



Why you should be listed on the FedRAMP Marketplace



Introduction

Independent software vendors (ISVs) are setting their sights on the public sector, and for good reason. The federal government spent nearly \$7 billion on cloud computing in 2020.¹ Today, that figure is well on its way to exceeding \$11 billion — a 66% increase in just two years.

With more agencies hungry to leverage the efficiencies of cloud computing than ever before, ISVs are equally adamant about breaking into the flourishing federal market.

That's where the FedRAMP Marketplace comes into play. In this white paper, we'll explain why security is the last barrier to cloud adoption, why it's mission-critical for ISVs to list their products on the FedRAMP Marketplace and what they can do to simplify the compliance process.

¹ <https://www.nextgov.com/it-modernization/2022/07/federal-agencies-invest-more-each-year-cloud-benefits-outweigh-challenges/374672/>



A brief history of FedRAMP

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Department of Defense (DOD) and several other parties collaborated to develop FedRAMP: the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program.

The initiative was created in 2011 as part of the U.S. government's cloud computing strategy, otherwise known as "Cloud First."² At this point, federal cloud adoption had gotten off to a slow start. FedRAMP's intent was not only to accelerate cloud migration, but to do so as safely and securely as possible.

Before the program, federal entities that wanted to migrate IT infrastructure to the cloud had to take on the risk of security vulnerabilities all on their own. Without any uniform standards for cloud security, basic practices fell through the cracks and exposed sensitive data to breaches and leaks.

FedRAMP solves this issue by creating a baseline level of security for all agencies that use (or want to use) cloud service offerings (CSOs). As a compliance program, federal entities use FedRAMP to evaluate

and authorize CSOs that access and process government data. This enables the federal government to streamline cloud adoption by creating transparent standards and allowing agencies to access authorization at scale.

The program is modeled off of NIST Special Publication 800-53 — a highly rigorous cybersecurity framework. Using this standard, FedRAMP provides a uniform approach to security assessment, authorization and continuous monitoring of cloud services.

In its first four years only 20 CSOs were FedRAMP Authorized. The pace picked up in 2018 when the government updated its cloud computing strategy to "Cloud Smart."³ With cyber threats targeting sensitive information at an accelerated rate, it became clear that federal agencies needed a tougher approach to security — sparking a renewed interest in the program. Today, over 200 products are FedRAMP Authorized.

² https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/egov_docs/federal-cloud-computing-strategy.pdf

³ <https://cloud.cio.gov/strategy/>

FedRAMP Marketplace: A must-have for ISVs

FedRAMP compliance is an absolute must-have for any ISV who wants to sell their CSOs to the federal government. All cloud services that hold federal data are required by law to achieve FedRAMP Authorization. Likewise, any government agency that wants to deploy a cloud product must do so through the FedRAMP Marketplace.

What is the FedRAMP Marketplace?

Simply put, the FedRAMP Marketplace is a one-stop shop for authorized cloud products. It's the government's online repository of all FedRAMP-compliant CSOs and their security packages.

Because it's a convenient way for federal agencies to shop for secure CSOs, it's also normally the first place they tend to look. Why? Because it's much faster and easier to leverage a product that's already authorized than work with an ISV to complete the process.

That's why it's imperative that ISVs list products on the FedRAMP Marketplace. **Achieving compliance and earning a spot on the list can yield several important benefits:**

- **Raises profile in the public sector:** FedRAMP Authorization makes you much more likely to do business with government agencies. Better yet, a place on the FedRAMP Marketplace is a signal to the rest of the market that you're committed to cloud security and are compliant with the most rigorous standards.
- **Increases confidence in ISV security:** The stakes are high for ISVs who handle government data. FedRAMP compliance provides reassurance to federal agencies that their data is in safe hands.
- **Simplifies the assessment process:** FedRAMP is designed to reduce duplicative efforts and cost inefficiencies. Just one assessment is required to gain an Authority to Operate (ATO) from multiple agencies. This saves both time and money in the long run.

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Achieving FedRAMP compliance

FedRAMP is a requisite for any ISV hoping to do business at the federal level. That said, obtaining authorization is a rigorous process. An ISV must take many steps to FedRAMP authorization.⁴

The program's high-level requirements include:

- Completing FedRAMP documentation, such as a System Security Plan.
- Implementing security controls according to impact level (i.e. data sensitivity).
- Engaging a third-party assessment organization to evaluate the CSO.
- Remediating findings and developing a plan of action.
- Obtaining an Agency ATO or Provisional ATO (P-ATO).
- Establishing a continuous monitoring program that includes monthly vulnerability scans.

There are two traditional pathways for achieving FedRAMP compliance: through the Joint Authorization Board (JAB) or an agency itself. Either way, you still have to implement a stringent set of security measures and controls before doing business with the federal government.

All the while, authorization can take years to complete. By the end, you may be sacrificing millions of dollars and countless hours just working through the process. That time could be spent developing innovative solutions and growing your business.

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⁴ <https://www.fedramp.gov/>



The Project Hosts solution

Project Hosts has developed an alternative fast track to FedRAMP compliance. Instead of engaging an assessor and working through the process on your own, our turnkey white-glove compliance services take the burden off your shoulders with **three simpler solutions**:

- **Compliance inheritance:** Connecting your application to our pre-audited and FedRAMP-compliant platform — the General Support System — means you offload up to 86% of all security controls to us. This not only eases your burden, but also speeds up the assessment process.
- **Compliance by certification:** We engage an assessor on your behalf — but we don't stop there. We create your security documentation, collect evidence and work with your sponsoring agency so you can focus on innovating and growing your business.
- **Continuous compliance:** It's one thing to achieve compliance, it's another to maintain it. Any application running on our platform leverages the power of our engineers, who continuously monitor and patch your environment to uphold compliance.

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With Project Hosts, you can save time and money as you enter the federal market. In fact, you can have your application up and running in as little as two to three months. We have the most ATOs of any platform on FedRAMP.gov — a proven track record of FedRAMP success.



Get started with Project Hosts

As an ISV, you have a major opportunity to grow your business in the public sector. Project Hosts is the partner who can help you streamline FedRAMP compliance, earn authorization and maximize the potential of your cloud service offerings.

Ready to fast-track FedRAMP? [Contact our team](#) to learn more about how Project Hosts can simplify compliance for your organization.

Sources

1. <https://www.nextgov.com/it-modernization/2022/07/federal-agencies-invest-more-each-year-cloud-benefits-outweigh-challenges/374672/>
2. https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/egov_docs/federal-cloud-computing-strategy.pdf
3. <https://cloud.cio.gov/strategy/>
4. <https://www.fedramp.gov/>