



# Eight Challenges of AWS - Solved with Stax

Read this paper to unlock the unlimited benefits of AWS.  
With Stax by your side, navigating AWS can be done  
securely and at pace.

# Stax and AWS

**Exclusively built for AWS, Stax is the only native cloud management platform, globally, with a rich and robust feature set to help organizations migrate, build and operate an evergreen and thriving AWS ecosystem.**

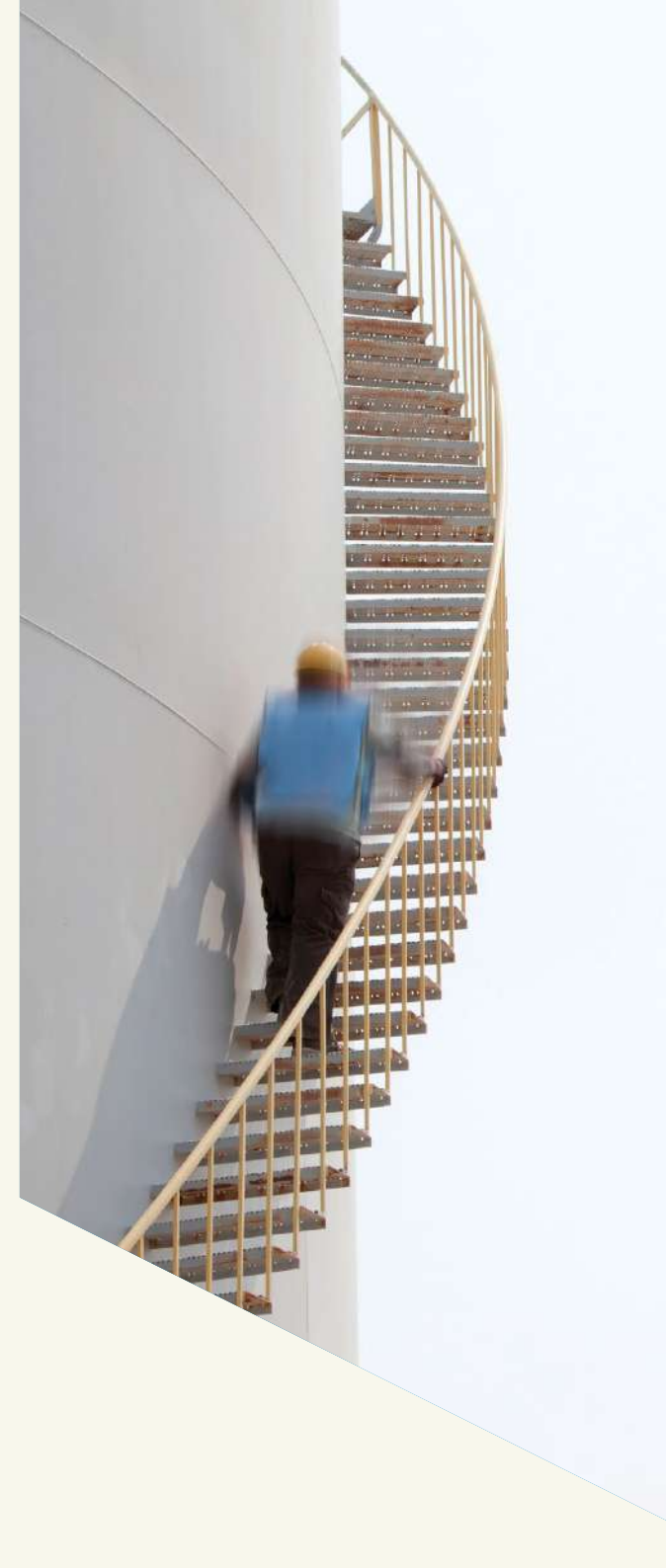
Through prefabricated frameworks, Stax establishes a best practice cloud foundation, taking care of all critical components and fundamentals to help organizations of all sizes unlock the opportunities of AWS faster.

By choosing Stax, businesses are empowering their people to work confidently knowing their AWS environment is secure, compliant and always up to date.

The Stax platform provides complete financial transparency, ensuring risks are managed with real-time monitoring, alerts and recommendations.

Removing the costly and time-consuming need to employ a specialist team, Stax is the solution that will get you securely running on AWS within days, a task that could take months upon months to build a bespoke environment.

Widely recognized as the cornerstone of AWS, our platform is built on three core pillars: Consistency, Confidence & Velocity. Consistency drives confidence. Confidence drives velocity. Velocity drives value.





# Stax accelerates cloud adoption, allowing you to focus on innovation, not maintenance.

**Organizations that invest in Stax, rather than building their own environment, can adopt the cloud within days, and achieve cloud maturity within weeks.**

If your in-house guru decides to leave, they'll take that knowledge/skillset with them, leaving you with a big gap to fill, very quickly.

In contrast, by investing in Stax, you can let us take care of the day-to-day critical tasks without ever worrying about skills gaps while leaving your existing talent focused on building excellence that matters - not building the platform itself.

# Pre-built to work hard beneath the surface, Stax makes migrating, maintaining, and operating on AWS seamless.

AWS releases new services and features on a daily basis, and Stax is set up to react and adapt instantly, freeing up your team's time and avoiding drift in your cloud environment.

Stax uses an AWS-endorsed architecture for a multi-account cloud environment with segregated account access, so you can be confident they are 'secure by design'. Automated patterns mean a consistently high level of security and less of a risk of human error.

**With Stax on your side, you can concentrate on doing what you do best, even better.**

**With Stax you'll enjoy complete visibility over your entire AWS footprint**

You will benefit from total visibility over costs and cost allocation for different units within the business, as well as recommendations for cost optimization. Real-time alerts for spikes or unusual activity will be sent to you, so bill shock becomes a thing of the past.

Industrial-strength security and risk management features help keep business and customer data safe. Stax establishes guardrails that govern what teams can access and the actions they can perform, in line with best practices, and provides all the necessary training for your team.

Stax also allows businesses to establish compliance rules reflecting internal policies or industry standards, such as Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) Standards. These rules track and report in real-time on how they measure against compliance goals.



# Eight Challenges of AWS solved with Stax



# Challenge One:

## Building foundations aligned to the AWS Well-Architected Framework in a cost-effective and timely manner

A key part of the Stax mission is to make it easier for customers to do the right thing on AWS.

The Well-Architected Framework (W-AF) is designed to protect your business, and your customers, from experiencing problems with security, reliability, performance, and cost management in the cloud.

The challenge for businesses is finding the time and expertise to follow the W-AF, while still delivering the required value to their customers.

### Common challenges include:

- Building bespoke foundations and landing zones in AWS can require three full-time engineers and between three and six months in build time
- A highly skilled engineer who has the expertise to build against the W-AF will cost upwards of \$150K per annum
- Relying on people to build bespoke foundations means the knowledge is not transferred causing a key person risk
- The reality is that every line of code your team writes is a line of code they need to test, troubleshoot, maintain, and improve over time. This is not only time consuming but can lead to human error
- Because AWS releases new services and features daily, bespoke solutions age from the day they are built
- Every change made can cause drift in your environment.



# Stax

Given the importance of the W-AF, the team at Stax has built the platform to align. This means that customers can build workloads on Stax, knowing they're heading in the right direction while avoiding common pitfalls and mistakes on AWS.

Stax allows for safe processes without impacting delivery velocity using automated patterns, offering a high level of security and lowering the impact of human error.



Reduce deployment time from months to days, to benefit from AWS faster.



Maintain best practices at scale with Stax's automation features.



Remove the need for in-house, specialized knowledge – reducing costs.



Enjoy visibility over your entire AWS footprint – with no unpleasant surprises.



Ensure consistency and repeatability, with best practices built in.



Take advantage of the latest AWS features, instantly and safely.

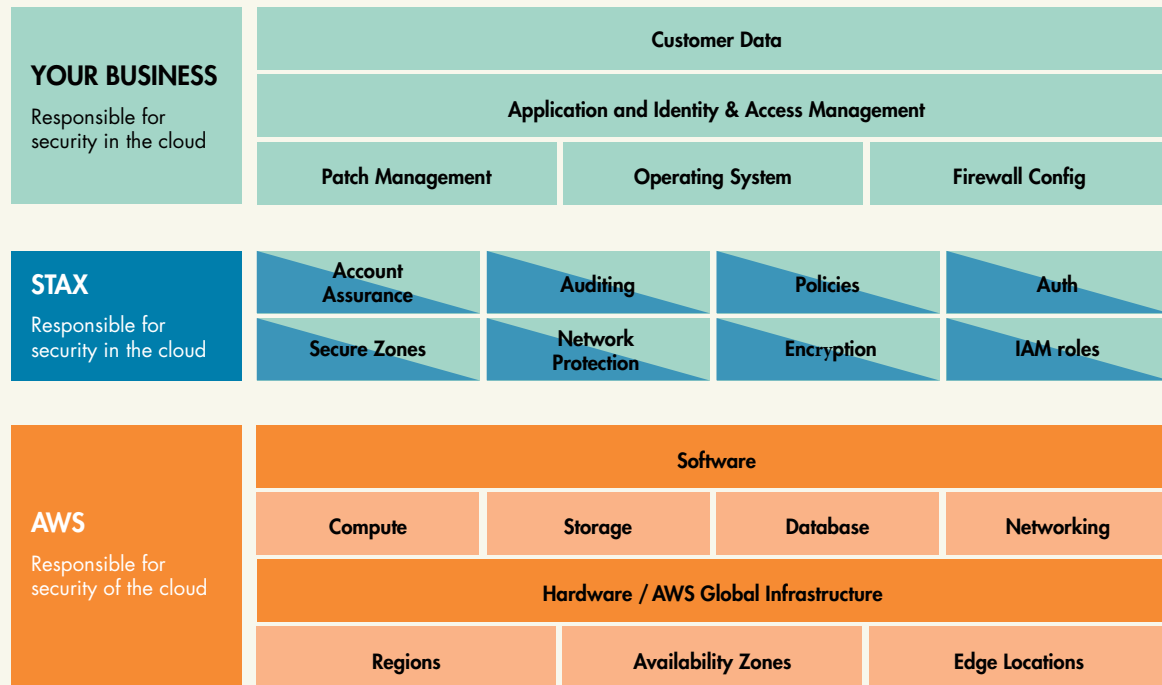
# Challenge Two:

## Ensuring the safety of your business and customer data

A common misconception among organizations considering a cloud migration is that once they're in the cloud, their security concerns will be taken care of by their cloud provider. This is only partially true, as all cloud providers adhere to a shared responsibility model, where security responsibilities are split between the provider and the customer.

In the case of AWS, this model is known as the AWS Shared Responsibility Model, and a clear understanding of your responsibilities as an AWS customer is a hallmark of a mature and secure cloud environment.

When it comes to the AWS Shared Responsibility Model, Stax is on the customer's side. Take a look at the following graphic for an overview:





# Stax

Stax is “above the line” and helps the customer use and configure key AWS services securely to keep up their side of the model. Stax uses the power of automation to configure foundational services, especially those that relate to security, compliance, cost management, and networking. These are services that all customers on AWS find themselves configuring, regardless of their industry or vertical, and aligns with recommendations from AWS like the W-AF.

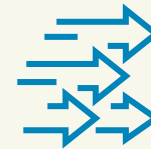
With Stax you enjoy the reassurance of proactive controls, managed by Stax, and reactive controls whereby the Stax platform will monitor your environment, providing real-time alerts.



Prevent incidents before they happen.



Safeguard your environment from human error.



Give your team the confidence to move fast.

# Challenge Three:

## Lack of visibility into AWS consumption and spend

Visibility across consumption and spend can be tricky in AWS. As a result, many organizations get stung with unexpected spikes in their usage, exceeding their planned budget.

Stax was created to provide organizations with complete visibility across their entire AWS environment, giving them near real-time access into their consumption and spend, with budget and spike alerts as well as actionable insights for cost optimization.

In addition, the Stax platform looks at what the customer is using in AWS, and provides rich insights and recommendations to avoid wastage, as well as:



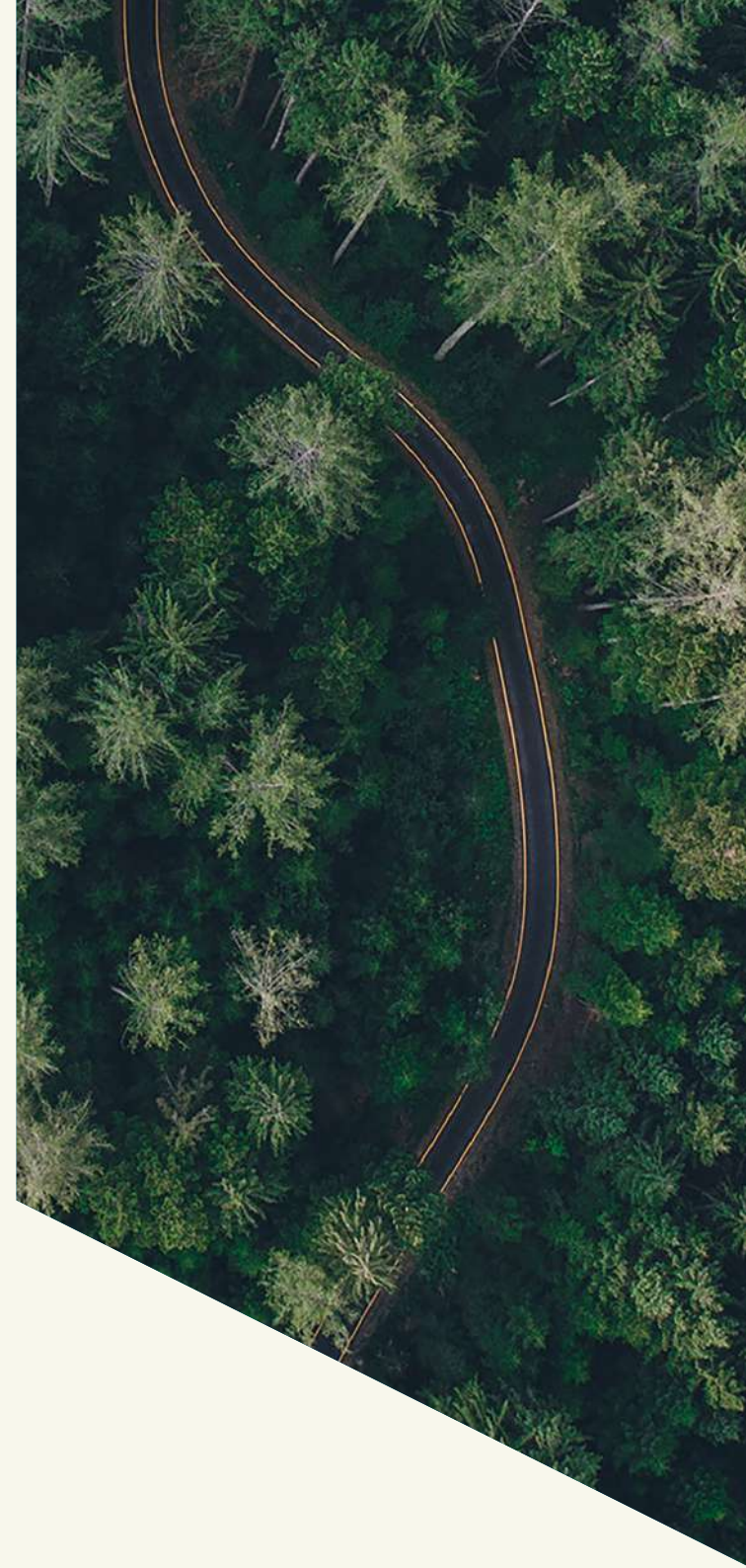
Reduce reporting and management overhead.



Empower your team to take data-driven actions, and let us take care of the extensive data processing.



See where your budget is being utilized by segments that are meaningful to your business.





# Challenge Four:

## Inability to monitor an AWS environment, ensuring its compliance to industry standards

While AWS offers many benefits for organizations looking to improve their risk and security posture, the reality is cloud services need to be implemented correctly and monitored consistently to ensure adherence to your risk management framework.

Stax allows businesses to establish continuous monitoring for risk items, called Rules, which alerts your team when a change impacts your risk posture.

Rules are the core elements of our Risk Management feature, allowing teams to track their alignment to internal policies for working in AWS. Organizations can use Rules to build a unique set of compliance checks, while also helping to continuously improve their infrastructure, building better cloud-based deployments.



Standards can be targeted to either your entire organization or to specific resources. When standards are updated, so is Stax, with full versioning capability.

Stax offers continuous monitoring across all risk items, alerting you in real-time when your resources begin to fail compliance checks, enabling rapid issue resolution and minimizing risk exposure.



Track the risk posture across your whole environment.



Apply best practice rules to ensure things are done right.



Use insights to optimize your environment.

The screenshot displays the AWS Stax console interface. On the left is a dark navigation sidebar with the following menu items: Dashboard, Cost, Rules (highlighted), Bundles, Catalog, Categories, Data, and Views. At the bottom of the sidebar, there is a 'Help' icon and the user's name 'Danny'. The main content area is titled 'Rule Bundles' and shows a list of 'Active Bundles'. The bundles listed are:

- Organization Rules** (Version 1.0): 68 rules, ACTIVE. Description: A bundle for rules that your organization has created.
- CIS Benchmark** (Version 1.4.0): 52 rules, ACTIVE. Description: A non-profit organization that has developed a global benchmark to help organizations improve their security and compliance posture.
- CloudTrail Best Practice** (Version 1.0): 9 rules, ACTIVE, AUTO UPDATE. Description: Ensure your use of CloudTrail configuration is secure and aligned with best practice.
- EC2 Best Practice** (Version 1.0): 19 rules, ACTIVE, AUTO UPDATE. Description: This Rule Bundle helps you ensure your use of EC2 is secure and aligned with best practice.
- IAM Best Practice** (Version 1.0): 8 rules, ACTIVE, AUTO UPDATE. Description: A Bundle of Rules to make sure your use of IAM is secure and aligned with best practice.
- Public Exposure** (Version 1.0.0): 28 rules, ACTIVE. Description: Monitor your organization's posture against common avenues for public exposure in AWS.
- RDS Best Practice** (Version 1.0): 13 rules, ACTIVE. Description: A Bundle of Rules to ensure your use of RDS is secure and aligned with best practice.
- S3 Best Practice** (Version 1.1): 7 rules, ACTIVE, AUTO UPDATE. Description: This Rule Bundle helps you ensure your use of S3 is secure and aligned with best practice.
- SNS Best Practice** (Version 1.1): 5 rules, ACTIVE. Description: This Rule Bundle helps you ensure your use of SNS is secure and aligned with best practice.

# Challenge Five:

## Updating an environment to avoid deprecation and drift

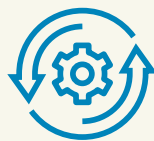
AWS releases new services and features every day. Unlike the on-premises world, the platform underneath your workloads is always changing and evolving. Without effort dedicated to updating your environment, it will fall behind AWS best practices over time.

Inconsistencies in your environment not only affect your security posture and operational excellence but can also cause brain drain, as your teams are working across different, outdated environments.

Stax helps you take advantage of foundational improvements from AWS, without needing your teams to be distracted from their day-to-day work. Updates and improvements will be automatically applied to your environment when they've been tested and verified, so you:



Avoid spending time assessing, implementing and testing new releases.



Ensure things work seamlessly and securely within your environment.



Stay on top of best practice standards and ways of delivering.





# Challenge Six:

## The time and resources required to build and operate on AWS

### Stax Workloads

Being able to deploy many versions of your applications is a huge benefit of using the cloud. On AWS, there's effectively no limit to the number of applications you can spin up, which means you can test the things that are important to your business. Unfortunately, this can quickly become complicated, because now you need to keep track of different versions of your application, and where they are deployed.

Stax Workloads makes it easier to deploy many versions of the same infrastructure. When you deploy your application using Stax Workloads, you get additional information about the version and location of your applications, so you can ensure your business needs are met at scale.



Built on the AWS infrastructure-as-code service, CloudFormation.



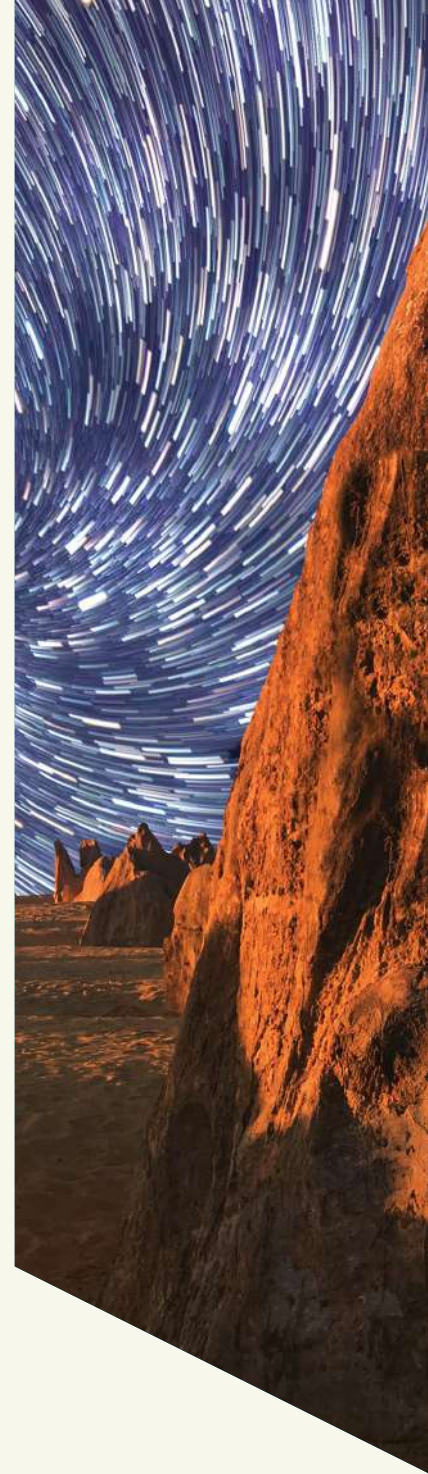
Encourages infrastructure-as-a-code best practices, so customers get the benefit of using AWS.



Makes your applications repeatable, while enforcing versioning and consistency.



Work with confidence knowing what you tested is what you deployed to production.





## Networks

Creating a new network in AWS can take weeks to design, build, and troubleshoot. While networks in the cloud are critical for your applications to be available and secure, they aren't a point of differentiation for most businesses. You don't want to spend your time and effort on undifferentiated heavy lifting like networks, but you also don't want to get it wrong.

With Stax you can create a new network within minutes. It's battle-tested, robust, simple, easy, and just works!



Build a multi-account, hub-and-spoke network with a multi-tiered security model in minutes, not days or weeks.



Networks makes it easy to model the most common network patterns using the right AWS services at the right time. This includes:

- Shared services networks for common applications and databases
- Isolated networks for sensitive applications or databases that need protection for security and compliance
- Centralized ingress/egress for network flow control and cost management
- Multi-site connectivity for hybrid environments or migrations into the cloud from legacy/existing data centers.

## Set-up Identity & Access Permissions

Identity and access can be challenging because you need to balance different levels of access. You want to be sure that the right people can do their job, while ensuring your environment is secure from the wrong. Each application and AWS account has its own needs and requirements, so managing them at scale can be tricky and error-prone if you don't have automation to help you.

In Stax, you can access all accounts within one console, ensuring complete visibility – knowing the right people have the right access to the right accounts. Controlling everything in Stax means you don't have to log into every AWS account individually to set it up. This control and orchestration within Stax greatly reduces the likelihood and impact of human error on your environment.



Consistently create AWS accounts in minutes that are hardened and fully integrated with your environment.



Guardrails and access management are included in the account creation process, so you have security and visibility at any scale.



Get full visibility into all of your AWS accounts for security, cost, and risk. No gaps, no surprises.

# Challenge Seven:

## Finding the people and skills required to manage an AWS environment

It's critical to provide the best tools and opportunities for your employees to create impactful work. This not only attracts the right talent, but it helps retain valuable tech talent that might otherwise be a flight risk. Stax is the ideal platform for this, as it:



Modernizes tedious-but-necessary manual work.



Removes tasks that involve inefficient processes.



Automates and reduces constant reviews and improvements.



# Challenge Eight:

## The inability to innovate at pace and scale

Many businesses have high quality developers, engineers, and security expertise within their team, but these employees spend the bulk of their day working on the repetitive, mundane tasks that help keep the lights on, over more innovative and transformative projects which could take you to the next level.

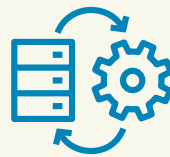
Stax provides automation which creates a successful and predictable cloud deployment, by:



Freeing up staff to focus on building amazing customer experiences.



Enabling creativity and collaboration while reducing accidental complexity.



Automating the foundational tasks, to deliver consistency, ensure compliance and drive greater value across your organization.







Our goal at Stax is to enable AWS customers to succeed in their cloud mission with pre-configured, enterprise-grade controls for security, network, connectivity, real-time monitoring, and identity and access management.

By choosing Stax, organizations empower their people to work with confidence, ensuring they're actively maximizing time, spend, efficiency, security, and compliance.

See how Stax can help your organization overcome risk and drive innovation in the face of ongoing change.



Visit [stax.io](https://stax.io) and book a no obligation demonstration today.

**With Stax on your side, you can concentrate on doing what you do best, even better.**



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