

AWS Digital Customer Experience Competency

Consulting Partner Validation Checklist

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Version 2.0



partner
network

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Table of Contents

AWS DIGITAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMPETENCY PROGRAM PREREQUISITES.....	3
AWS DCX CONSULTING PARTNER VALIDATION CHECKLIST	5
1.0 DCX Practice Overview.....	5
2.0 Operational Excellence	6
3.0 Security	7
4.0 Reliability	9
5.0 Performance Efficiency	10
6.0 Cost Optimization	12

AWS Digital Customer Experience Competency Program Prerequisites

AWS Digital Customer Experience (DCX) Competency APN Partners have a proven track record of delivering the highest quality solutions in the marketing automation, content management, customer analytics, and digital commerce categories. By attaining the AWS DCX Competency, you are demonstrating to your customers that you have deep expertise in the DCX segment on the AWS platform and have delivered solutions seamlessly in the AWS Cloud environment.

The following items will be validated by the AWS Competency Program Manager; missing or incomplete information must be addressed prior to scheduling of the validation review.

1.0 APN Program Membership		Met Y/N
1.1 Program Guidelines	The APN Partner must read the Program Guidelines and Definitions before applying to the DCX Competency Program. Click here for Program details .	
1.2 Consulting Partner Tier	APN Partner must be an Advanced or Premier APN Consulting Partner before applying to the Digital Customer Experience Competency Program.	
2.0 AWS Customer Case Studies		Met Y/N
2.1 DCX-Specific Customer Case Studies	<p>APN Partner must have four (4) AWS customer case studies specific to completed projects in one or more of the DCX Competency categories; two (2) of these case studies must be publicly referenceable case studies.</p> <p>Case studies must be for projects that are in production, rather than in pilot or proof of concept stage. Projects that are still in development stage will not be accepted.</p> <p>APN Partner must provide the following information for each case study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Name of the customer ▪ Problem statement/definition ▪ What you proposed ▪ How AWS services were used as part of the solution ▪ Third party applications or solutions used ▪ Start and end dates of project ▪ Outcomes and results <p>This information will be requested as part of the Program Application process in APN Partner Central.</p>	
2.2 Publicly Available Case Studies	<p>2.2.1 Two (2) of the four (4) AWS customer case studies <u>must be public</u>; evidence must be in the form of publicly available case studies, white papers, or blog posts.</p> <p>Note: For best practice on how to write an accepted Public Case Study See Here</p> <p>2.2.2 Public case studies must be easily discoverable on the APN Partner’s website, e.g., must be able to navigate to the case study from the APN Partner’s home page. APN Partner must provide link to these case studies.</p> <p>2.2.3 Public case studies must include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reference to the customer name, APN Partner Name, and AWS ▪ Problem statement/definition ▪ What you proposed ▪ How AWS services were used as part of the solution ▪ Outcome(s)/results <p>Note: Public case studies are used by AWS upon approval into the Competency to showcase the APN Partner’s demonstrated success in the practice area and provide customers with confidence that APN Partner has the experience and knowledge needed to develop and deliver solutions to meet their objectives.</p>	
3.0 AWS DCX Practice and Focus		Met Y/N

3.1 Partner Practice Landing Page	<p>AWS customers are looking for expertise in the development and delivery of DCX solutions on AWS; an APN Partner’s internet presence specific to their AWS DCX practice provides customers with confidence about the APN Partner’s DCX capabilities and experience.</p> <p>APN Partner must have a landing page that describes their AWS DCX practice, AWS solutions and Competency use cases, technology partnerships, links to AWS customer case studies or case studies, and any other relevant information supporting the APN Partner’s expertise related to DCX and highlighting the partnership with AWS.</p> <p>DCX practice page must be accessible from APN Partner home page. Home page is not acceptable as a practice page unless APN Partner is a dedicated DCX consulting company and home page reflects the APN Partner’s concentration on DCX.</p> <p>Note: For best practice on how to build an accepted APN Partner Practice Landing Page See Here</p>	
3.2 DCX Thought Leadership	<p>AWS DCX Competency Partners are viewed as having deep domain expertise in DCX, having developed innovative solutions that leverage AWS services.</p> <p>APN Partner must have public-facing materials (e.g., blog posts, press articles, videos, etc.) showcasing the APN Partner’s focus on and expertise in DCX. Links must be provided to examples of materials published within the last 12 months, examples of customer workshops/education and description of vertical use-cases offered.</p>	
4.0 APN Partner Self-Assessment		Met Y/N
4.1 AWS Competency Partner Program Validation Checklist Self-Assessment	<p>APN Partner must conduct a self-assessment of their compliance to the requirements of the AWS DCX Consulting Partner Validation Checklist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ APN Partner must complete all sections of the checklist. ▪ Completed self-assessment must be emailed to competency-checklist@amazon.com, using the following convention for the email subject line: “[APN Partner Name], DCX Competency Consulting Partner Completed Self-Assessment.” ▪ It is recommended that APN Partner has their Solutions Architect or Partner Development Manager (PDM) review the completed self-assessment before submitting to AWS. The purpose of this is to ensure the APN Partner’s AWS team is engaged and working to provide recommendations prior to the audit and to help ensure a positive audit experience. 	

AWS DCX Consulting Partner Validation Checklist

In preparation for the validation process, APN Partner should become familiar with the items outlined in this checklist and prepare objective evidence, including but not limited to: prepared demonstration to show capabilities, process documentation, and/or actual customer examples. APN Partners are not limited to the four (4) case studies submitted as part of the prerequisite process but should be prepared to describe how the new case studies meet the minimum acceptable criteria for an AWS DCX case study if being used during the validation.

The AWS Competency Program is guided by [AWS best practices](#) and [Well Architected Framework](#).

1.0 DCX Practice Overview		Met Y/N	Notes
1.1 Customer Presentation	<p>APN Partner has a company overview presentation that sets the stage for customer conversations about their AWS DCX practice and showcases APN Partner's demonstration capabilities.</p> <p>Presentation contains information about the APN Partner's AWS DCX practice, including AWS-specific differentiators, e.g., what is unique about the APN Partner's DCX practice that can only be accomplished leveraging AWS.</p> <p>Overview presentations contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Company history ▪ Office locations ▪ Number of employees ▪ Customer profile, including number and size of customers, including industry ▪ Overview of AWS DCX Practice <p>Evidence must be in the form of a presentation delivered by a business development executive at the beginning of the validation session and should be limited to 15 minutes.</p>		
1.2 Maintaining AWS Expertise	<p>APN Partner can describe how they stay current on AWS Service releases related to their AWS DCX Practice.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of a verbal description on enablement materials leveraged by APN Partner to stay current on AWS services and features.</p>		

2.0 Operational Excellence		Met Y/N	Notes
<p>The operational excellence pillar focuses on running and monitoring systems to deliver business value, and continually improving processes and procedures. Key topics include managing and automating changes, responding to events, and defining standards to successfully manage daily operations.</p>			
APN Partner Delivery Model			
2.1 APN Partner Engagement with Customers	<p>APN Partner can describe whether their AWS DCX practice delivers only project-based work and hands off final solution to end customer per terms of the Statement of Work.</p> <p>or</p> <p>APN Partner delivers project-based work and retains contractual obligation to the customer to manage and operate DCX workloads.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of a verbal description or evidence of APN Partner engagement model (e.g., SOWs, SLAs, or MSP contracts) for the customer case studies submitted to meet the Competency prerequisites.</p>		N/A
2.2 MSP Program Participation and DCX-Specific Differences	<p>Approved MSP Partners are subject to a rigorous onsite audit covering the full customer engagement lifecycle and are therefore eligible for waiver of a number of requirements in the following sections.</p> <p>If APN Partner manages workloads and is an approved AWS MSP Partner, APN Partner must describe any differences in their practice as it pertains to supporting DCX workloads on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of a document listing unique considerations for managing DCX environments.</p> <p>Note: Compliance with this requirement allows APN Partner to claim a waiver for all requirements listed in this Checklist as "Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP."</p>		N/A
2.3 Customer Handoff and Acceptance for DCX Projects (for non-MSP Partners)	<p>If APN Partner performs SOW-only work, APN Partner can describe each phase of the customer handoff and acceptance process.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of verbal description, customer training documents, and/or SOW language describing handoff responsibilities.</p>		Not Eligible for Waiver
2.4 Disaster Recovery Planning and Testing	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner demonstrates evidence of disaster recovery planning.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of a documented disaster recovery process, with evidence of testing within the last 12 months.</p> <p>Evidence of current ISO 22301 certification provides exemption.</p>		Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.
Designing for Operations			
2.5 Design Process: Overall Planning	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner has design process to ensure solution designs account for how workload will be deployed, updated, and operated.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of verbal description and process documentation referring to specific DCX customer case studies.</p>		Not Eligible for Waiver
2.6 Business Problem Understanding and Articulation	<p>APN Partner has significant depth in understanding business problems that customers have in relevant DCX categories and be able to articulate to the customer how solutions built on AWS bring solutions.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of verbal description and process documentation referring to specific DCX customer case studies.</p>		Not Eligible for Waiver

2.7 Design Process: Metrics	<p>APN Partner has implemented analytics collection that validate model and inference engine performance, service level commitments, marketing, and customer experience objectives.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of verbal description, process documentation, and/or technology demonstrations.</p>		
2.8 Design Process: Quality Control	<p>APN Partner has implemented engineering practices that align with defect reduction and quick and safe fixes.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of verbal description, process documentation, and/or technology demonstrations if applicable.</p>		
2.9 Deployment Checklist	<p>APN Partner uses consistent processes (e.g., checklists) to know when ready to go live with a workload.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of completed checklists leveraged for DCX solutions.</p>		Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.
2.10 Runbooks/ Playbooks	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner uses runbooks that document routine activities and playbooks that guide the issue resolution process.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of runbooks/playbooks for relevant components of DCX solutions.</p>		Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.
2.11 Automation through Scripting	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner leverages scripting and tagging to automate execution of runbooks if/where applicable.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of script library/demonstration.</p>		Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.
Understanding Operational Health			
2.12 Metrics and Performance Dashboards	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner leverages metrics and performance dashboards to measure operational health. (e.g. Amazon CloudWatch Logs, Amazon Elasticsearch Service, Personal Health Dashboard, AWS Service Health Dashboard).</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of verbal description and demonstration of operational health metrics/dashboard.</p>		Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.
Responding to Events			
2.13 Planned and Unplanned Event Planning	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner has a process to anticipate operational events, both planned (for example, sales promotions, deployments, and failure tests) and unplanned (for example, surges in utilization and component failures).</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of verbal description with examples of both planned and unplanned events that impacted DCX practice.</p>		Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.
2.14 Operations: Event, Incident, and Problem Management	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner has event, incident, and problem management processes, including escalation paths and root cause analysis.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of APN Partner demonstration of how events are captured, allocated, escalated, and managed to closure.</p>		Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.
Learning from Experience			
2.15 Lessons Learned	<p>APN Partner demonstrates that lessons learned from each deployment are documented and shared across teams to share the benefits of those lessons.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of lessons-learned documentation.</p>		Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.
3.0 Security		Met Y/N	Waiver Conditions
The security pillar focuses on protecting information & systems. Key topics include confidentiality and integrity of data, identifying and managing who can do what with privilege management, protecting systems, and establishing controls to detect security events.			
User Security Best Practices			

3.1 Identity and Access Management	<p>APN Partner has a documented Access Management Strategy, including but not limited to: AWS Identity and Access Management (IAM) users, symmetric access keys, asymmetric X.509 certificates, console passwords, and hardware or virtual multi-factor authentication (MFA) devices.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of a technology demonstration, process documentation that addresses the above, and one customer example.</p>		<p>Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.</p>
3.2 Protection of Root Account Credentials	<p>APN Partner does not administrate AWS accounts by use of root account credentials.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of a technology demonstration.</p>		<p>Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.</p>
3.3 Least Privilege Principle	<p>APN Partner has system that provides access to customer resources to its engineers based on the principle of least privilege. A process for defining and maintaining the appropriate level of access is in place. Access to critical or sensitive data (as defined by the customer) is further controlled by multi-factor or quorum authentication with access-based alerts.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of a demonstration of internal capabilities and processes for maintaining least privilege access policies.</p>		<p>Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.</p>
Monitoring and Detection			
3.4 Detective Controls	<p>Activity is monitored appropriately, including by maintenance of logs for capturing performance and security event data, for example CloudWatch Logs, events, VPC Flow Logs, Elastic Load Balancing logs, Amazon Simple Storage Service (Amazon S3) bucket logs, etc.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of an example of logs maintained, including demonstration that logs are retained per customer-agreed retention periods.</p>		<p>Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.</p>
Infrastructure and Data Protection			
3.5 Multi-Factor Authentication	<p>APN Partner ensures that multi-factor authentication is activated on all APN Partner and customer AWS root accounts.</p> <p>APN Partner must show evidence of the use of technology (e.g., AWS Trusted Advisor) for regular auditing of accounts for MFA activation and activation of MFA on new AWS root accounts.</p>		<p>Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.</p>
3.6 Protection of Internal Systems from Attacks	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner has established security policies and procedures to monitor and protect its own systems from attacks.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of security policies and procedures; may also be in the form of current industry certification related to information security (e.g., ISO 27001) or proof of infrastructure security and information security management processes and associated approvals.</p>		<p>Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.</p>
3.7 Protection of Customer Systems from Attacks	<p>APN Partner has security policies and procedures to protect its customers' systems from attacks.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of security policies and procedures; may also be in the form of industry certification related to information security management (e.g., ISO 27001).</p>		<p>Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.</p>
3.8 Communication of Security Best Practices	<p>APN Partner ensures <u>customers</u> understand AWS security processes and technologies as outlined in https://aws.amazon.com/whitepapers/aws-security-best-practices/.</p> <p>For digital commerce implementations, APN Partner ensures that customers understand PCI-DSS scope of proposed architectures as well as best practices for deploying PCI-DSS compliant solutions on AWS.</p>		<p>Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.</p>

	Evidence must be in the form of onboarding and educational documents provided to customers that specifically cover customer security considerations in the APN Partner's environment.		
3.9 Data Encryption	<p>Customer contact and business/personal information is encrypted on all Partner systems including APN Partner, billing, and ticketing systems.</p> <p>In addition, for digital commerce deployments, APN Partner ensures that card holder data is encrypted in-transit over public & private networks and at-rest.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of documentation of customer information storing systems with proof of encryption.</p>		Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.
3.10 PCI-DSS – Network Segmentation	<p>For digital commerce implementations where card holder data is present, APN Partner employs network architectures with isolation of workloads, with firewalls, that process and/or store card holder data from other customer workloads.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description as it relates to two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies.</p>		
3.11 PCI-DSS – Antivirus & Malware Protection	<p>For digital commerce implementations, APN partner has deployed antivirus and malware detection measures as well as a process to regularly update and maintain them.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description as it relates to two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies.</p>		
3.12 PCI-DSS – Vulnerability Scans & Penetration Testing	<p>For digital commerce implementations, APN Partner has implemented a means of performing quarterly vulnerability scans and penetration testing.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description as it relates to two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies.</p>		
3.13 PCI-DSS – Annual Scope Assessment	<p>For digital commerce implementations, APN Partner has implemented a means of performing PCI-DSS scope assessments of architecture and processes.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description as it relates to two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies.</p>		
3.14 PCI-DSS – Risk Assessment Process & Incident Response	<p>For digital commerce implementations, APN Partner has implemented a risk assessment process and incident response plan.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description as it relates to two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies.</p>		

4.0 Reliability		Met Y/N	Notes
The reliability pillar focuses on the ability to prevent, and quickly recover from failures to meet business and customer demand. Key topics include foundational elements around setup, cross project requirements, recovery planning, and how we handle change.			
Network			
4.1 Service Availability	<p>APN Partner has process to determine service availability needs for customers.</p> <p>See AWS Reliability Pillar whitepaper for specific considerations and guidance on how to calculate service availability with downstream dependencies.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of verbal description and/or process documentation.</p>		Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.
4.2 Network Capacity	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner plans network topology for IP-based networks to account for future growth and compatible addressing structures.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of network growth considerations leveraged for an existing DCX customer.</p>		Not Eligible for Waiver

4.3 Network Resiliency	For SaaS implementations APN Partner plans network topology to ensure the resiliency of connectivity including planning for DoS attacks, unexpected increase in traffic, or removal of connectivity due to misconfiguration errors. Evidence must be in the form of verbal description and/or process documentation.		Not Eligible for Waiver
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Application Design for High Availability

4.4 Application Availability	APN Partner designs applications according to customer needs, factoring in cost of building/maintaining that application to the desired availability levels. Evidence must be in the form of verbal description and/or partner documentation leveraged in design process.		Not Eligible for Waiver
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4.5 Service Interruption	For SaaS implementations APN Partner understands and has processes to automatically remediate common causes of service interruption including but not limited to: hardware failure, deployment failure, load induced interruptions, data induced interruptions, credential expiration, failure of dependent services, infrastructure availability related to power or environmental sources, and/or identifier exhaustion (exceeding available capacity). Evidence must be in the form of verbal description how these interruptions are accounted for in customer designs, with description of automated remediation that has been established.		Not Eligible for Waiver
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Testing

4.6 Testing for Availability	APN Partner uses testing to ensure availability goals are met. This can include, but is not limited to: unit testing, load testing, and performance testing, while simulating failure modes while under these tests. Testing should account for dependency unavailability and deployment failures. Evidence must be in the form of description of testing and results compared to committed application availability of the application or service.		Not Eligible for Waiver
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Failure Management

4.7 Root Cause Analysis	APN Partner conducts Root Cause Analysis on failures based on significant events to evaluate the architecture. Evidence must be in the form of records of root cause analysis for previous failure with resulting architectural recommendations.		Not Eligible for Waiver
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5.0 Performance Efficiency

For this section, APN Partner must select two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies and discuss performance efficiency considerations for both examples.

The performance efficiency pillar focuses on using IT and computing resources efficiently. Key topics include selecting the right resource types and sizes based on workload requirements, monitoring performance, and making informed decisions to maintain efficiency as business needs evolve.

Customer Case Studies for Performance Efficiency Considerations	[Insert Customer Case Study #1 Here]	[Insert Customer Case Study #2 Here]
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Selection

5.1 Compute	APN Partner to describe considerations for how they select the right AWS compute options specifically outlining choice of instances, containers, and functions. Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description		
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	as it relates to two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies.		
5.2 Storage	<p>APN Partner to describe considerations for how they select the right AWS Storage options specifically outlining access method, pattern of access, throughput required, frequency of access, frequency of update, and availability and durability constraints.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description as it relates to two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies.</p>		
5.3 Database	<p>APN Partner to describe considerations for how they select the right AWS database options specifically outlining requirements for availability, consistency, partition tolerance, latency, durability, scalability, and query capability.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description as it relates to two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies.</p>		
5.4 Network	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner to describe considerations for how they select the right Network options specifically outlining latency, throughput requirements, and location.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description as it relates to two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies.</p>		
Performance Monitoring and Review			
5.5 Resource Review	<p>APN Partner has implemented a means of continually reviewing architectural decisions and approaches using tracking of key performance metrics, load testing, and benchmarking.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description as it relates to two (2) of the</p>		

	four (4) submitted customer case studies.		
5.6 Performance Monitoring	<p>APN Partner uses techniques to monitor applications, including active and passive monitoring, after deployment to test the performance and availability.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description as it relates to two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies.</p>		

Performance Tradeoffs

5.7 Tradeoffs	<p>APN Partner considers tradeoffs during design to ensure an optimal approach for the customer; this may include tradeoffs for consistency, durability, or latency, in order to deliver higher performance.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided in the form of verbal description of how tradeoffs were implemented for two (2) of the four (4) submitted customer case studies, including for example, caching, partitioning or sharding, compression, and buffering.</p>		
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6.0 Cost Optimization

Met
Y/N

Waiver
Conditions

Cost Optimization focuses on avoiding un-needed costs. Key topics include understanding and controlling where money is being spent, selecting the most appropriate and right number of resource types, analyzing spend over time, and scaling to meet business needs without overspending.

Resource Planning

6.1 Service and Pricing Models	<p>APN Partner considers cost when selecting AWS services, including optimizing by using the most appropriate services and by selecting the appropriate pricing models to meet cost targets, including by the use of Reserved Instances and Spot Instances and by factoring costs into Region selections.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of a description of how services and price models are selected for cost optimization.</p>		Not Eligible for Waiver
6.2 Supply and Demand	<p>APN Partner ensures that capacity matches but does not exceed what is needed, including by using a demand-based, buffer-based, or time-based approach.</p> <p>This includes testing for data usage at scale, to account for larger deployments.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of a description of capacity planning activities, including testing for demand at scale.</p>		Not Eligible for Waiver

Spend Visibility and Tracking

6.3 Usage and Spend Awareness	<p>APN Partner leverages billing and cost management tools to monitor usage and spend.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of a demonstration of billing and cost management tools used.</p>	<p>Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.</p>
Cost Optimization over Time		
6.4 Cost Review and Improvement	<p>For SaaS implementations APN Partner has established a regular cadence to review internal performance and provide recommendations for improvement. Internal optimization involves looking for efficiencies within the APN Partner's operations that result in financial efficiencies, process efficiencies, and/or greater customer satisfaction.</p> <p>Evidence must be in the form of explanation of internal review cadence, and any efficiencies implemented as part of the process (e.g., billing alerts, etc.).</p>	<p>Waived if APN Partner is approved AWS MSP.</p>

AWS Resources:

Title	Description
How to Build a Practice Landing Page	Provides guidance how to build a Practice/solution page that will meet the prerequisites of the Program.
How to write a Public Case Study	Provides guidance how to build a Public Customer Case Study that will meet the prerequisites of the Program.
How to build an Architecture Diagram	Provides guidance how to build a architecture diagrams that will meet the prerequisites of the Program.
Partner Readiness Doc	Provides guidance and best practice examples of the Program prerequisites.

AWS reserves the right to make changes to the AWS Competency Program at any time and has sole discretion over whether APN Partners qualify for the Program.