



IAM Cloud **versus** Azure AD Premium + ADFS

Overview

IAM Cloud is an IT Management platform hosted entirely in the cloud. It handles identity management, federation, single sign on, MFA and many other enterprise IT functions.

At initial glance there are a number of overlapping features with other services on the market, including Azure AD Premium with ADFS. But the differences between IAM Cloud and Azure AD Premium with ADFS from a technical, operational and business level are substantial.

This document is intended to accurately highlight the significant number of demonstrable differences between IAM Cloud and Azure AD Premium with ADFS.

Technical factors

Features

Please see Fig.1 for an overview of the top level differences between features.

Identity Management

Active Directory, and by extension Azure AD, is not an identity management solution. It is simply a user and resource directory with the ability to create group policies. It is a passive reference point for IT.

Identity Management systems in contrast are active, and have the potential for programmed intelligence and automation. Identity management systems can have any number of triggers to enact automated processes, but they are typically:

1) User creation and provisioning

From the moment of recruitment, or even pre-recruitment interview, a user can be created within the system with specific access rules, process logic and policies. As an interviewee, you may wish them to be able to login to a couple of recruitment-related resources, but nothing else.

2) User changes

If any user information changes, for example, they become a full time member of staff. IAM Cloud can detect the change, and enact the process logic around that change. In this example, a successful interview candidate who accepted the job, would go from having limited IT access as an interviewee, to being provided with everything they require to effectively do their job as a full-time employee.

3) User de-provisioning

When a user 'leaves' your organisation, you are likely to want to de-provision their access to core applications. This is essential for ensuring tight security, and having automated processes here can help avoid human oversight. However, it may be that employees who have left your organisation still require access to certain systems,

e.g. pensions systems. You may want to set specific rules for these groups of people too, and offer limited access to key applications – with IAM Cloud this is no problem.

These three processes together are commonly referred to as ‘user lifecycle management’, and by intelligently automating them, it helps to increase security while removing many of the manual burdens on IT support. But identity management isn’t limited to this. Identity management is also at the core of personalised and context-specific enterprise IT.

Identity should be viewed as the foundation for all your IT. It facilitates the effective implementation, deployment, management and security of your IT - now and in the future. The more intelligent your identity management is, the more dynamic and powerful your IT becomes.

Fully Available

Azure AD Premium has a 99.9% up-time SLA, which is the same as IAM Cloud. But the combined solution with ADFS is not classified as ‘Fully Available’, because it is dependent on on-premise services including ADFS, AD-Sync and load balancers to be operational. These are in turn dependent on other ancillary services like Firewalls to be operational too.

So even if your employees are trying to access cloud applications like Office 365, with Azure AD Premium and ADFS, they’re relying on on-premises systems too. If there’s a problem on-site such as a fire, flood or firewall issue, no one can access Office 365 from anywhere. With IAM Cloud this isn’t the case. The authentication process happens in the cloud, in fact in the same Microsoft data centres as Office 365 itself. Consequently, IAM Cloud is a much stronger solution for business continuity.

A platform for control and customisation

ADFS, Azure AD & Dirsync are products, not platforms. IAM Cloud is a platform, with a full API, SSO Toolkit, and Software Development Kit. It’s been developed in a way that it can evolve to meet any identity and access requirements. It gives developers and technical IT Administrators the ability to advance and hone the system to maximise the benefit to their organisation.

With IAM Cloud, Administrators don’t need to learn a whole skillset just to make it functional, as they do with ADFS and Dirsync. IAM Cloud is functional from the get-go, but its extensibility gives IT Administrators a chance to put their skills and expertise to use on higher value and more strategic tasks. Azure AD, ADFS and Dirsync are more complicated yet less powerful than IAM Cloud.

Operational factors

Deployment speed and freedom

IAM Cloud is a facilitator. It makes day-to-day IT better, but it also removes barriers to IT adoption and increases deployment speed of new applications without compromising security and compliance. IAM Cloud makes future IT projects easier. It helps you centralise your IT administration, so your IT is manageable regardless of whether you 50 users or 500000, or have 5 applications or 500. Azure AD and ADFS adds ongoing complication to all future IT projects.

Service means more than support, with IAM Cloud it's about collaboration

Azure AD Premium and ADFS are for all intents and purposes products. When you take them, you also take on the responsibility of ensuring they work. Having a service, like IAM Cloud, doesn't just mean you have customer support – Azure AD and ADFS have 'support'.

Firstly, a true service means that the responsibility is taken from your shoulders and put on IAM Cloud, to make sure everything works as agreed. IAM Cloud is responsible for ensuring the successful delivery of the platform. Secondly, we take service even further with true technical collaboration with our partners. IAM Cloud's identity and access specialists become an extension of your own team, providing guidance, technical input and full cross-team development.

Strategic focus and talent concentration

Azure AD, ADFS and Dirsync require full skillsets and knowledge pools in their own right. Managing them effectively means making sure you stay up to date with the changing technologies. But this dilutes your expertise in other areas. IAM Cloud's system is fully customizable, but it doesn't require administrators to learn an entirely new skill.

Business factors

Expertise.

The IAM Cloud team are a valuable ally to your business. Our collaborative approach to 'service' means that we assume the role of your very own identity management and cloud services advisor to your business on all future IT developments. You can bring us in to work with you on future IT Projects, or work with us on ensuring you develop and effective cloud procurement strategy, or simply run something past us to ensure it conforms to the latest technical requirements and best practices.

Evolution.

IAM Cloud's technology evolves with customer requirements, and the platform is continually being enhanced and built upon further. Forming a technology partnership with IAM Cloud as a customer means that you'll not only benefit from the features available today, you'll also benefit from the features as the platform continues to evolve and grow. IT is never static, so working with a company and technology that can evolve and grow along side of your business is invaluable.

Agility.

IAM Cloud makes IT more agile, and that in-turn makes the whole business more agile. Whether you're wanting to create a more flexible workforce, who can easily and securely hotdesk and remote work, or if you're simply wanting to ensure that you can quickly and effectively deliver LOB applications to teams across the business – IAM Cloud helps.

Total Cost of Ownership.

With IAM Cloud, you only pay for what you use. Even when multi-year deals with up-front payments are preferred by clients, IAM Cloud's contracts are based on adaptive pricing agreements, which means you only pay for what you use, and this is measured daily to ensure you get the very best deal possible. IAM Cloud also has no ancillary servers or systems, which require huge time and financial costs for planning, installation, professional services, hardware, management, upgrades, energy, physical space and patch updates.

Furthermore, the actual single per user per month cost of IAM Cloud is competitive, and often cheaper, than just Azure AD Premium on its own.

IAM Cloud	ADFS+Azure AD Premium
Zero costs of installation, servers, maintenance, service, scripting, updates. And burden of responsibility on IAM Cloud, not customer	Cost of installation of ADFS, Dirsync, load balancers, and redundancies + Cost of 8 on-prem servers + Time & actual cost of maintenance and upgrades + Cost of any further integrations + Time cost of scripting + Risk associated with single points of failure + Burden of responsibility = A <u>high TCO</u> just for the ancillary services.
= Zero ancillary costs.	
+ Base plan = £2.30	+ AD Premium £3.67 user/month
Base plan + Identity adv - £3.05	
Base plan + Access adv - £3.05	
Base + Identity adv + Access adv = £3.80 user/month	+ Service costs
+ Zero additional service or support costs – and IAM Cloud includes full customer success program.	£183.27 per month standard support £610.10 per month professional support £xxxx (call Microsoft) per month premier support

Drawbacks & limitations

The one area which Azure AD Premium is currently superior to IAM Cloud on is its advanced reporting. However, IAM Cloud is working on a reporting solution and a notification system that is far more advanced than Azure AD's equivalent. These will be available in early 2016. In the meantime, IAM Cloud is happy to produce reports on request of the customer.

Conclusion

Overall when you combine the technical, operational and business benefits of IAM Cloud, there is almost no argument for using ADFS, Dirsync and Azure AD. It is the default option packaged by Microsoft, but IAM Cloud gets regularly recommended by account managers and sales people in Microsoft as a superior option for supporting Office 365 for the enhanced services and customer experience. Indeed, IAM Cloud recently won Microsoft Worldwide Education Partner of the Year 2015, and were a 2015 Finalist in Microsoft EMEA Cloud Partner category. IAM Cloud didn't receive these accolades for providing an inferior version of a product that Microsoft already produced.

Fig.1 Cost and feature comparison table

IAM Cloud	ADFS+Azure AD Premium
Baseplan	
Full integrated automated identity management system with powerful independent logic and data flow & synchronisation	Basic AD synchronisation
Enterprise SSO with smart links to five cloud AND on-prem applications	Basic Portal SSO only (no desktop sso) to unlimited cloud-based apps only
Login Control	N/A
Co-Branded Login Portal	Yes, similar, but less customised
Cloud Drive Mapper	N/A
TouchPoint	N/A
Self-Service Password Reset & on-prem write-back	Yes, same.

Microsoft Licensing Automation	N/A
Customer identity management (with independent commercial agreement)	N/A
99.9% SLA	Yes, same.
Reports available on request, with a full featured advanced reporting module ready within 4 months. Can be accelerated on demand.	Advanced reporting
Advanced Access	
SSO from unfederated environments (e.g. intranets) for unlimited cloud AND on-prem applications	Basic Portal SSO (no custom environments) only to unlimited cloud-based apps
Fully custom login portal	N/A
Session Timeout Control	N/A
Multi-Factor Authentication	Yes, but more primitive.
Biometric login (finger print)	N/A
Advanced Password Reset from workstation login	N/A
Advanced Identity	
Unlimited source directories	Requires FIM/MIM
Unlimited destination directories	Requires FIM/MIM
Full system integration with WorkDay, PeopleSoft, SIMS, Oracle, SQL + more on demand	Limited integration (12 attributes, inbound only, no groups) with WorkDay. SQL integration, but not in combination with anything else.
Cross-directory password sync	N/A