

Google Cloud Customer Care: Accelerate SMB Digital Transformation



Four best practices for success in the transformation cloud

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How technical support can help your business grow and thrive

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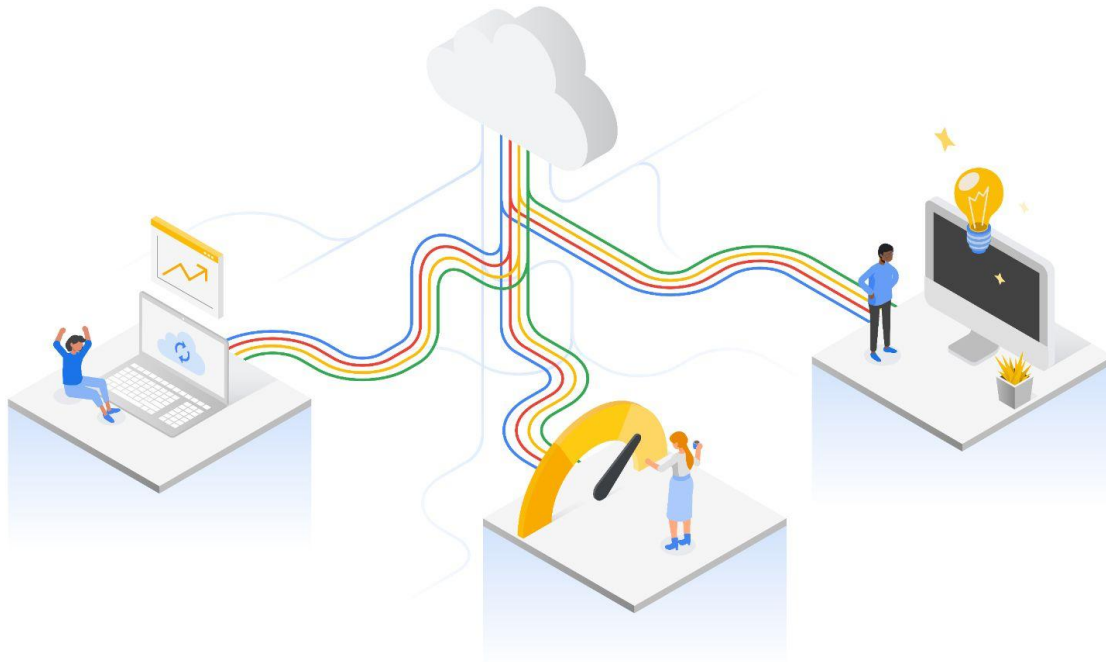
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01

Executive summary

Google's vision for the future of cloud – the transformation cloud – opens up tremendous growth opportunities for small and midsize businesses (SMBs). But to get the most value from the transformation cloud, businesses need a committed support partner for both immediate technical fixes and long-term innovation planning. Google Cloud Standard and Enhanced Support are ideal matches for SMBs. Both provide unlimited support cases for an unlimited number of individuals. Enhanced Support expands the services to round-the-clock support, and it can be tailored through Value-Add Services, so SMBs get the support services they need.





02

Introduction: A new cloud era awaits

For most businesses, the cloud to date has mostly delivered efficiencies. You saved money by eliminating physical infrastructure. You streamlined processes by moving applications to the cloud. And your people were able to boost their productivity by collaborating with each other, also in the cloud.

But full usability of the cloud goes far beyond merely “lifting and shifting” old IT infrastructure – and old ways of doing business – to the cloud. No one knows this better than SMB leaders. Already bound by limited resources, they must use the cloud to drive value, not just efficiency.

The cloud must expand beyond IT, become integral to every process across your business, and, most importantly, get into the hands of every employee, so that innovation and creativity springs from the very heart of your organization.

At Google, we call this the transformation cloud, and it represents the next era of cloud computing.

A transformation cloud is a new approach to digital transformation. It provides an environment for application and infrastructure modernization, data democratization, people connections, and trusted transactions, and it incorporates artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning for building apps in the cloud. Flexible and agile, it gives organizations confidence that they are saving money while accelerating growth.

No matter the size of your business, you can build in the cloud to drive success in the new normal. We talk about the numerous advantages of [moving to the cloud](#) in many places. But in this paper, we focus on how to keep your cloud up and running at peak performance.

To achieve this you need both an innovative cloud provider and a responsive cloud support provider. The latter must not only address any immediate technical issues that arise, but also be committed to your future growth.

In this paper, we'll share the best practices we've seen work for our SMB customers who have achieved success in the transformation cloud – specifically by changing the way they think about and engage with their cloud technical support providers.

“Midsize businesses have shown a growing propensity for the use of cloud-based solutions. The 2021 Gartner CIO Survey (2021 CIO Agenda: A Midsize Enterprise Perspective) showed that half of the CIOs of midsize organizations surveyed expect to increase their spending on cloud computing in the coming year, versus only 3% expecting a potential decrease.

– Gartner, Inc., “Focus on Midsize Businesses to Maximize the SMB Cloud Managed Service Opportunity,” by Gregor Petri and Rene Buest, January 31, 2022

03

Best practices for success in the transformation cloud

The transformation cloud can drive your business to the next level, and even beyond that. But then it can be challenging for SMBs to keep up with the pace of innovation: New transformation cloud capabilities are emerging too rapidly for even the most technologically advanced SMBs to reap the full value from them. [A report from the Technology and Services Industry Association \(TSIA\)](#) noted this, calling it the “consumption gap.” This gap is the result of the “ongoing proliferation of [cloud] product features and complexity, and the ability of customers to consume features at an ever-growing pace,” according to the report.

“An industry trend that continues to impact both customers and support organizations is the ever-growing consumption gap resulting from the ongoing proliferation of [cloud] product features and complexity, and the ability of customers to consume features at an ever-growing pace.

– Dave Baca, “On-Premise to Cloud: Understanding Support’s Vital Role Is Key to Success,” TSIA, August 11, 2022

SMB leaders who have successfully avoided the consumption gap adhere to four best practices. But there’s a caveat. Just dutifully following these alone won’t power business innovation at the velocity you seek. You need another foundational element: a trusted and expert cloud technical support provider.

You need someone – actually a team of expert someones – to ensure that the cloud environment is optimally tuned, that application performance isn’t suffering, and that you don’t suffer unplanned performance issues at the moments you can least afford them.

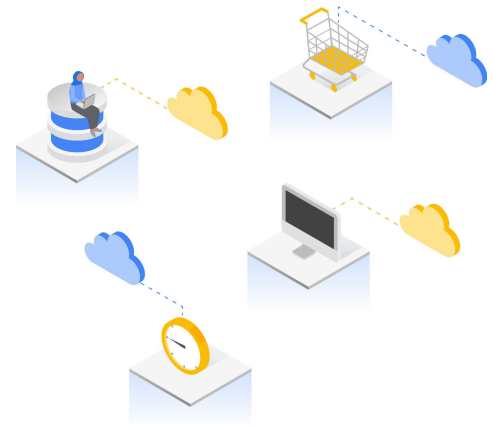
With a trusted provider to deliver such services, you can focus on mastering the transformation cloud. You can deliver game-changing cloud applications and workflows without worrying about whether your infrastructure and applications are performing as they should.

Read on for the four best practices that will help you do that.

Best practice 01

Optimize your infrastructure

Naturally, you want the best technology infrastructure possible to support your business as it evolves and grows. Which is why you don't want to be locked into just one cloud provider. You need to run applications and store data wherever it makes the most economic, technical, and business sense. That means being able to choose any public cloud provider as well as build your own private clouds, if you like. And you want your multicloud infrastructure to scale and perform at its best, minimizing system bottlenecks and meeting all of your service levels.



So you'll almost certainly be using multiple clouds and technologies. And that likely means you'll also embrace open source and choose cloud providers that have built their platforms using open architectures, which enables you to keep your options open to adopting new innovations as they appear on the market.

Now, it's true that a multicloud strategy that includes integrating open source elements will increase the complexity of your infrastructure. But here's a secret: Those businesses that successfully ride the transformation cloud to breakthrough growth aren't wasting their time worrying about that complexity – whether an application is performing slowly or even if it crashes. They choose a partner they trust to keep the infrastructure operating optimally, so that applications never disappoint your users or customers. And this partner is not just any services provider, but one with a service portfolio that can be attuned and tailored to the specific requirements of their particular transformation cloud initiative.

Best practice 02

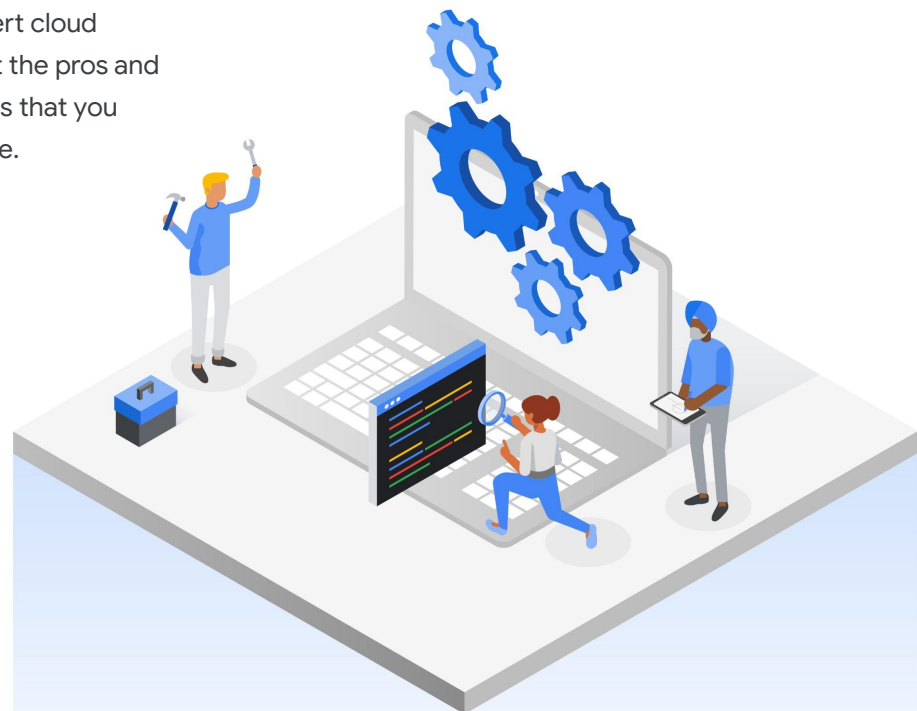
Innovate efficiently

As an SMB leader, you likely find yourself challenged with getting the most from your finite resources. You have a limited budget. You have limited personnel with cloud expertise. And although you want to take advantage of the latest innovations, your infrastructure might be limiting you as well. Most importantly, you are bogged down with trying to support your infrastructure and develop applications at the same time.

Businesses that succeed in the transformation cloud build strong partnerships with the customer care teams of their cloud providers. These cloud support professionals act as extensions of your business's own team, bringing vast engineering knowledge, expertise, and resources to solve technologically complex challenges quickly and effectively. And when you're considering new, untested technologies, it pays to have these support professionals – expert cloud engineers – on hand to unlock knowledge about the pros and cons, and to find cost-effective, proven solutions that you can deploy in production at minimal risk and time.

“ The independent thinking, the expertise, and being able to reach out to the Google ecosystem is what I value. I've never seen a way to be able to make that work efficiently, and it has been so far so good with Google.

– Michael Beal, CEO at Data Capital Management



Best practice 03

Build your team's capabilities

Running a business in the cloud requires specialized knowledge. But [cloud expertise is scarce](#), as reported by the Wall Street Journal. SMBs must therefore invest in their people and empower them to upskill and learn as much as they can to advance the business.

But with a small team, finding the time and resources to devote to training can be exceptionally challenging.

Businesses that succeed in the transformation cloud know that a strong support partner can help fill the knowledge gap – both by providing cloud-trained resources that extend the capabilities of your internal team and by identifying training opportunities that are highly relevant and tailored for the organization's needs. This not only reduces costs for the organization, but it also greatly accelerates time to value for businesses that have migrated to the cloud or have built their operations entirely in the cloud.

“ A lot of the people working for SMBs don't have the time or knowledge to get immersed in formal training. The training offered to them has to be hands-on, and available for them just in time, giving them ammunition to make the right decisions at the moment.

– Darshini Santhanam, Head of Customer Training, Google Cloud

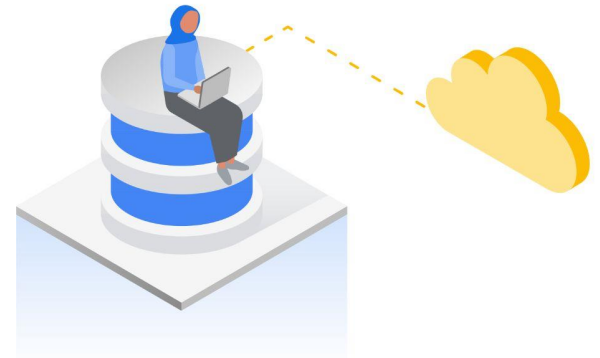


Best practice 04

Focus on the future

Prior to the transformation cloud era, business leaders might typically have relied on a third-party support service to solve short-term problems.

But now, SMBs that succeed in the transformation cloud take a more holistic, future-facing approach to their support partnership. Rather than focusing on short-term fixes, businesses can look to their support teams to provide data-driven insights and proactive recommendations for the long term. These insights can help them optimize their processes and technologies, inform their long-term strategic planning, and better position themselves to achieve their current and future business goals.



The importance of technical support in the transformation cloud

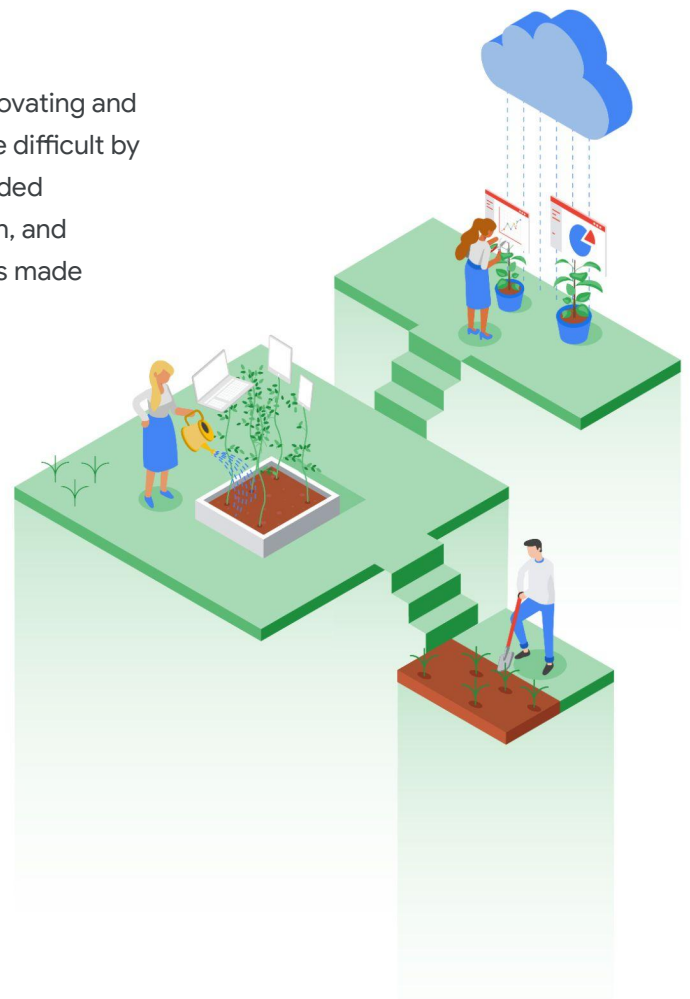
Technical support is critical to keeping your business running smoothly – especially today, when hybrid workforces need to stay connected at all times. Although the scale may vary, organizations of all sizes face similar challenges. In particular, suffering from poor performance during planned events can be catastrophic. [Read about Google Cloud Customer Care](#) and its Enhanced Support, which is specifically designed for SMBs.

04

The value of support: How SMBs and startups can flourish in the transformation cloud

To illustrate the critical role support plays in driving your success in the transformation cloud, we'll use startups as an example. They are good for dramatizing the value of having a reliable and knowledgeable support partner. With limited resources and often seemingly impossible time frames for bringing products or services to market, startups navigate a particularly challenging journey when building their transformation clouds. And they need a trusted support partner to ensure they get value from their cloud investment.

First, startups must manage the delicate balance of building transformation cloud infrastructure capabilities while both innovating and keeping costs under control. This challenge is made even more difficult by having to effectively manage their IT teams' time, which is divided between supporting infrastructure, ensuring application health, and developing new digital capabilities for the business. How is this made possible? By depending on a strong support provider.



How a support provider can help

Here are the benefits of having such a provider.

Responsiveness and agility

Moving applications swiftly from code to production is critical if a startup or an SMB hopes to grow. But things can go wrong, even on the most reliable clouds. Startups need to be able to reach their support provider immediately through multiple channels, and get prompt, reliable responses. And the professionals from that support provider must have more than generic cloud skills. They must possess in-depth knowledge of an organization's unique business so they can respond quickly to any challenges and ensure a smooth transition of applications to production.



Cost-effectiveness

Key to thriving in the transformation cloud is an organization's ability to keep costs down while building on or migrating to a cloud architecture. Indeed, the cloud can be a startup's biggest expense. To operate efficiently, startups need to carefully calculate spending on cloud services by using cost-management tools that help them avoid wasting money on unnecessary services. This is where a support provider that scales and offers additional services becomes invaluable. By allowing startups to pick and choose the right offering and additional services, such a provider can deliver services that are better tuned to the requirements of startups, and take into account the budget considerations of SMBs.



Data-driven insights

Startups and SMBs alike need to be able to easily aggregate data and turn it into real-time insights. This allows them to unlock powerful decision-making capabilities. The right support provider will use these data-driven insights to fix short-term issues in real time, as well as to inform businesses as they formulate long-term strategic decisions and set visionary goals.



Stability and peace of mind

Throughout their cloud journeys – and even after moving production to the cloud – startups and SMBs benefit from a support team that can collaborate in real time, provide fast responses to questions, and generally ensure the business always feels supported. The right support provider will also proactively monitor systems to quickly assess issues, even providing a designated technician if the startup desires – a technician whose deep knowledge of the business means they can jump in when contacted and immediately begin solving issues. Having the peace of mind that their support provider will back them up allows startups to focus on their businesses with laser-like intensity.



Forward-looking solutions

Although reacting swiftly to issues is a critical part of a support provider's usefulness, of equal importance is that they offer proactive, forward-looking advice based on their deep knowledge of a startup's goals. By being committed to the success of the businesses it serves, the right support provider is not a one-size-fits-all service, but a true strategic partner that's intelligently molded to a startup's or SMB's precise requirements.



Case study

A leading digital wealth-management company, Data Capital Management, depended on Enhanced Support to migrate from AWS to Google Cloud, while it simultaneously used the cloud to continue expanding its visionary AI-based future capabilities.

Enhanced Support enabled internal DCM teams to focus their attention and minimize risk by prototyping proven solutions rather than untested options, and it empowered them to efficiently apply new approaches and quickly solve problems with unlimited access to round-the-clock support.

[Read the full case study](#) ↗

Get relevant self-service resolutions to your issues

Many SMBs prefer do-it-yourself support options. With Google Cloud, support is immediately there for you even before you need it: Intuitive, self-service resources have already been integrated directly into it. All Google Cloud customers can benefit from this embedded self-service experience. And the entire case-creation service process now has self-service capabilities. The workflow has been designed so that as you select the product in which you're having issues, you get an immediate injection of personalized help and support – right when you need it most. These advanced offerings are capable of using internal APIs to automatically diagnose and detect customer issues, and deliver personalized resolution advice. Your issue can be resolved in minutes, without the need to reach out to anyone.

“ The Customer Care portfolio was specially designed to deliver on the multiple support needs of SMBs. It gives them a tailored technical support entry point with Standard Support, and an option that offers faster response times and extra services to optimize productivity with Enhanced Support. Additionally, Value-Add Services can be easily incorporated into their experience for proactive guidance through all the stages of their cloud journeys – from onboarding to more advanced initiatives.

– Jodie Paxton, Customer Experience
Director, Google Cloud



05

Standard Support: Ease your way into Customer Care

To get the most value from your transformation cloud, you need support services that are tailored just for you. Standard Support is one of the support services that Google Cloud offers as part of the Customer Care portfolio, and it's designed specifically to offer SMBs a full array of support services at a reasonable cost.

[According to an IDC Market Note](#), Google Cloud's approach to customer success is designed to "provide unique experiences that deliver empathetic and trusted outcomes for their customers."

And IDC found that "emotionally intelligent engagement" differentiates support leaders like Google Cloud from the rest of the pack. According to the Market Note, "In IDC's 2021 B2B Technology Buyer Survey, 85% of millennials and 82% baby boomers report that contextualized, personalized engagement from vendors demonstrates empathy." IDC also found that Google Cloud's approach to support is different because it's not only tailored to the business, but to specific personas within the organization: IT leaders, line-of-business leaders, chief information security officers, chief executive officers, and many others.¹



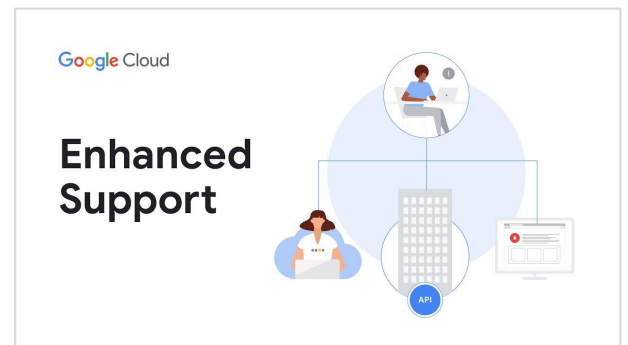
¹ IDC Market Note, sponsored by Google, "Google Cloud: Delivering Ongoing Customer Value with a Deliberate Customer Success Strategy," by Sudhir Rajagopal, IDC #US49234822, June 2022.

06

The advantages of upgrading to Enhanced Support with Value-Add Services

By subscribing to Enhanced Support, you get expert technical guidance that's tailored to your unique transformation cloud environment. Enhanced Support allows you to:

- **Boost productivity with 24/7 access to support.** Enhanced Support helps your business be even more successful with cloud technology. Keep your team working efficiently with quick response times – within one hour of your request for high-priority cases. And get support services tailored to your needs, taking cloud infrastructure management off your team's shoulders.
- **Scale confidently with support tailored just for you.** You get to select the right Value-Add Service from Enhanced Support to meet your specific needs. This helps you grow your business in the cloud with peace of mind – should any issues arise, cloud experts who know your environment are available to quickly resolve them.
- **Bring your products to market faster.** Enhanced Support helps you speed up the time it takes to launch your new products and services by ensuring business continuity with its unlimited, 24/7 support services.



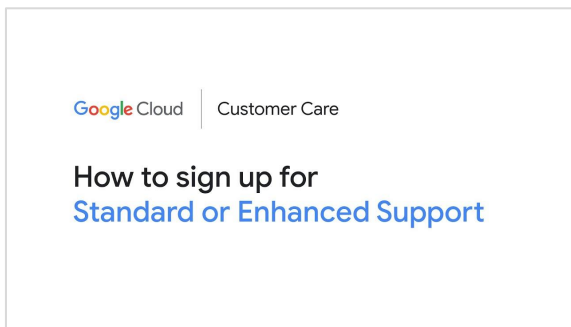
Learn more about Enhanced Support by [checking out this video](#).

“ Enhanced Support helps you optimize your cloud experience with high-quality, robust support, fast response times, and additional services for businesses of all sizes.

– Paco Contreras, Head of Customer Care Services, Customer Experience, Google Cloud

93% of cases meet initial response time (IRT) targets²

Cloud Customer Care has been building true partnerships with its tailored and responsive customer service.



Sign up for Customer Care

[Watch this video tutorial](#) on how to sign up for Standard or Enhanced Support from Cloud Customer Care.

“ The main value proposition is the fact that you get access to only what you need, because nobody wants to be paying for features or services they’re not using. This is especially valuable for SMBs because they don’t have unlimited resources, and Enhanced Support and Value-Add Services enable them to derive more value from Google Cloud – very cost-effectively.

– Darshini Santhanam, Head of Customer Training, Google Cloud

²Google Customer Service Survey 2022.

Get even more with Value-Add Services

One of the biggest advantages of choosing the Enhanced Support service is that you can get more from your Enhanced Support by purchasing additional Value-Add Services. These allow you to tailor the support experience precisely for your organization, so you get what you need, without paying for services you won't use. Fredrik Jones, Head of Language Support at Google Cloud, says, "The key goal we strive to achieve with Enhanced Support and Value-Add Services is to give our customers peace of mind. They want to know that we have their back, and they don't have to chase us, and that their support service is fully tailored to achieve their specific business objectives."

Here are some of the advantages you can get from adding Value-Add Services to your Enhanced Support:

- **Augment your Enhanced Support capabilities** – get more specialized guidance and support
- **Move beyond putting out fires** – take a more strategic approach to winning in the transformation cloud
- **Increase system uptime** – proactively plan for achieving your most urgent business goals
- **Align business priorities with system capabilities** – take charge of infrastructure management

“If one values independent thought and second opinions, yes, absolutely I'd recommend Enhanced Support.

– Michael Beal, CEO,
Data Capital Management

“Since we've deployed on Google Cloud and chose Enhanced Support, we've maintained a 100% availability. That's zero downtime, which is incredible.

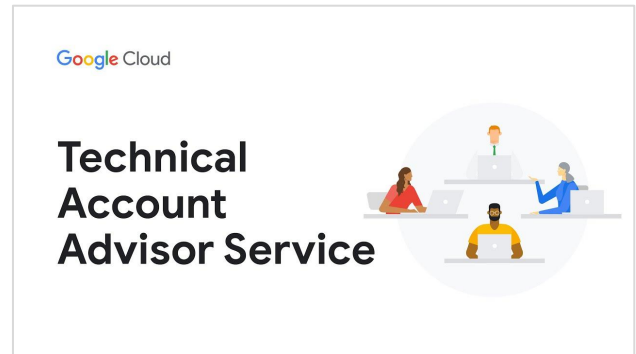
– Raj Ramchandani, CEO, EyecareLive

A taste of Value-Add Services

Technical Account Advisor Service and Planned Event Support are two of the more popular Value-Add Services that SMBs can choose to augment their Enhanced Support services.

Technical Account Advisor Service

Get both proactive guidance and reactive support from Technical Account Advisor Service. With this service, Technical Account Advisors empower you to successfully onboard to Google Cloud, create a cloud strategy, and optimize cloud operations. You'll also get best practices and additional support for your most critical cases. "We provide customers not just with reactive support to fix issues, but also with proactive guidance to plan for the future. For example, if we see they're opening cases about a particular topic, we'll recommend training to help them strengthen their team's skills in that area," says Jeff Gu, product lead for Technical Account Advisor Service at Google Cloud.



What is the Technical Account Advisor Service?

[Learn more](#) about this Value-Add Service that you can purchase if you have an Enhanced Support subscription.

100% of Technical Account Advisor Service customers are satisfied³

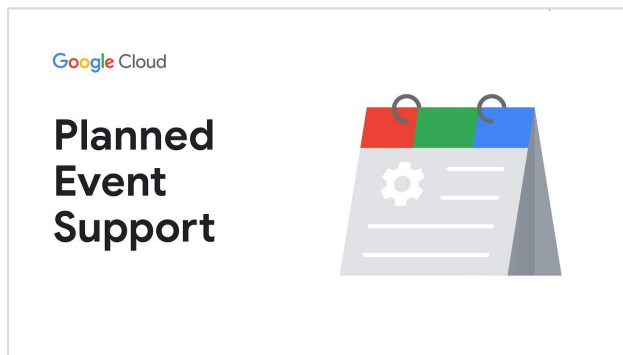
“The combination of Enhanced Support and the Technical Account Advisor Service is the ideal solution for us at Moloco. It is an inexpensive way to access the timely attention we need, when we need it. From the start, we've experienced noticeable improvements with response time, technical guidance, and service reviews critical to our business success.

– Changhoon Kim, Vice President of Engineering, Moloco

³ Customer satisfaction (CSAT) score based on survey of Technical Account Advisor Service customers.

Planned Event Support

When running a high-traffic event, technical issues can result in serious losses of revenue, investors, or consumer interest. Planned Event Support gives you confidence that your cloud environment is prepared with the quick responses you need to resolve any issues that may occur during the event. For startups and other SMBs, this is especially useful for important launches or product demonstrations.



What is Planned Event Support?

[Learn more](#) about this Value-Add Service that you can purchase if you have an Enhanced Support subscription.

“ We designed Enhanced Support with faster response times and additional services to keep you up and running in the cloud.

– Atul Nanda, Vice President, Cloud Support, Google Cloud

Be a leader: Make Enhanced Support and its Value-Add Services part of your transformation cloud

You want to maintain your competitive stance in today's challenging market. You are also committed to the transformation cloud. But you need to ensure that the cloud meets your performance, stability, and security needs. This is exactly what Google Cloud provides with our Customer Care portfolio. In particular, our Standard Support and Enhanced Support services, and the optional Value-Add Services that are available with Enhanced Support, enable SMBs to create a fully tailored support service that meets their needs.

This includes allowing SMBs to innovate swiftly despite the constraints they must overcome – such as small teams that have to do more with fewer resources, shortages of internal expertise, and technical “blind spots” that can disrupt business-critical apps or infrastructure. Enhanced Support, combined with Value-Add Services, enables customers to focus on their businesses and get the most value from their cloud investments.

For SMBs building or expanding their transformation clouds, Enhanced Support and Value-Add Services accelerate time to value now and help plan the path for future growth.

To find out more about how Google Cloud Enhanced Support and Value-Add Services can help you succeed in the transformation cloud, visit the [Customer Care page](#).