Omdia Universe: Global Cloud Service Provider, 2025

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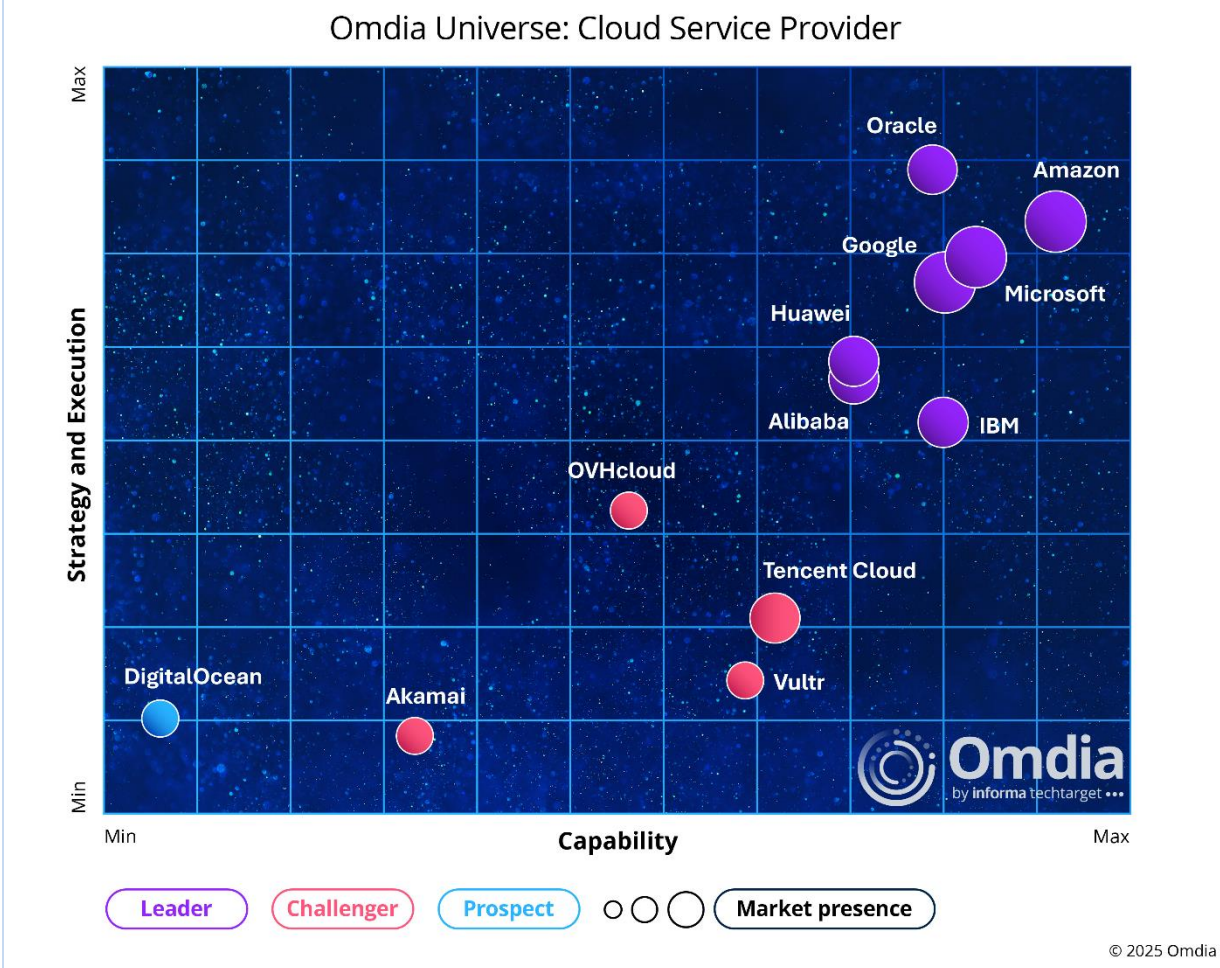
Summary

Catalyst

The global cloud computing market is 20 years old, and the capabilities and value it offers have changed significantly over this time. Omdia's research into this market reflects the changing expectations of what "good" looks like in the global cloud computing market. This report compares the leading global cloud service providers (CSPs) and provides independent analysis of how well the current services meet the needs of cloud computing customers today.

Figure 1: The Omdia Universe for Global Cloud Service Providers



Source: Omdia

All vendors included in the report were approached to provide input for this study. Amazon, DigitalOcean, Google Cloud, and Microsoft either declined to participate or did not complete the response questionnaire in time before publication. The non-participant vendor evaluations are based on publicly available information, analyst insights, and feedback from their customer base sourced directly via Informa TechTarget audiences.

Omdia view

Cloud computing has evolved and now has many more different variations on the as a service theme, which is one of the core benefits of cloud computing. However, it is difficult for organizations today to navigate the sheer breadth of the services and capabilities these CSPs offer. The adage "less is more" can seem to apply to cloud computing, but dig a little deeper. While the number of services has grown from tens in 2006 to hundreds today, many of these services are just different configurations of the basic compute and storage services that started the cloud computing business. While the sheer number of these resource configurations can be overwhelming, they enable customers to be more precise in their selection.

Where CSPs have expanded services is in the platform layer, where they now provide solutions for the entire lifecycle of workloads from build to run. The value CSPs have brought to organizations is that customers can focus on building solutions by using a cloud platform and do not need to spend time and effort ensuring the infrastructure and software are compatible and maintained. CSPs have always tried to simplify the adoption of any new technology wave, such as providing a platform for Kubernetes when organizations were looking to migrate to cloud native. Today, CSPs continue that tradition of simplifying technology adoption and have invested heavily in artificial intelligence (AI). Hyperscale providers will invest an estimated $288 billion in 2025 in their data center capex, according to Omdia's *Data Center Capex Tracker – 1H25*. AI is the new battleground where CSPs need to demonstrate the value of using cloud, but in these more turbulent times, that assertion is battling the growing sense of the need to build AI in a sovereign environment. While CSPs have built sovereign clouds, these clouds still lack the guarantee of privacy from the CSPs' home nation's intelligence agencies' more nefarious intentions. As such, many nations are looking to build AI factories owned by, built, operated, and run wholly within the country.

Analyzing the cloud service provider universe

Market definition

The move from on-premises to the public cloud—infrastructure as a service (IaaS) and platform as a service (PaaS)—is now well-documented and has grown steadily over the past 20 years. As of 2025, Omdia estimated that 50% of all workloads ran in the public cloud. Migration to the public cloud is now uniform in the type of workload organizations plan to move, as well as those that they are not planning to move to the cloud. However, the cloud market is not a simple binary choice of on-premises or a single public cloud. The cloud market has spawned many innovations, such as hybrid multicloud, edge cloud, AI cloud, and sovereign cloud. Therefore, the choice and selection of CSPs have become more nuanced as customers look for capabilities that match their specific needs.

Omdia clarifies the sector by identifying the key characteristics of a CSP. The current reality of the market is that the hyperscale CSPs do not all deliver the same level of performance on Omdia's 10 key characteristics.

Core service delivery

- Cloud services. The breadth and depth of the different services now available in the cloud are obvious capabilities, but organizations need to consider whether more is always best.
- Service quality. At the core of any cloud service offering is its ability to be available for the customer when they want it, and not to have a history of poor performance or service unavailability.
- Pricing and total cost of ownership (TCO). Comparing suppliers with the price and TCO of using the CSP examines many different factors contributing to TCO.
- Scale and optimization of environments. The vendor's presence and the platform's easy access from any geography are critical aspects of a global cloud provider's offering. In addition, the platform should enable the customer to grow or shrink resource consumption seamlessly in line with demand.
- AI cloud. The CSP is extending its core cloud services to solve customers' AI training and inference requirements.

Additional services

- Security and compliance. These are the solution's ability to provide the right levels of security, sovereignty, compliance, and privacy to match those needed by the different classifications of data.
- Support and customer service. One of the biggest issues large multinational organizations like CSP hyperscalers face is how to deliver customer service efficiently and effectively to meet customers' requirements.
- Environmental, social, and governance (ESG). The increasing importance of ESG now requires CSPs to deliver to customers some key data that the customers need for their own reporting requirements.
- Reporting and integration. These are the ability to derive some metrics and understand the cost and value of the service, as well as the ease of integrating with adjacent technologies and the customer's whole IT environment.
- Marketplace. This is how different capabilities from third parties and the CSP are made available for customers to consume easily and frictionlessly.

Market dynamics

The gap between the leaders, challengers, and prospects in the global cloud services market has been reduced over recent years as differentiation becomes more nuanced. The number of services, the quality of the service, or the number of partner services supported differentiates core cloud services. The market sees some clear signs of differentiation in newer services, such as AI, sovereignty, and hybrid. Omdia considers all the vendors in this Universe to deliver the core capabilities to a similar standard, and what makes the leaders stand out is the breadth and depth of core services, ease of use, the ability in the newer emerging services, and a commitment to "openness." The rise of sovereigns has challenged the large hyperscale CSPs as their offerings did not lend themselves to smaller, agile in-country deployments. Consequently, smaller and nimbler CSPs

have been challenging these hyperscale CSPs. While the hyperscale CSPs have developed offerings that can be deployed on a smaller scale to respond to this change in market needs, the fact that new startups like Neoclouds have emerged in the past 18 months shows the market is in a constant state of change. Therefore, all CSPs need to have a clear identity of what they deliver better than competitors and a competitive set of services that compete in a wider market. Customers select CSPs based on how well they meet their specific needs, which has led to a more dynamic hybrid multicloud world where interoperability is considered a strength.

Figure 2: Vendor rankings in the Global Cloud Service Provider Universe

Vendor	Product(s) evaluated
Leader(s)	
Alibaba	Alibaba Cloud
Amazon	AWS
Google	Google Cloud Platform
Huawei	Huawei Cloud
IBM	IBM Cloud
Microsoft	Microsoft Azure
Oracle	Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI)
Challenger(s)	
Akamai	Akamai Cloud Computing
OVHcloud	OVHcloud
Tencent Cloud	Tencent Cloud
Vultr	Vultr Cloud
Prospect(s)	
DigitalOcean	DigitalOcean Cloud

Source: Omdia

Market leaders

All the market leaders scored more than 78% for solution capability and 87% for strategy and execution. The number of CSPs now classified as “Leader” increased to 58% of the global CSPs. While this may seem a high number, the cloud market is 20 years old and is now more mature. As such, the differentiation is more nuanced. All leaders offered similar services and demonstrated an expansion into newer, more emerging cloud markets.

Market challengers

All the market challengers scored more than 74% for solution capability and 70% for strategy and execution. They offer the same breadth of services as the leaders but have fewer choices in the number of service variations. The other key difference is that the challengers operate a smaller footprint than the larger leaders. While the significance of size is becoming more nuanced, it is still a factor in Omdia's classification.

Market prospects

The market prospect scored less than 72% for solution capability and less than 70% for strategy and execution. The key difference between the prospect and challengers was that the prospect, while offering a full set of services, was more focused on IaaS. Omdia considers the prospect ideal for IaaS as its offerings are on par with those of the leaders.

Opportunities

AI revolution

The whole AI revolution is evolving so rapidly that customers find it hard to keep pace with the technological advances in hardware and software. Most enterprise customers will not have the resources or inclination to build and develop their own large language models (LLMs). However, these enterprises will need to take a foundational LLM and combine this model with their own specific data to build AI applications. As technology evolves rapidly, enterprises need to access the resources and software as and when they need them to start their AI journey. They will also need to learn quickly, particularly from failures, and not get delayed because of access to resource issues. This means that as these enterprises develop knowledge and skills, they will want to advance their techniques to build newer and better AI applications. The advantage of the cloud is that these users can access the technology they want when needed and not become caught in the legacy technology trap. The legacy technology trap means that just because they invested in technology, they must use it until its economic value has been written down. In AI, this could mean using iron age approaches in the 21st century in just 12 months.

Threats

The trade war

The current US administration's desire to rebalance the global manufacturing economy by imposing tariffs on importing physical goods into the US is driving the current geopolitical uncertainty. However, while the focus is on manufacturing and where goods are made, the whole services economy has been ignored. US vendors dominate the global cloud computing digital service market; any retaliation by countries with a services trade imbalance with the US will see cloud as a target for taxation and regulation. While this taxation and regulation could harm any nation's own use of cloud computing, any such measure will likely target the cloud company, not the users. If just a handful of countries adopt this approach, the impact would be negligible. However, it could have a significant impact if an entire region coordinates it, such as the European Union (EU).

The rise of sovereignty

The other impact of the current geopolitical instability is a lack of trust. The fact that companies headquartered in the US or China dominate the global cloud market means there is a lack of choice. The concern is that these two nations can control access to technology (cloud computing). Should

they choose to, they could stop any country from using it. Another concern is privacy. CSPs have all changed their offerings and developed sovereign solutions that address some of these concerns. However, the fundamental issue remains the two governments' ability to demand access to any data stored anywhere in the world on a cloud operated by a CSP native to their country. This is causing other regions, notably Europe, to investigate the development of a region-wide cloud capability based on an ecosystem of vendors that operates across different jurisdictions, meaning privacy will be a critical capability that a single nation-state declaration cannot override.

Market outlook

The public cloud computing market has been growing every year since it began in 2006. The COVID-19 pandemic boosted the popularity of cloud businesses because it enables organizations to adopt a more flexible approach to IT delivery, allowing organizations to meet the various governments' rules on employee working restrictions. After nearly two decades, cloud computing has matured, as has the enterprise use of cloud computing. Today, most organizations use cloud computing in some form, and most of these use multiple cloud providers. The two "hot" topics in cloud computing in 2025 are AI cloud and sovereign cloud. Over the past two decades, organizations have established cloud computing strategies and understand the workloads best suited to cloud computing and those where the business case is unclear. Omdia considers cloud computing to remain the dominant form of computing for enterprise customers. However, it faces significant challenges from the shift in thinking by nation-states, considering the US administration's declaration of tariffs. There is a need for many developed countries globally to build AI in a more sovereign way so that the global market in AI does not become a single nation's duopoly, which could impact the growth of cloud computing as a platform for AI development.

Vendor analysis

Vendor accolades

Within the vendor analysis section, two types of accolades can be awarded to vendors:

- The Best-in-class accolade is awarded to the vendor(s) with the highest score (highest outright, tied highest, or within <1% of the highest score) for each of the scoring categories that make up this Universe topic:
  - Core service delivery
  - Additional services
  - Solution breadth
  - Strategy and innovation
  - Market momentum
  - Vendor execution

- The **Top-tier** accolade is given to vendors falling within the upper tercile (top third) of the scores within the comparison group, for each of these same scoring categories.

Akamai (Omdia recommendation: Challenger)

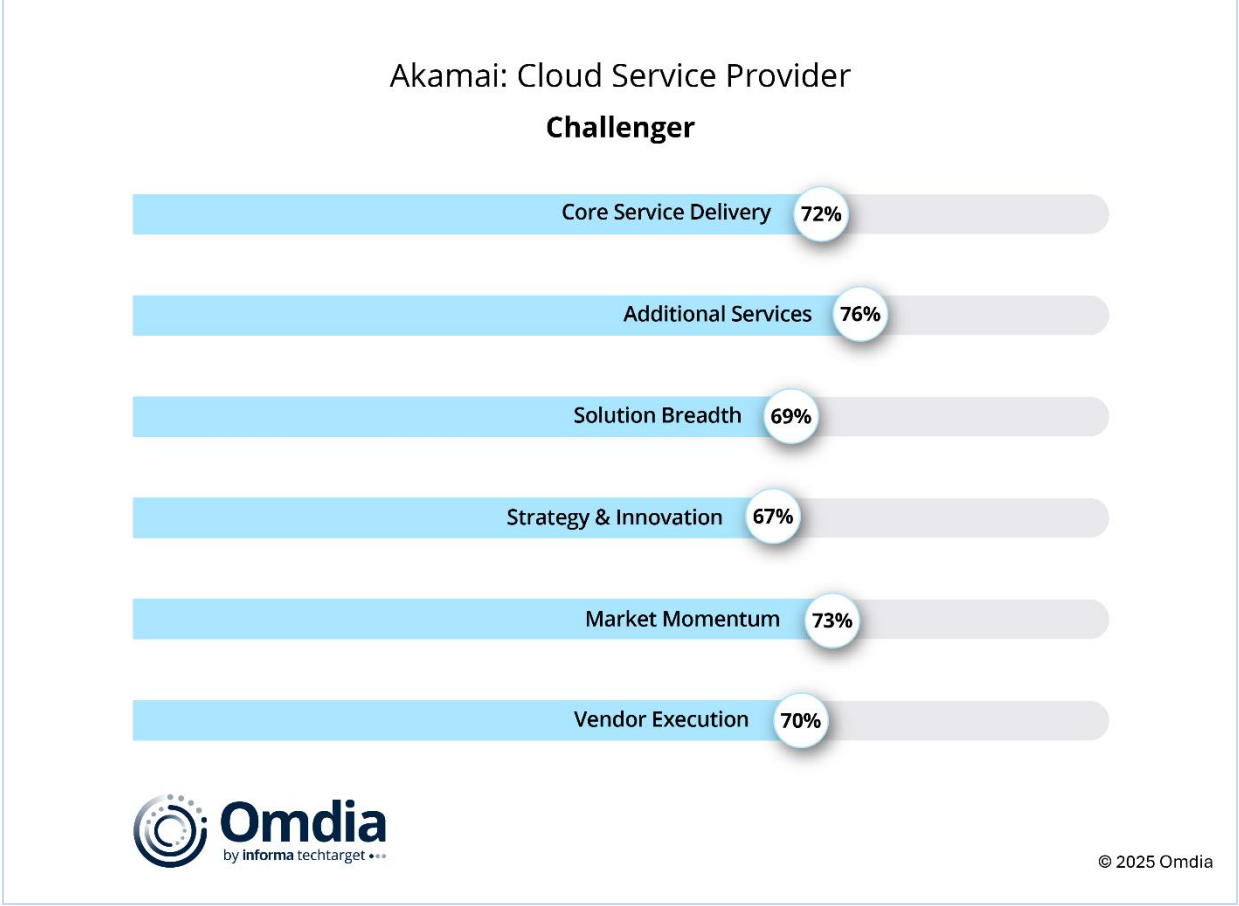
Akamai should appear on your shortlist if:

- You are looking for a cloud provider with a focus on IaaS.
- You are looking for a cloud provider that offers price-competitive solutions.
- You are looking for a cloud provider with a reputation for excellence in customer support.

Overview

The Akamai Cloud Computing platform primarily focuses on providing a simple, user-friendly IaaS cloud platform. Akamai centers its offerings on the world's most distributed and AI-ready cloud platform, emphasizing affordability, reliability, and ease of use. This approach makes Akamai Cloud Computing a popular choice for developers and enterprises who want simple, straightforward cloud management without complex features often found in larger cloud providers. Unlike some cloud providers offering a wider range of services, Akamai Cloud Computing also primarily focuses on providing virtual servers, which users can customize with their own operating systems (OS) and applications, essentially giving them complete control over their infrastructure. Akamai Cloud Computing also includes basic security features like DDoS protection and cloud firewall (CFW) rules at no extra cost. Akamai is classified as a Challenger in the *Omdia Universe: Global Cloud Service Provider, 2025*, with a solution capability score of 73% and a strategy and execution score of 66%.

Figure 3: Omdia Universe ratings—Akamai



Source: Omdia

Strengths

Akamai's top subcategory score was for support and customer service, scoring 82%. Akamai prioritizes a customer-centric approach to customer service. It focuses on providing highly trained, expert support with no tiered system, meaning customers can access the same technical assistance regardless of their plan. Akamai customer support uses various channels, including tickets, emails, and phone calls, all aiming to resolve issues and provide accurate solutions quickly. Akamai's support team is part of its 2,450+ person Global Services team and highlights its "award-winning support" as a key selling point.

Akamai's second strongest subcategory was ESG, scoring 80%. Akamai believes cloud hosting can help businesses align their operations with sustainability goals. Akamai runs its data centers at a power usage effectiveness (PUE) between 1.2 and 1.4. While this is not groundbreaking, it must be considered that Akamai builds data centers in locations that some of its competitors do not. A PUE of this for an estate that ranges from small-scale to very large facilities is impressive. Also, approximately 59% of Akamai's power requirements are met by renewable energy across this estate. Akamai takes pride in its world-class team of engineers and architects who work to find innovative and efficient ways to enhance the performance of its global platform. Through its efficiency work, its teams continuously work to improve the services while reducing the impact on the planet through process improvement, software performance, and hardware optimizations.

Akamai's third strongest subcategory was security and compliance, scoring 79%. Akamai's cloud security solutions protect applications, networks, and data. Akamai's cloud security services include identity and access management, data loss prevention (DLP), bot and abuse protection, web application and API protection, and zero trust. Akamai's cloud platform, Akamai's global infrastructure, is one of the most distributed in the world. This allows Akamai to put applications and experiences closer to users and threats farther away.

Limitations

Akamai's weakest subcategory was cloud services, where it scored 59%. Akamai has this score because its offerings were smaller and more focused on IaaS than many of its competitors. However, this strategy is what its customers want, so Omdia does not see any reason for Akamai to change.

IBM (Omdia recommendation: Leader)

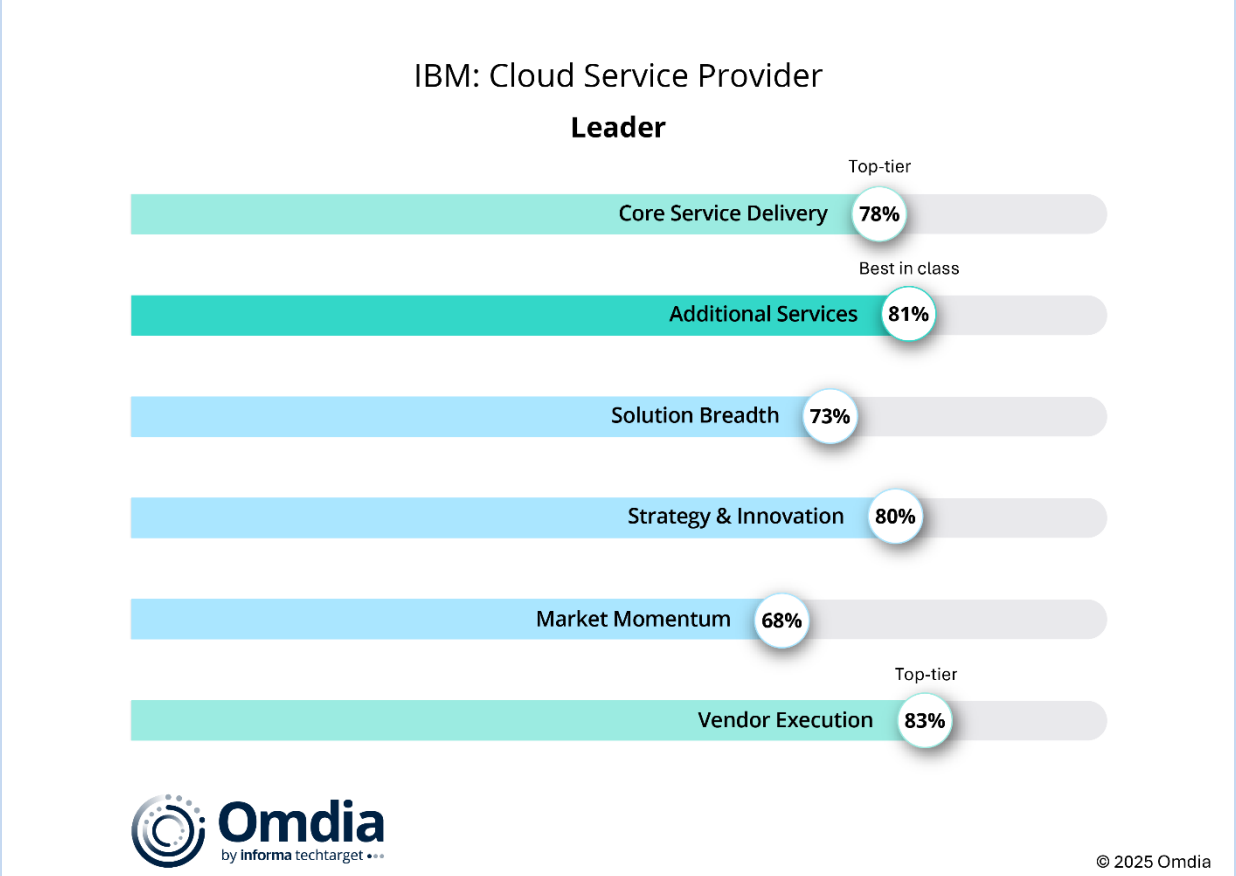
IBM should appear on your shortlist if.

- You are looking for an open-hybrid cloud solution that works with other cloud providers.
- A CSP with good customer satisfaction ratings.
- A CSP that has a history of AI development.

Overview

IBM has been changing its approach to cloud over the past few years; it is now more focused on hybrid multicloud than a single public cloud offering. The IBM Cloud platform leverages Enterprise Design Thinking and the IBM Offering Management Framework to build and manage its portfolio. The Framework is a mature, IBM-developed methodology. IBM ensures that every product manager has received training on the methodology and uses it, and their leadership to manage their respective products. This framework infuses Design Thinking with other modalities and is used at the portfolio and platform levels to manage IBM Cloud. IBM continuously optimizes its product catalog. If a service needs to be retired or replaced, IBM provides up to 12 months' advance notice and migration paths to ensure a smooth transition. IBM is classified as a Leader with a solution capability score of 79% and a strategy and execution score of 78%. IBM customers rated it very highly, with a willingness to recommend a score of 87%.

Figure 9: Omdia Universe ratings—IBM



Source: Omdia

Strengths

IBM's strongest subcategory was security and compliance, where it scored 88%, which was also the same score for AI cloud, making it a joint strength. In security and compliance, IBM Cloud's mission is to provide highly regulated enterprises with the confidence to run critical hybrid cloud and AI workloads securely. IBM delivers this through a secure-by-design, compliant, highly available cloud platform supporting IaaS, PaaS, and SaaS services. A unified Service Framework governs all BM Cloud services, and this framework enforces consistent security and compliance practices across the platform. IBM Cloud extends its internal controls to customers through a Proactive Security and Compliance Framework tailored for hybrid cloud and AI. This framework guides customers through three key stages.

- **Govern & Identify** establishes risk management and compliance strategies using predefined profiles and deployable architectures.
- **Implement Workload Compliance** applies automated, built-in security controls to the software supply chain using hardened DevSecOps Toolchains and Pipelines.
- **Continuous Assessment** monitors and validates security posture in real time.

In AI cloud, IBM has long been known as a pioneer and innovator in the AI space with its Watson technology. IBM Cloud offers a full-stack solution designed for enterprise AI use where IBM prioritizes data security, compliance, and trust. This approach builds on its security strength by safeguarding customer data while enabling transformative GenAI capabilities. Omdia considers IBM's network—which allows customers to accelerate large-scale GPU clusters' performance, so it is optimized for training and tuning—worth noting. Various GPU-accelerated compute options enable customers to get the best cost/performance while keeping full control of the data and AI workloads. IBM also offers customers a set of fully managed AI SaaS capabilities from WatsonX AI, complete with a data assistant and governance capability to accelerate enterprise AI solution adoption. Watsonx Orchestrate provides intelligent workflow automation aided by AI assistants and a catalog of prebuilt agents. IBM has built AI capabilities and deployment options at each layer of the IaaS, PaaS, and SaaS stack of the Cloud platform. IBM Cloud also offers open source options for AI with Red Hat AI and InstructLab services.

IBM's second strongest subcategory was reporting and integration, scoring 86%. IBM's public cloud is part of its hybrid by design strategy that integrates with other public and private clouds to enable a multicloud strategy. One of the key advantages IBM offers is that it leverages open source technologies, which are widely supported and can be competently integrated with various other cloud environments. At the same time, a strict continuous integration and delivery process with built-in security controls ensures the integrity of the software supply chain for either open source or custom components. IBM offers hybrid cloud solutions that can connect on-premises infrastructure and manage deployments across multiple public clouds using its Turbonomic platform, which supports IBM Cloud, AWS, and Microsoft Azure. Extensive integration of identity and access management capabilities with IBM's cloud services help large enterprises maintain a proper security posture. A unique selection of fully automated deployable architectures leveraging proprietary compute capabilities, such as Power and HPC, allows customers to satisfy the high demands of complex enterprise applications like SAP, EDA, or banking workloads while ensuring secure and robust integration with on-premises resources and data. Finally, IBM has numerous strategic partnerships with other cloud providers, which result in pre-built connectors and integrated services. For example, IBM services like watsonx and AI are accessible not only on IBM Cloud but also on AWS and Microsoft Azure through partnerships and integrations.

Limitations

IBM's weakest subcategory was scale and optimization, where it scored 68%. The scale aspect let IBM down compared to its competitors. While the number of public cloud data centers does not mean better, it could enable a CSP to claim it can host workloads in various countries.

Appendix

Omdia Universe

Omdia's rigorous methodology for the Universe product involves the following steps:

- Omdia analysts perform an in-depth review of the market using Omdia's market forecasting data and Omdia's enterprise insights survey data.

- Omdia creates a matrix of capabilities, attributes, and features that it considers to be important for the market now and in the next 12–18 months.
- Vendors are interviewed and provide in-depth briefings on the current solutions and future plans.
- Analysts supplement these briefings with other information obtained from industry events and user conferences.
- The Universe is peer reviewed by other Omdia analysts before being proofread by a team of dedicated editors.

Inclusion criteria

Omdia only invites and includes the leading cloud providers with operations and customers in at least three global geographic regions: North America; Latin America & Caribbean; Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA), and Asia & Oceania.

Further reading

Data Center Capex Tracker – 1H25 (May 2025)

Omdia Market Radar: Sovereign Cloud 2025 (April 2025)

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