FD Sage on Azure: All of the functionality, none of the headache

First Distribution, in partnership with local managed service provider and integrator iSSC, has launched a new end-to-end cloud-based product called FD Sage on Azure - Powered by iSSC.

It’s everything you love about Sage’s accounting software, delivered directly from Microsoft’s Azure cloud, bringing all of the benefits of the cloud and eliminating many of the drawbacks of an on-premise accounting solution.

FD Sage on Azure has been designed specifically to address many of the major pain points of running on-premise accounting software as often cited by small businesses:

- The need for on-premise hardware
- Growing IT complexity
- Server availability / downtime
- Updates
- Backups
- Low performance at month-end

FD Sage on Azure has been designed from the ground up for the small to medium enterprise market and is available across the length and breadth of Africa. The only things you need to provide are your Sage license and a desire to move away from on-premise hardware and you’re ready to migrate to FD Sage on Azure.

Cloud Benefits

The very nature of the cloud means Azure is able to address every single one of the pain points listed above. By hosting FD Sage on Azure servers and accessing it over the internet there’s no need to buy, set up, configure, or maintain dedicated Sage server hardware on your premises.

This, in turn, reduces the overall complexity of your internal IT environment and allows you to adopt a managed IT service approach instead of employing full-time IT people.

There is therefore no need to manually update servers and clients to the latest version – when you need it, it’s there, updated, and ready to go. One of the core appeals of cloud-based anything is the fact that the cloud is almost always available and there is very seldom any downtime of the cloud servers themselves. Microsoft is so confident of this that Azure availability is guaranteed at a very impressive 99.99%. That is far better than “at least once a month for hours – if not days – at a time” as reported by many SMEs. All you have to look after is your internet connection.
Regarding backups, being in the cloud and powered by Microsoft's excellent Azure technology means backups are reliably done and always available. Simply set your desired backup interval and parameters and forget about it, restoring only as and when it's needed from your FD Sage on Azure console.

And when it comes to disaster recovery, failovers happen so quickly and automatically that you won't even notice if the virtual machine running your Sage instance hits a snag. The last Azure benefit we'll mention is arguably the biggest, and the one that your accounting staff will appreciate most: it puts an end to those bad experiences from the old days when your server would fall over at month-end as the entire finance department hammered it with requests.

That is because Azure provides automatic performance scaling according to how much demand is placed on your FD Sage on Azure instance. That means even under load you'll get the performance you need as the infrastructure powering your experience scales accordingly. On-premise servers certainly can't do that.

**Free Consultation Service**

First Distribution and iSSC also make the deployment and migration process as easy as possible. You are offered a free site assessment and consultation service that establishes how ready you are to transition to FD Sage on Azure. You are provided with the advice and solution architecture on what you need to do on that basis.

Once your business's readiness has been established, and you decide to go ahead with the move, First Distribution and iSSC handle the transition from start to finish. It's an end-to-end solution that offers everything you need to use Sage directly from the cloud. This is a service that doesn't ask for any up-front commitment.

**How does this compare to Sage One?**

SageOne has a limitation that FD Sage on Azure Powered by iSSC doesn't: it is a standalone payroll and accounting package that doesn't offer integration with existing business systems.

FD Sage on Azure does offer this benefit making it a far more flexible option for SMEs looking to integrate financial functionality into other parts of the business. This solution is designed for businesses that already have Sage licenses and is structured according to how many Sage users the business is licensed for rather than how many people there are in the organisation in total.

At the moment, Sage on Azure is available for businesses that have 1 to 5, 5 to 10, and 10 to 25 Sage users.

**Now also available in First for Cloud**

FD Sage on Azure - Powered by iSSC launches today, and is also available via the First for Cloud portal, our e-commerce and marketplace solution, where partners will be able to sell the solution to their customers through their webstores.
Costs
As FD Sage on Azure - Powered by iSSC is a cloud-based service you just will pay month to month over an annual contract period. There is no separate cost for migration – you receive everything the FD Sage on Azure service offers for one low monthly fee.

All of the benefits, none of the headaches
Thanks to the benefits of the cloud end users of FD Sage on Azure receive convenient access to Sage without having to pay for or build or maintain their own servers, as well as:
• Scalable performance offered by Azure’s flexible fabric
• Guaranteed uptime
• Backups and disaster recovery
All at a low annual cost payable monthly.

FD Sage on Azure Powered by iSSC gives SMEs exactly what they need from their accounting package - results – without bogging them down with unnecessary infrastructure complexity.

Contact us today
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