

IBM and Microsoft Open New Experience Zone in Leicester to Provide Global Clients with More Hands-on Access to Cloud and Generative AI Solutions

New location in the UK to help clients explore generative AI, hybrid cloud and other Microsoft technologies



LONDON, UK – Sept. 19, 2024 - Today, IBM and Microsoft announced the official opening of a new IBM-Microsoft Experience Zone within IBM's Leicester-based Client Innovation Centre. These Experience Zones are designed to help global clients across industries, such as financial services, government, healthcare, industrial, manufacturing and consumer packed goods (CPG), find new ways to derive value from [generative AI](#), [hybrid cloud](#) and other Microsoft products and technologies.

In addition to the [inaugural IBM-Microsoft Experience Zone in Bangalore, India](#) which opened in April 2024, the Leicester, UK site along with two additional new Experience Zones in Bucharest, Romania and Buffalo, New York, are strategically located in geographic locations that expand IBM's reach and ability to engage with clients to take full advantage of Microsoft's technologies to explore how to propel their business forward and innovate on potential opportunities

"The IBM-Microsoft Experience Zones will give clients and prospects an opportunity to explore potential solutions that leverage the strengths of both organisations," said Brian Wood, Research Director, Global IT Services and Systems Integration Services at IDC. "The combined tools and platforms for data and AI show synergy in many environments and business processes."

The IBM-Microsoft Experience Zones

Utilising the Experience Zones, IBM's global clients will have access to Microsoft technologies including Microsoft Azure, Azure Open AI Service, Microsoft Copilot, Microsoft Dynamics and more, by using dedicated technology stations to explore and co-create generative AI solutions that span internal and external business functions. Clients can also experiment with select IBM technologies that run on Microsoft Azure, including IBM Maximo Application Suite.

"Our consultants understand the complexities businesses face in transitioning to the cloud and leveraging AI to drive business value at scale," said Rahul Kalia, Managing Partner, IBM Consulting UK&I. "Our Experience Zone is where innovation meets collaboration. We are bringing together the best of IBM and Microsoft to help clients co-create AI-powered solutions that transform their businesses and industries."

At the Experience Zone in Bangalore, CIOs and their teams have explored solutions around cloud modernisation, Microsoft Azure and custom copilots. Industry clients such as manufacturing, gas and oil, and CPG have shown an interest in capabilities with augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), including solutions like Microsoft's HoloLens and Azure Internet of Things (IoT) and Edge.

While onsite, IBM experts can work with clients to identify and solve their unique business challenges using cloud and generative AI solutions that can help them accelerate their business transformation and realise increased return on investment. For example, a financial services client could explore how Microsoft Copilot and its ability to create AI-based solutions could help cut down on the time to find documentation and review loan applications for approval. Or a client in the healthcare industry could assess ways to use various Microsoft Azure solutions to provide cloud computing for business-critical applications, such as cross-clinic access to patient files while also securing patient health information. In addition, the Experience Zones provide clients with an opportunity to up-level their employees' skill sets by showcasing next-generation technologies and industry-specific case studies to provide the resources to help enterprises harness generative AI to solve the complexities of competitive business environments.

"IBM's inaugural Microsoft Experience Zone has empowered customers to harness the full potential of the Microsoft Cloud, generative AI, and Copilot, to enable business transformation, and we are thrilled that IBM is launching three additional IBM-Microsoft Experience Zones," said Dinis Couto, GM, GSI Commercial Partners, at Microsoft. "Our partnership with IBM to establish three new Experience Zones will enable even more customers to create groundbreaking and transformative AI-powered services and solutions."

Microsoft as a Strategic Partner

IBM Consulting's continued investment and work with Microsoft helps our clients bring cloud and generative AI solutions to market through the expertise and guidance of IBM's dedicated practice of Microsoft practitioners globally. Today, IBM consultants have more than 46,000 Microsoft certifications and aim to add 10,000 generative AI certifications by the end of 2024. To-date, IBM consultants have successfully delivered thousands of Microsoft projects for clients, and the new Experience Zones add another opportunity for global clients to engage and discuss their business needs onsite where they can use IBM's expertise to develop and deliver innovative solutions that will enable them to transform their business so they can take full advantage of AI.

As another example of IBM's partnership with Microsoft, during the recent [IBM-Microsoft Copilot Hackathon](#), 250 client teams and more than 800 participants worked with experts from [IBM](#), [Neudesic](#), [Bluetab](#) and [Microsoft](#) to explore and co-create AI-based solutions to improve productivity, unlock creativity and streamline business processes. Beyond developing solutions on Microsoft Copilot, the teams utilised IBM Consulting's [Copilot Runway](#) offering, announced in May, which allows enterprises to create and deploy customised, tailored copilots to help enhance business efficiencies that can impact the bottom line. From more than 150 submissions, the hackathon's winning prototype solutions addressed challenges including enhancing customer engagement and enablement to creating the ability to accelerate business decision-making.

With these three new Experience Zones, and client-focused engagements like the hackathon, IBM continues to highlight its commitment to – and momentum with – Microsoft as a strategic partner to deliver joint solutions for clients globally to unlock our "better together" philosophy and harness the full potential of generative AI and the hybrid cloud. With continued client interest and demand for Microsoft technologies, and to provide even greater access for clients globally, IBM will evaluate expanding the Experience Zones to additional global Client Innovation Centres in the future. Learn more about IBM's collaboration with Microsoft, [here](#).

About IBM

IBM is a leading provider of global hybrid cloud and AI, and consulting expertise. We help clients in more than 175 countries capitalize on insights from their data, streamline business processes, reduce costs and gain the competitive edge in their industries. Thousands of governments and corporate entities in critical infrastructure areas such as financial services, telecommunications and healthcare rely on IBM's hybrid cloud platform and Red Hat OpenShift to affect their digital transformations quickly, efficiently and securely. IBM's breakthrough innovations in AI, quantum computing, industry-specific cloud solutions and consulting deliver open and flexible options to our clients. All of this is backed by IBM's long-standing commitment to trust, transparency, responsibility, inclusivity and service. Visit www.ibm.com for more information.

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