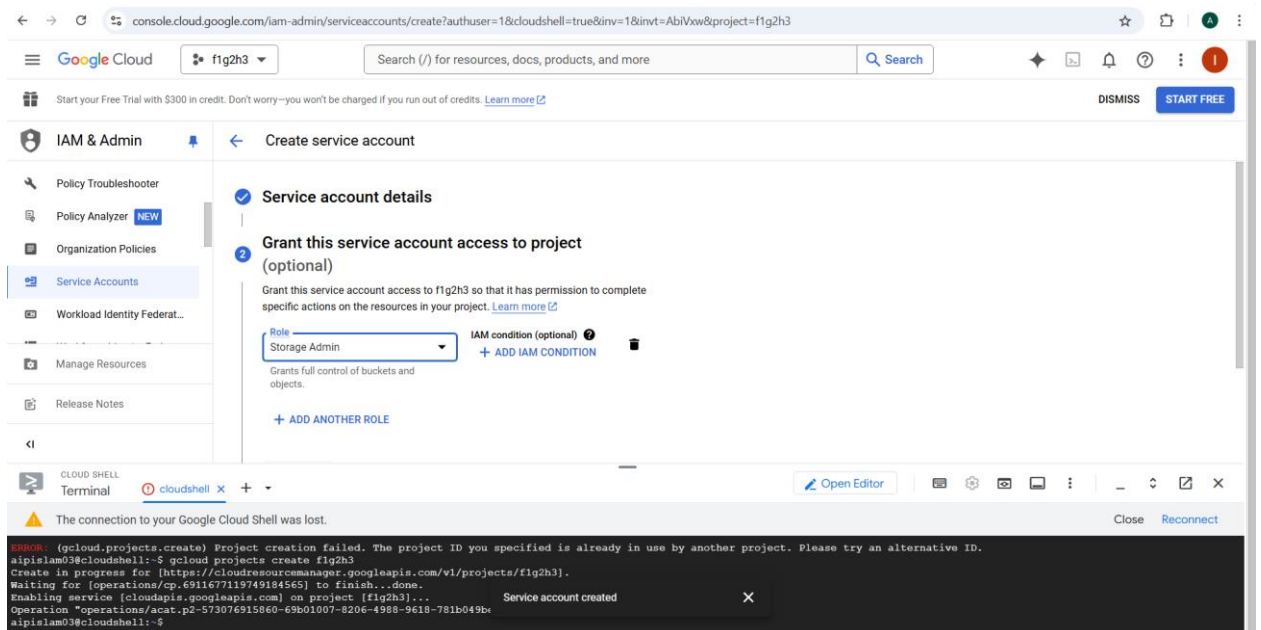
The screenshot displays the Google Cloud console interface for a project named 'flg2h3'. The top navigation bar includes the Google Cloud logo, the project name 'flg2h3', and a search icon. Below the navigation bar, a banner promotes a 'Start your Free Trial with \$300 in credit'. The main content area is divided into two sections: 'Cloud Storage' and 'Cloud SQL'. Both sections show the 'API Enabled' status with a green checkmark and a 'MANAGE' button. The 'Cloud Storage' section includes a description: 'Google Cloud Storage is a RESTful service for storing and accessing your data on Google's...'. The 'Cloud SQL' section includes a description: 'Google Cloud SQL is a hosted and fully managed relational database service on Google's...'. At the bottom, a terminal window shows the command 'gcloud projects create flg2h3' being executed, with output indicating successful creation and API enabling. The terminal also shows a warning message: 'Now viewing project "flg2h3" in organization "No organization"'.



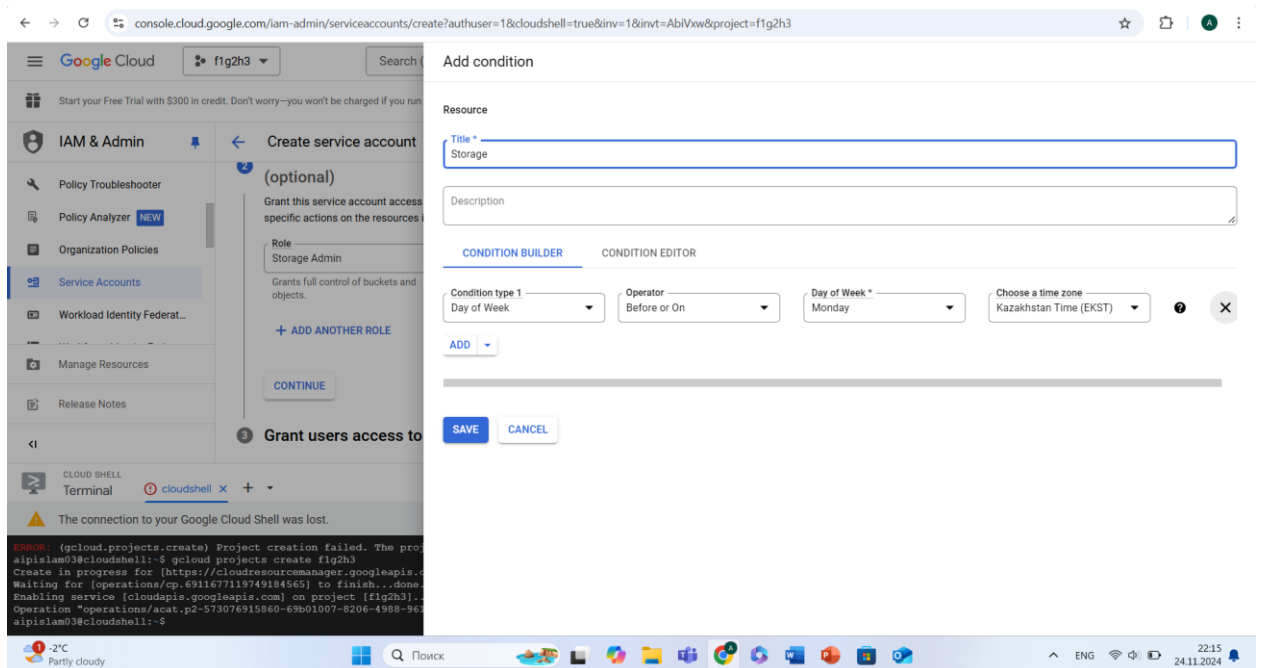
For some APIs billing should be enabled.

2. Identity and Access Management

Now let's create a service account and grant access to project.

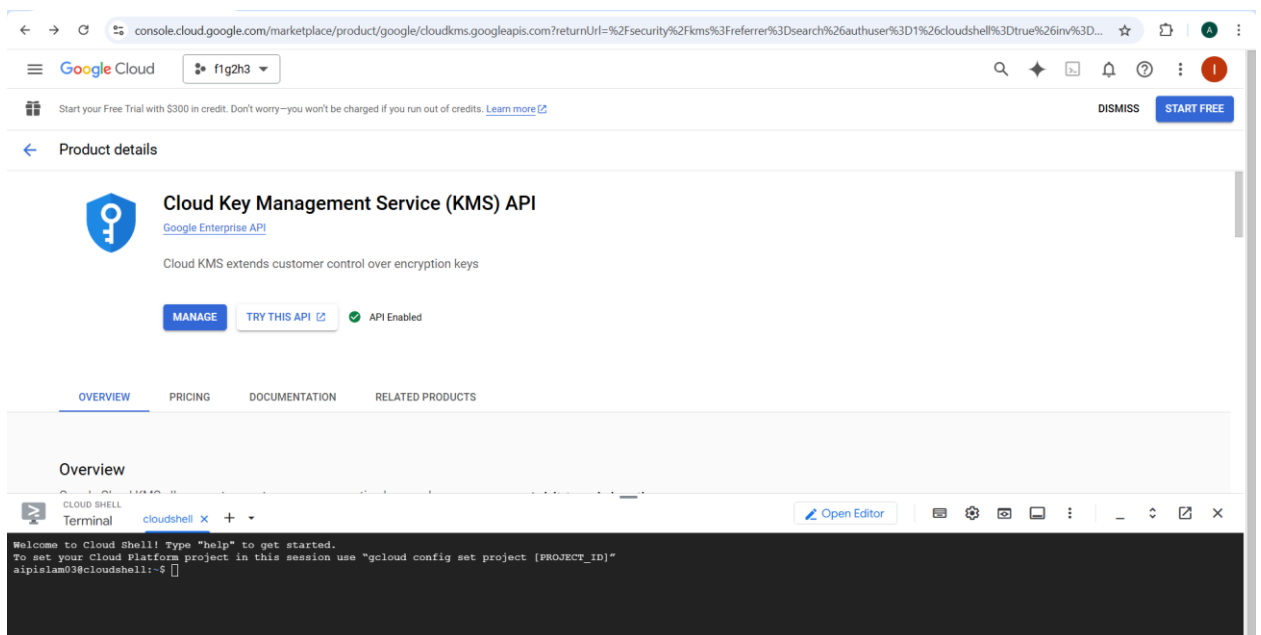


Now we can assign conditions based on attributes such as time, day of week and so on.

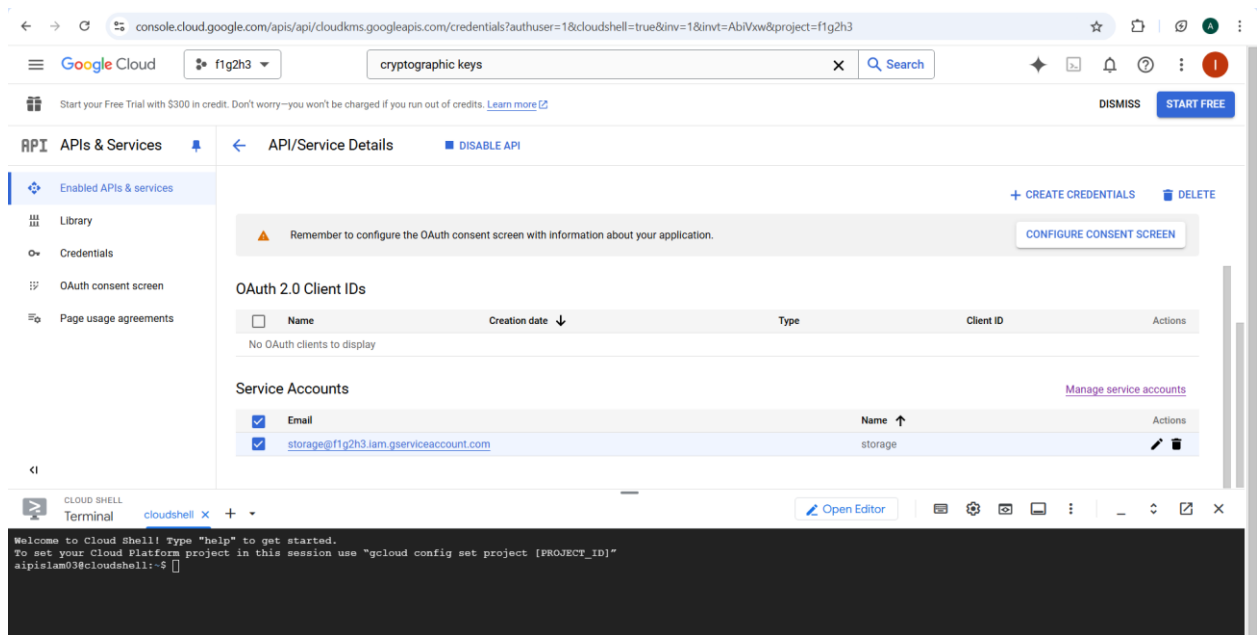


3. Data Protection

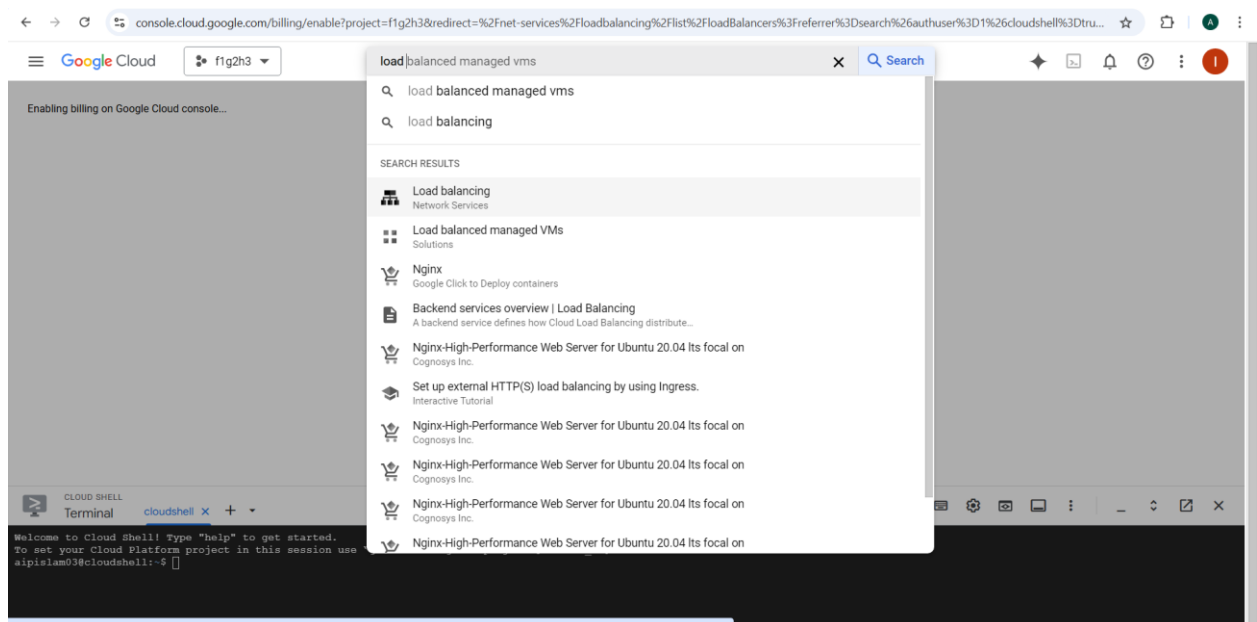
In order set up encryption for data at rest we can use Google Cloud KMS.



After enabling Google Cloud KMS API, we can create credentials and choose our service account that we created before.



Now, in order to set up a load balancer, we need billing account.



After enabling billing we should be able to configure load balance and upload an SSL certificate or use Google managed SSL.

4. Application Security Testing

Security testing is crucial part of the application development. In Google Cloud we can integrate a security scanning tools such as Snyk, or we can use security command center to check threats, vulnerabilities and risks.

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Snyk Limited

Developer Loved, Security Trusted

Snyk is a developer-first security solution that helps organizations use open source and stay secure. Snyk is the only solution that seamlessly and proactively finds and fixes vulnerabilities and license violations in open source dependencies and container images, in the developer workflow. Snyk integrates its comprehensive, proprietary vulnerability database maintained by its expert security research team. With tight integration into existing developer workflows, source control (including GitHub, Bitbucket, GitLab), and CI/CD pipelines, Snyk enables efficient security workflows and reduces mean-time-to-fix.

Contact Details

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Products

Google Cloud Platform

Partner type

ISV/Technology Partner

Supported Languages

English

Countries

f1g2h3

owasp

Search

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Security

Security Command Center

- Risk Overview**
- Threats
- Vulnerabilities
- Compliance
- Assets
- Marketplace
- Release Notes

You need to be a part of an organization in order to use Security Command Center. [Learn how to create an organization.](#) If you already have an organization, reload this page, or reach out to [Google Support](#).

CLOUD SHELL

Terminal

cloudshell x +

[Open Editor](#)

```

Welcome to Cloud Shell! Type "help" to get started.
To set your Cloud Platform project in this session use "gcloud config set project [PROJECT_ID]"
aipsislam03@cloudshell:~$

```

5. Monitoring and Logging

In Google Cloud we can use Logs Explorer for logging.

f1g2h3

logging

Search

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Logs Explorer

[Query library](#)
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[Preferences](#)

[Last 1 hour](#)
[NPT](#)

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Project logs

Search all fields

All resources

All log names

All severities

Correlate by

Log fields

Search fields and values

RESOURCE TYPE

- Audited Resource 8
- Google Project 1
- Service Account 1

Timeline

Nov 24, 10:28 PM

10:45 PM

11:15 PM

Nov 24, 11:29 PM

10 results

SEVERITY	TIME	SUMMARY
INFO	2024-11-24 23:18:34.273	serviceusage.googleapis.com _longrunning.Operations.GetOperation _860-9e303f46-6bd8-4a79-a0b6-0fd7de8a58b3 aipsislam03@gmail.com

CLOUD SHELL

Terminal

cloudshell x +

[Open Editor](#)

```

Welcome to Cloud Shell! Type "help" to get started.
To set your Cloud Platform project in this session use "gcloud config set project [PROJECT_ID]"
aipsislam03@cloudshell:~$

```

Now let's enable audit logs. Admin Activity logs are typically enabled by default, for data access logs let's enable read and write for Cloud Storage.

The screenshot shows the 'Audit logs' configuration page in the Google Cloud console. The 'Default configuration' section shows 'Admin read', 'Data read', and 'Data write' all set to 'Disabled'. The 'Data access audit logs configuration' section shows a table with columns: Service, Admin read, Data read, Data write, Exempted principals, and Inherited exempted principals. The table has one row for 'Google Cloud Storage' with 'Admin read' checked, 'Data read' checked, 'Data write' checked, and 'Exempted principals' and 'Inherited exempted principals' both set to 0. On the right, the 'Google Cloud Storage' configuration panel shows 'PERMISSION TYPES' with 'Admin read', 'Data read', and 'Data write' all checked. A 'SAVE' button is at the bottom of this panel.

Service	Admin read	Data read	Data write	Exempted principals	Inherited exempted principals
Google Cloud Storage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0

Now, to monitor suspicious activities or errors we can create a new alert policy in Monitoring > Alerting.

The screenshot shows the 'Alerting' page in the Google Cloud console. The 'Summary' section shows 'Incidents firing' as 0, 'Incidents acknowledged' as 0, and 'Alert policies' as 0. The 'Incidents' section shows a table with columns: State, Severity, Policy name, Incident summary, and Opened. The table is empty with the message 'No rows to display'. The 'Snoozes' section shows a 'Create snooze' button and a 'Show past snoozes' toggle that is turned on. The 'Alerting' page also has a 'Create policy' button and an 'Edit notification channels' link.

State	Severity	Policy name	Incident summary	Opened
No rows to display				

Here we can configure alert trigger for number of log entries.

The top screenshot shows the 'Create alerting policy' interface. The 'Configure alert trigger' step is selected. The condition type is 'Audited Resource - Log entries'. The threshold is set to 3/s. The bottom screenshot shows the 'Policy details' page for the same policy. The policy is 'Enabled'. It shows the policy violates when ANY condition is met, with a threshold of 3/s and a retest window of 'No retest'. A notification at the bottom says 'Alert policy logging entries count saved'.

6. Incident Response

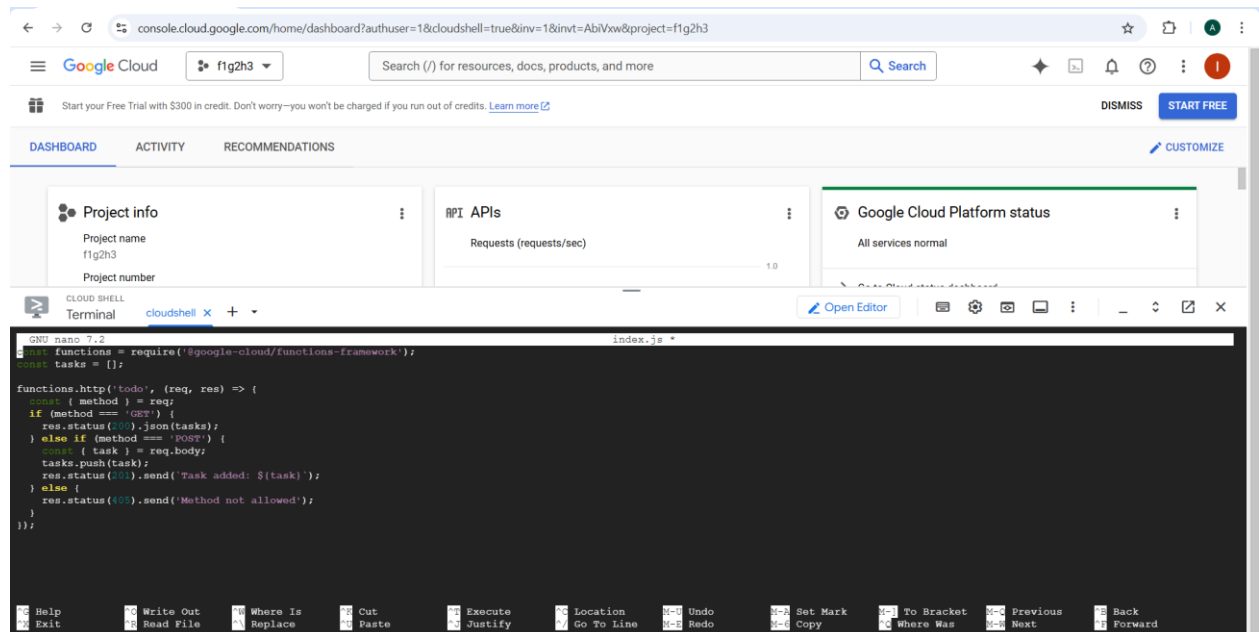
An Incident Response Plan ensures that team of developers can effectively handle security breaches. IRPs steps include:

1. Identify – we define how to detect and classify an incident. We can use tools like Cloud monitoring, Cloud Security Command Center, or logs from Cloud Audit Logs.
2. Contain – we define steps to isolate the system to prevent further damage. We can use tool like IAM permissions.
3. Eradicate – we remove the root cause of the incident, such as deleting malicious code or fixing vulnerability. We can patch software, update IAM roles etc.
4. Recover – we restore system to normal operation and ensure that vulnerability is fixed.

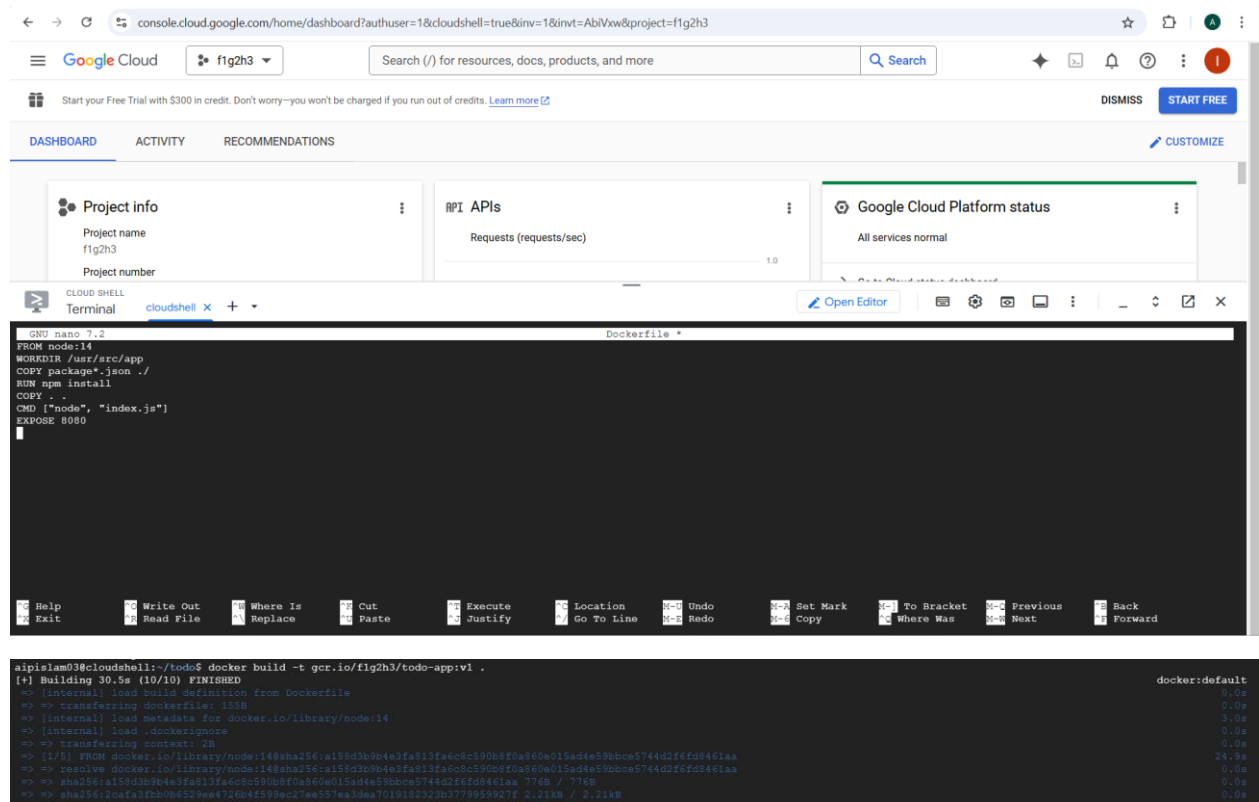
Scaling Applications on Google Cloud

1. Application Design

Let's create a simple to-do app.



We can use serverless computing or GKE for containerized applications. Let's add Dockerfile for our app and build the Docker image:

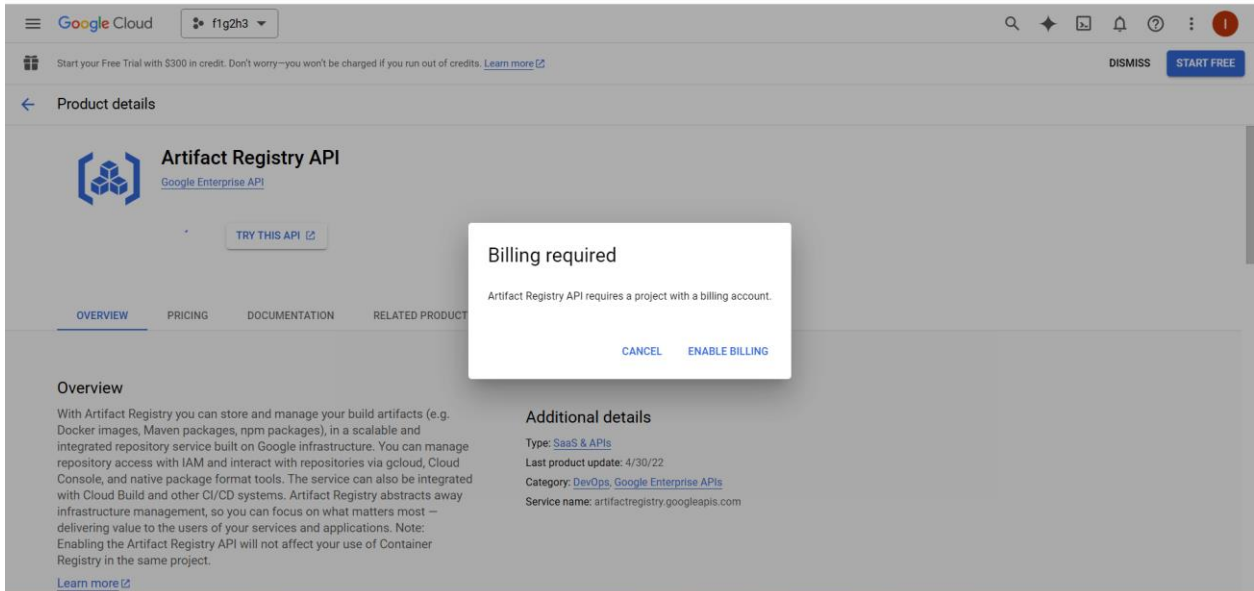


Now we can push the image to the Google Container Registry, but we need billing account to be enabled:

```

aipislam03@cloudshell:~/todo$ docker push gcr.io/flg2h3/todo-app:v1
The push refers to repository [gcr.io/flg2h3/todo-app]
e38e5ebcbb96: Preparing
666c60fedfca: Preparing
5f70bf18a086: Preparing
3bae2d7099d9: Preparing
0d5f5a015e5d: Preparing
3c777d951de2: Waiting
f6a91dd5fc84: Waiting
cb31227abde5: Waiting
e01a454893a9: Waiting
c45660adde37: Waiting
fe0fb3ab4a0f: Waiting
f1186e5061f2: Waiting
b2dba7477754: Waiting
denied: Artifact Registry API has not been used in project 573076915860 before or it is disabled. Enable it by visiting https://console.developers.google.com/apis/api/artifactregistry.googleapis.com/overview?project=573076915860 then retry. If you enabled this API recently, wait a few minutes for the action to propagate to our systems and retry.
aipislam03@cloudshell:~/todo$

```



After pushing the image we can deploy our application on GKE.

We create a GKE cluster, deploy container to the cluster and expose our app.

```

aipislam03@cloudshell:~/todo$ gcloud container clusters create todo-cluster \
--num-nodes=3 \
--zone=[ZONE]

aipislam03@cloudshell:~/todo$ kubectl create deployment todo-app --image=gcr.io/flg2h3/todo-app:v1

aipislam03@cloudshell:~/todo$ kubectl expose deployment todo-app --type=LoadBalancer --port 80 --target-port 8080

```

2. Horizontal vs. Vertical Scaling

Horizontal scaling involves adding more instances or nodes to distribute the workload. This approach is preferable over vertical scaling in some scenarios:

- 1) A web application or API must remain available even if one server fails.
- 2) Application experiences spikes in traffic.
- 3) Application designed to use multiple smaller nodes instead of a single powerful one.

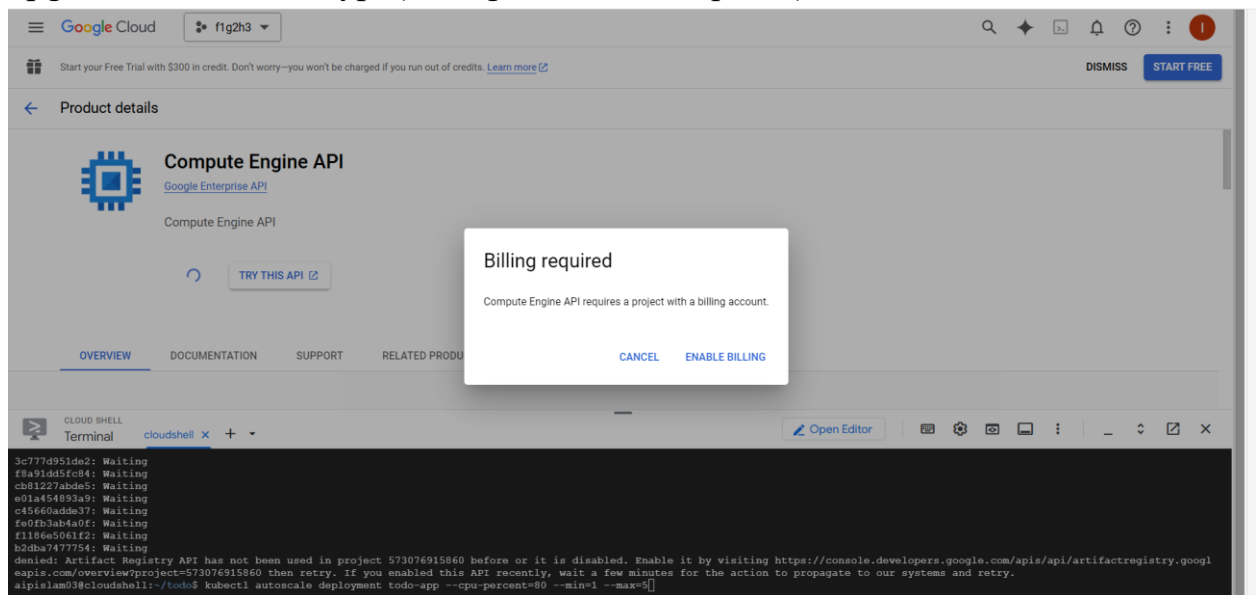
In GKE we can enable horizontal auto pod scaling:

```

aipislam03@cloudshell:~/todo$ kubectl autoscale deployment todo-app --cpu-percent=80 --min=1 --max=5

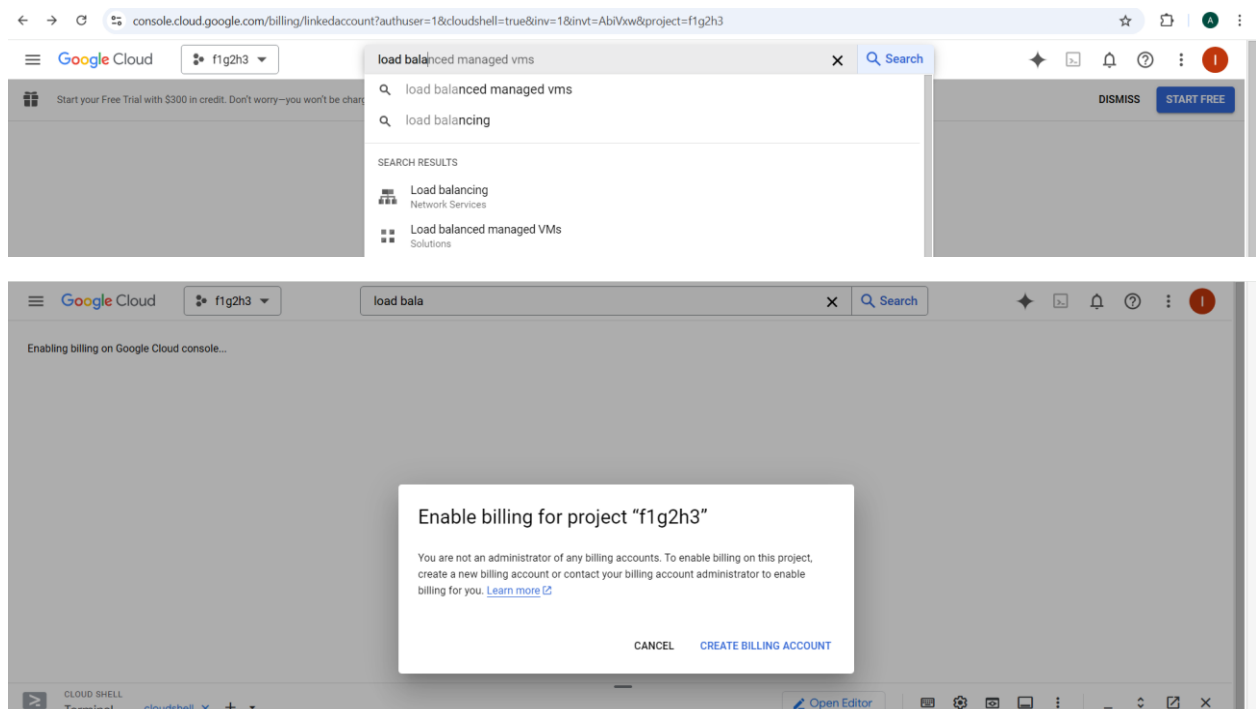
```

For Vertical Scaling in Compute Engine we can navigate to our VM instances and upgrade the machine type(billing account is required):



3. Load Balancing

In order to set up a Load Balancer for our project we can navigate to Network Services > Load balancing



Billing is required

Here we create Load Balancer and we can choose HTTPS Load balancer. After creating, we can attach backend services(GKE pods, Compute Engine instances).

4. Auto-Scaling

For Compute Engine we can create an instance group with auto-scaling ebnabled:

```

aipislam03@cloudshell:~/todo$ gcloud compute instance-groups managed create todo-group \
--base-instance-name=todo-instance \
--template=[INSTANCE_TEMPLATE] \
--size=1 \
--zone=[ZONE]
gcloud compute instance-groups managed set-autoscaling todo-group \
--max-num-replicas=10 \
--min-num-replicas=1 \
--target-cpu-utilization=0.6 \
--zone=[ZONE]

```

For GKE:

```

aipislam03@cloudshell:~/todo$ kubectl autoscale deployment todo-app --cpu-percent=80 --min=1 --max=10

```

5. Monitoring Performance

1) Track Metrics

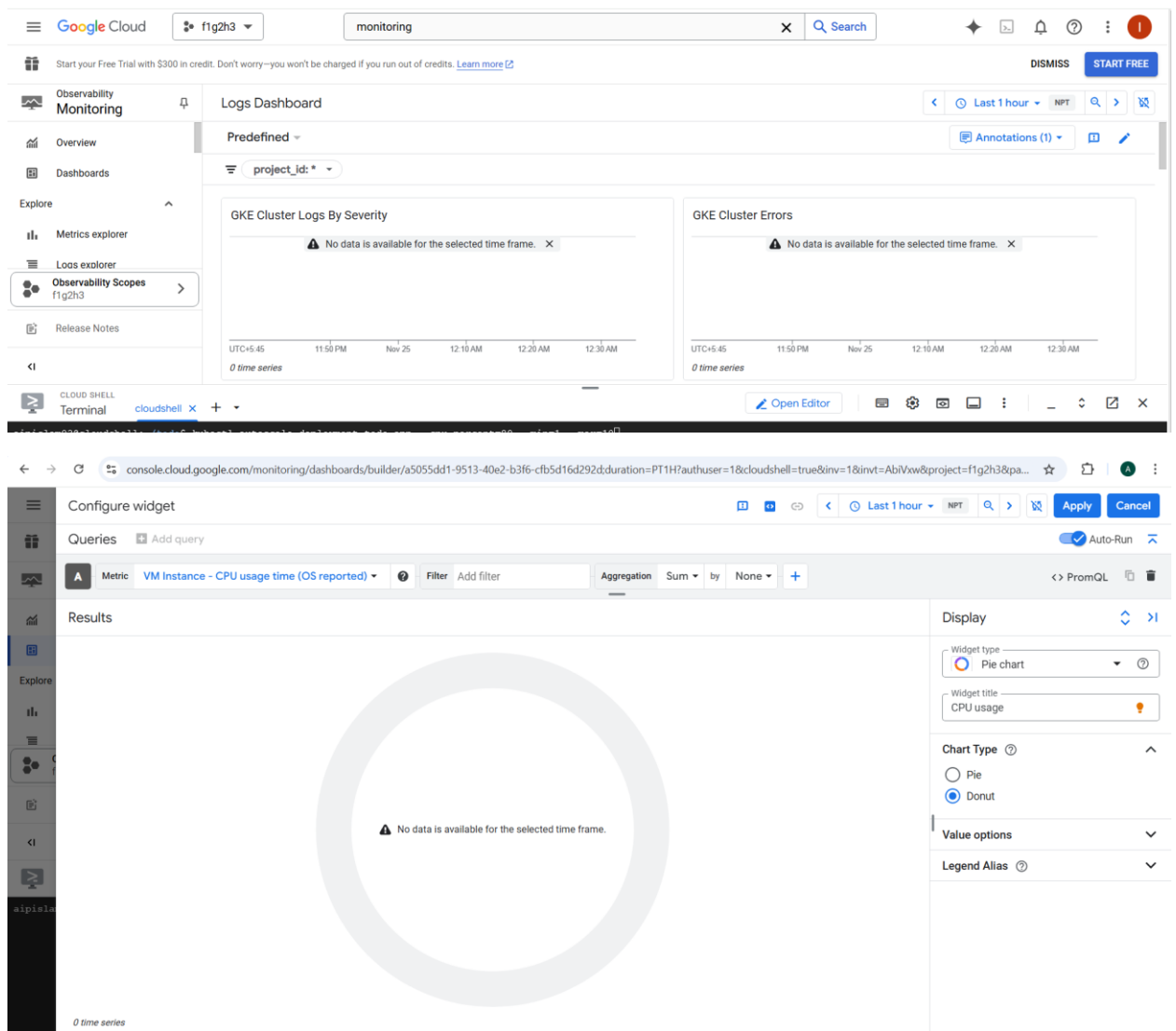
The screenshot shows the Google Cloud Monitoring console. The 'Select a metric' dialog is open, displaying a list of metrics under the 'cpu usage' search. The 'Active' tab is selected, showing 'POPULAR RESOURCES' and 'ACTIVE RESOURCES'. The 'VM Instance' resource is highlighted, showing 4 metrics. The 'Cpu' metric is selected, showing 1 metric. The 'Inactive' tab is also visible, showing 'POPULAR METRICS' and 'INACTIVE METRICS'. The 'CPU usage time (OS reported)' metric is highlighted. The 'Selection preview' at the bottom shows 'VM Instance > cpu > CPU usage time (OS reported)'.

Resource	Count
Kubernetes Container	2 metrics
VM Instance	4 metrics
AlloyDB node	1 metric
Amazon EC2 Instance	2 metrics

Metric Category	Metric	Count
Popular metrics		5 metrics
Cpu		1 metric
Guest		1 metric
Instance		1 metric
Memcached		1 metric

Selection preview: VM Instance > cpu > CPU usage time (OS reported)

2) Dashboards



6. Cost Optimization

We can use Cloud Billing Reports to identify high-cost resources or underutilized resources. We can also use preemptive VMs and track before/after costs in Cloud Billing Reports

Conclusion

In this exercise, we explored essential practices for securing and scaling applications on Google Cloud, focusing on robust design, automation, and incident preparedness. For security, we implemented measures like IAM policies, encryption, and audit logs, complemented by a detailed Incident Response Plan. For scalability, we designed applications leveraging serverless and containerized approaches, implemented load balancing, auto-scaling, and monitored performance to optimize cost-effectiveness.

Recommendations

We can implement regular security testing and optimize our auto-scaling policies