

#FABCONSQLCON2026

FABCON

Microsoft Fabric
COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

SQLCON

Microsoft SQL
COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

ATLANTA MARCH 16 - 20, 2026



Decoding Fabric Licensing

Kristyna Ferris



Fun Fact: this font is dyslexic friendly! Ask me how to use it for free after the session.



About Me ~ Kristyna Ferris

Microsoft MVP, Data Platform & Fabric
Solution Architect, P3 Adaptive
Lexington Data Tech Group co-organizer
DataOnWheels Author

Blog

<https://dataonwheels.wordpress.com/>

LinkedIn

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kristyna-ferris-dataonwheels/>

Twitter & Bluesky

@data_dragoiness

Fabric Licensing

The IKEA Instructions of IT





Microsoft Fabric Licensing Key Concepts

Tenant - Microsoft Fabric is deployed to a Microsoft Entra tenant. Each tenant is tied to a specific Domain Name System (DNS) and other domains can be added to the tenant.

Capacity - Resides within a Fabric tenant. Each capacity that sits under a tenant is a distinct pool of resources allocated to Fabric. Size of the capacity determines the amount of computation power available. You can have multiple capacities per tenant. Each tenant has a default shared capacity that does not cost anything, but it cannot run Fabric items and items are not sharable.

Shared capacity runs on a server shared with other tenants.

Dedicated capacity runs on a server that only contains your tenant's data (FSKUs).

Workspaces

Resides within capacities. Used as containers for Microsoft Fabric items. Each user has a personal workspace called "My Workspace". More workspaces can be created to enable collaboration. You can have multiple workspaces in a capacity.



Microsoft Fabric Licensing Key Concepts

Stock Keeping Units (SKU) – Provides a set of Fabric resources for your organization.

Individual User Licensing – Licenses that are applied to individuals such as Power BI Pro and Power BI Premium Per User. These two licenses are purchased through Microsoft 365 portal.

Pay-As-You-Go Pricing – Fabric SKUs (FSKUs) that are purchased as needed. Can be set up to automatically scale up and down based on need and can be easily paused to save money when not in use. Ideal for work loads that do not need to run all the time and have highly variable consumption.

Reserved Pricing – FSKUs that are purchased at least a year in advance for a 40% pricing discount. Ideal for work loads that require continuous up time.



The House

The House - Tenant

Living Room - Shared Capacity

My Chair - Personal Workspace



Couch - Pro Workspace



Fancy Recliner - PPU
Workspace



Kitchen/Garage - Dedicated Capacity

Fabric Workspace





Licenses are the Key



- More sharing options
- More storage options
- More automation options
- And....more money



The Couch Upgrade



Power BI Pro

Cost - \$14/month/user

Purchase Location - M365, is also included with an E5 license

Enables

- Publishing Power BI reports to a shared workspace
- Access to shared capacity workspaces that are not PPU workspaces



The Fancy Recliner



Premium Per User

Cost - \$24/month/user

Purchase Location - M365

Enables

- Publishing Power BI reports to a shared workspace
- Access to shared capacity workspaces
- Larger model sizes
- More frequent refreshes
- XMLA endpoint connectivity
- Advanced dataflow features
- Incremental refresh



The Rest of the House



Fabric Capacity

Cost – depends on SKU and reserved pricing/pay-as-you-go

Purchase Location – Azure portal.
Requires an Azure subscription and resource group.

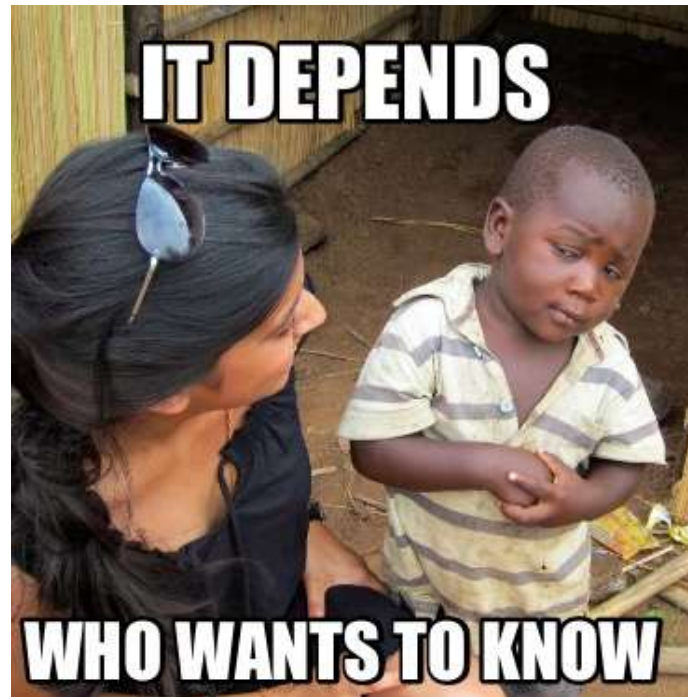
Enables

- Fabric artifacts
- \geq F64 SKU enables free viewers
- Copilot (any SKU!)
- Managed private endpoints
- On-demand resizing, pause & resume capacity
- Trusted workspace access

\$

So how much for the house?

Pay-as-you-go



Reservation



Fabric Capacity Pricing

Pay-as-you-go

- Pausing and auto-scaling capacity
- Can be combined with a reservation to allow for auto-scaling when needed
- More expensive per hour but may be cheaper if paused
- Breaks even in cost with reserved at < 14 hours a day

SKU	Capacity Unit (CU)	Pay-as-you-go (\$/month)	Reservation (\$/month)	Savings (%)
F2	2	\$262.80	\$156.33	41%
F4	4	\$525.60	\$312.67	41%
F8	8	\$1,051.20	\$625.33	41%
F16	16	\$2,102.40	\$1,250.67	41%
F32	32	\$4,204.80	\$2,501.33	41%
F64	64	\$8,409.60	\$5,002.67	41%
F128	128	\$16,819.20	\$10,005.33	41%
F256	256	\$33,638.40	\$20,010.67	41%
F512	512	\$67,276.80	\$40,021.33	41%
F1024	1024	\$134,553.60	\$80,042.67	41%
F2048	2048	\$269,107.20	\$160,085.33	41%

Reservation

- 41% discount
- Does not scale up/down nor pause
- Reservation is cheaper because you sign a year long contract for a set number of SKUs
- These SKUs can be split into multiple capacities if desired



Picking out a Fabric SKU

Use a Fabric Trial!

60 days of free F64 usage

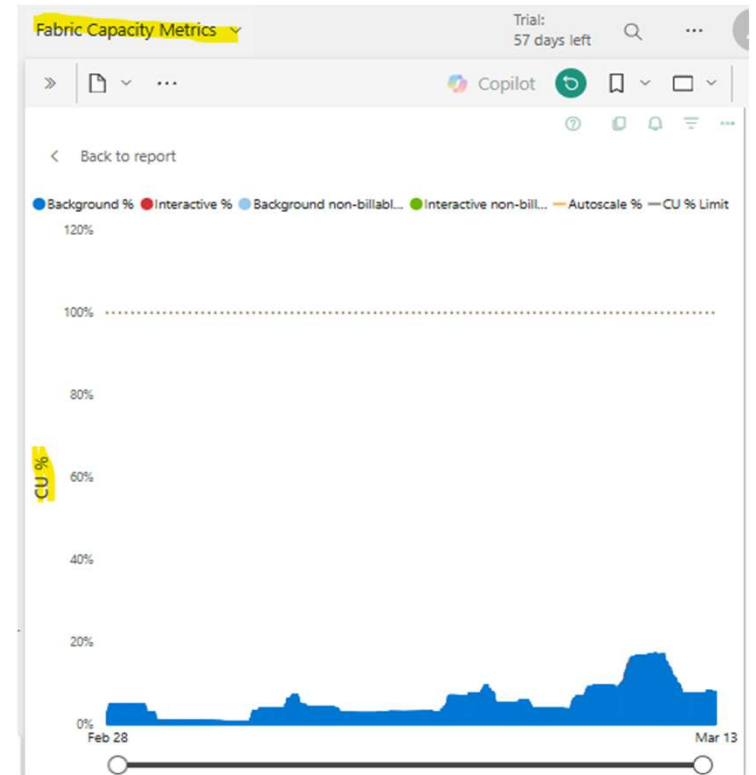
Aim for maximum 80% of capacity

Multiple **developers**? Min rec SKU is F8

Multiple **data sources** to ingest? Min rec SKU is F16

A lot of **report viewers**? Consider a F64 for free viewer licensing (discussed more in upcoming slides)

Environment concerns? Use diff capacities for dev, test, prod





How Do Reservations Work?

Reservation Scenario 1 F64 split

Capacity 1 | F16

Capacity 3 | F32

Capacity 2 | F16

Reservation Scenario 2 F64 one capacity

Capacity 1 | F64*

* These workspaces get the benefits of an F64 capacity (Copilot, free license viewing, and AI skills)

Annual contract with Microsoft for a 41% discount on F SKUs.

Can be paid monthly or upfront.

These SKUs can be split into multiple capacities or all used within one capacity.

You pay for all the SKUs even if they are not assigned to a capacity, so it is best to use them all.

You can get cancel, exchange, or refund reservations with certain limitations

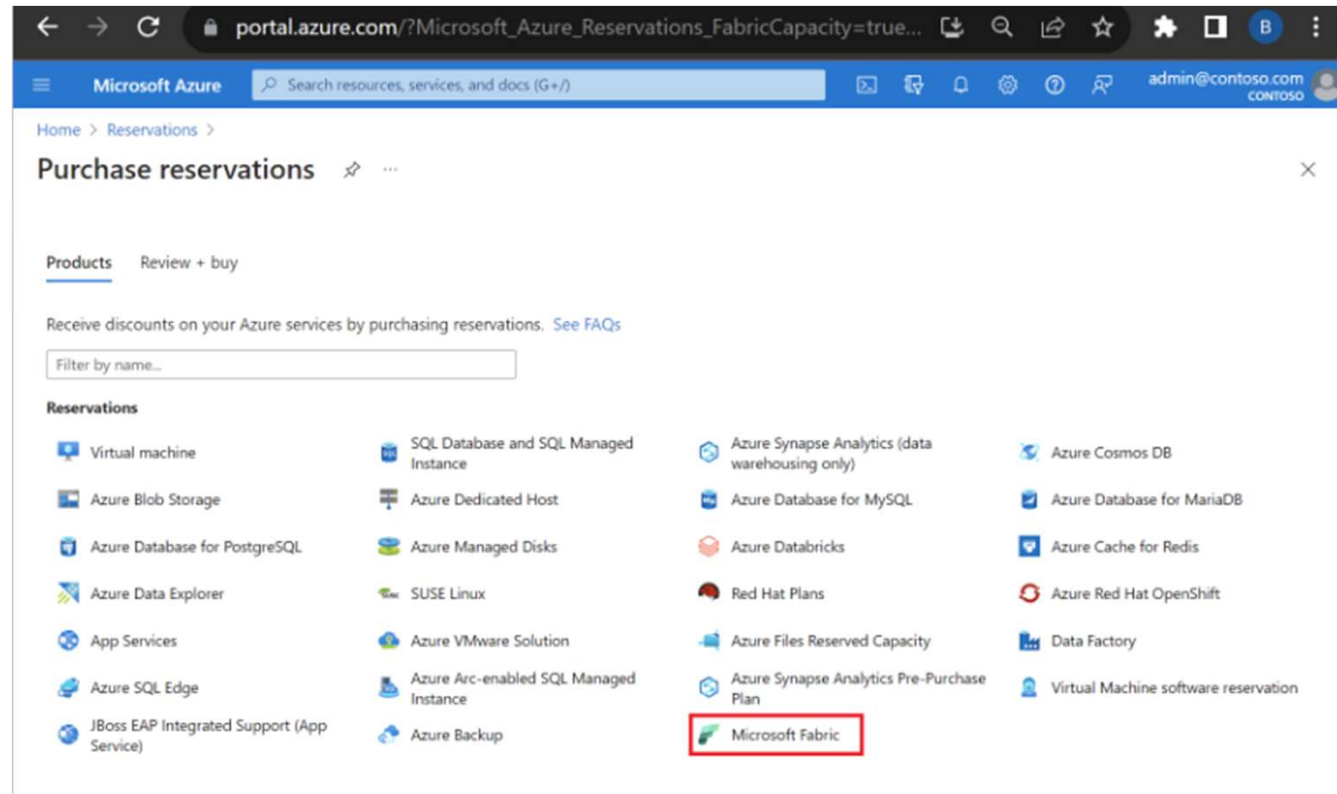


How-To Purchase Capacity Reservation

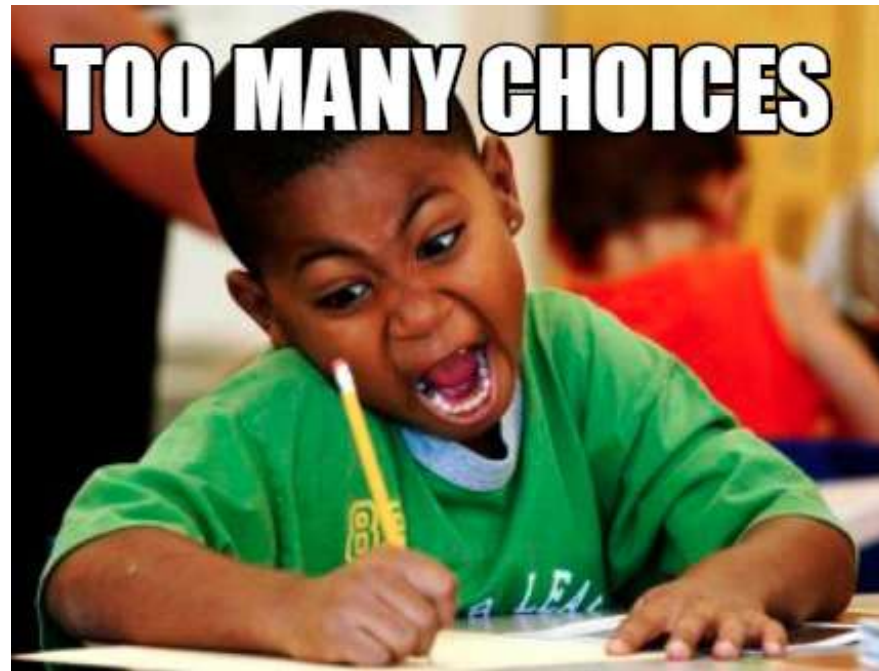
portal.azure.com > Reservations > Microsoft Fabric

Prerequisites

- Azure Subscription (method for paying)
- Azure Resource Group (tool for grouping your Azure resources)
- Must have owner role or reservation purchaser role on an Azure subscription




What's the Right Option for You?



What's the Right Option for You?




Licensing Scenario Personas & Workspace Types

 **Data Engineers**


Responsibilities:

- Create Fabric artifacts (lakehouses, warehouses, notebooks, data pipelines, etc.)

 **PBI Developers**

Responsibilities:

- Create Power BI semantic models
- Create Power BI reports
- ** Publish reports to shared workspaces

 **Report Viewers**

Responsibilities:

- *** Utilize Power BI reports to answer business questions

 Fabric Capacity Workspace  Personal Workspace

 Premium Per User Workspace  Shared Workspace (no capacity)

** Requires either a pro or ppu license

*** Requires a pro license if in a shared workspace, ppu license if in a ppu workspace, and no license if in a F64 capacity workspace



Licensing Example 1

No ETL, Small User Base



X 0 = \$0



X 2 x \$14/pro license = \$ 28



X 50 x \$14/pro license = \$700

Total Monthly Estimate: \$728

Total Annual Estimate: \$8,736

+ External Engineering Costs

Assumptions

0 Fabric Data Engineers

- Engineering is handled outside Fabric

2 Power BI Developers

50 Report Viewers



Licensing Example 2

No ETL, Small User Base, PPU Workspaces Needed



X 0 = \$0



X 2 x \$24/ppu license = \$48



X 50 x \$24/ppu license = \$1,200

Total Monthly Estimate: \$1,248

Total Annual Estimate: \$14,976

+ External Engineering Costs

Assumptions

0 Fabric Data Engineers

- Engineering is handled outside Fabric

2 Power BI Developers

50 Report Viewers



Licensing Example 3

No ETL, Large User Base



X 0 = \$0



X 5 x \$14/pro license = \$70

F64 = \$5,000



X ∞ x \$0 viewer = \$0

Total Monthly Estimate: \$5,070

Total Annual Estimate: \$60,840

+ External Engineering Costs

Assumptions

0 Fabric Data Engineers

- Engineering is handled outside Fabric

5 Power BI Developers

∞ Report Viewers

Reserved F64 pricing



Licensing Example 4

Small ETL, Small User Base



F16 = \$1,250



X 2 x \$14/pro license = \$28



X 50 x \$14/pro license = \$700

Total Monthly Estimate: \$1,978

Total Annual Estimate: \$23,736

Assumptions

2 Fabric Data Engineers

- Going with F16 for the estimate
- Using reserved pricing

2 Power BI Developers

50 Report Viewers



Licensing Example 5

Larger ETL, Small User Base



F32 = \$2,501



X 2 x \$14/pro license = \$28



X 50 x \$10/pro license = \$700

Total Monthly Estimate: \$3,229

Total Annual Estimate: \$38,748

Assumptions

2 Fabric Data Engineers

- Going with F32 for the estimate
- Using reserved pricing

2 Power BI Developers

50 Report Viewers



Licensing Example 6

Larger ETL, Large User Base



F64 = \$5,000



X 5 x \$14/pro license = \$70



X ∞ x \$0 viewer license = \$0

Total Monthly Estimate: \$5,070

Total Annual Estimate: \$60,840

Assumptions

10 Fabric Data Engineers

- Going with F64 for the estimate
- Using reserved pricing

5 Power BI Developers

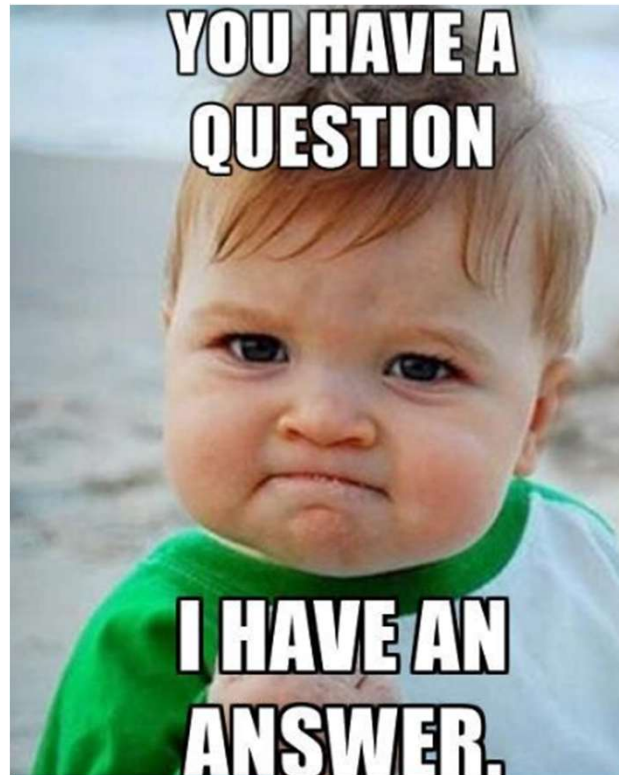
∞ Report Viewers

Helpful Additional Tools



- <https://data-witches.com/power-bi-licensing-calculator/>
- [Microsoft Fabric Licensing: An Ultimate Guide – RADACAD](#)
- <https://www.tigeranalytics.com/perspectives/blog/a-comprehensive-guide-to-pricing-and-licensing-on-microsoft-fabric/>

Questions?



Don't forget to connect, thanks for listening!

GitHub

A white outline icon of a bird, representing Twitter, positioned on the left side of a dark green arrow-shaped background pointing to the right.

@data_dragoness

A colorful logo featuring a green dragon with orange wings and a blue gear with the text "DATA ON WHEELS" inside, positioned on the left side of a dark green arrow-shaped background pointing to the right.

<https://dataonwheels.wordpress.com/>

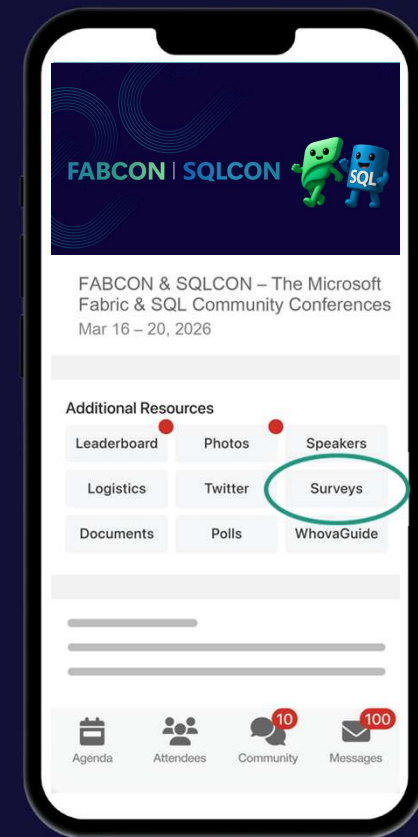
A white outline icon of a paper airplane, representing email, positioned on the left side of a dark green arrow-shaped background pointing to the right.

kristyna@dataonwheels.com

How was the session?



Complete Session Surveys in
Whova for your chance to WIN
PRIZES!



Two Fabric Certifications, One FREE Exam Included

Attendees can take the Fabric Analytics Engineer or Fabric Data Engineer exam for free. Be part of the 2 fastest growing role-based certifications in Microsoft history.

Request your voucher by March 31, 2026.

<https://aka.ms/GetDataCertified>

