

Best Practices for Running Oracle Database on AWS

September 2021



Notices

Customers are responsible for making their own independent assessment of the information in this document. This document: (a) is for informational purposes only, (b) represents current AWS product offerings and practices, which are subject to change without notice, and (c) does not create any commitments or assurances from AWS and its affiliates, suppliers or licensors. AWS products or services are provided “as is” without warranties, representations, or conditions of any kind, whether express or implied. The responsibilities and liabilities of AWS to its customers are controlled by AWS agreements, and this document is not part of, nor does it modify, any agreement between AWS and its customers.

© 2021 Amazon Web Services, Inc. or its affiliates. All rights reserved.

Contents

Introduction	1
Oracle Licensing Considerations.....	2
Amazon RDS License Included	3
Bring Your Own License (BYOL)	4
Choosing Between Amazon RDS, Amazon EC2, or VMware Cloud on AWS for your Oracle Database	5
Architecting for Security and Performance	6
Network Configuration.....	7
Amazon EC2 Instance Type	8
Database Storage	10
Architecting for High Availability	12
Amazon EC2.....	13
VMware Cloud on AWS	13
Oracle Real Application Cluster (RAC)	13
Backup Storage.....	14
Amazon S3	14
Amazon S3 Glacier	14
Amazon S3 Glacier Deep Archive.....	14
Amazon EFS.....	15
Amazon EBS Snapshots.....	15
Management	16
Automation.....	16
Oracle AMIs	16
AWS Systems Manager	16
Conclusion	17
Contributors.....	17
Further Reading	17
Document Revisions	19

Abstract

Amazon Web Services (AWS) offers you the ability to run your Oracle Database in a cloud environment. Running Oracle Database in the AWS Cloud is very similar to running Oracle Database in your data center. To a database administrator or developer, there are no differences between the two environments. However, there are a number of AWS platform considerations relating to security, storage, compute configurations, management, and monitoring that will help you get the best out of your Oracle Database implementation on AWS.

This whitepaper provides best practices for achieving optimal performance, availability, and reliability, and lowering the total cost of ownership (TCO) while running Oracle Database in the AWS Cloud. The target audience for this whitepaper includes database administrators, enterprise architects, systems administrators, and developers who would like to run their Oracle Database in the AWS Cloud.

Introduction

Amazon Web Services (AWS) provides a comprehensive set of services and tools for deploying Oracle Database on the reliable and secure AWS Cloud infrastructure. AWS offers its customers three options for running Oracle Database on AWS:

1. Using Amazon Relational Database Service (Amazon RDS) for Oracle, which is a managed database service that helps simplify the provisioning and management of Oracle databases. Amazon RDS for Oracle makes it easy to set up, operate, and scale a relational database in the cloud by automating installation, disk provisioning and management, patching, minor version upgrades, failed instance replacement, as well as backup and recovery tasks. The push-button scaling feature of Amazon RDS allows you to easily scale the database instance up or down for better cost management and performance. Amazon RDS for Oracle offers both Oracle Database Enterprise Edition and Oracle Database Standard Edition. Amazon RDS for Oracle also comes with a license-included service model, which allows you to pay per use by the hour.
2. Running a self-managed Oracle Database directly on Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (Amazon EC2). This option gives you full control over the setup of the infrastructure and database environment. Running the database on Amazon EC2 is very similar to running the database on your own server. You have full control of the Oracle binaries database and have operating system-level access, so you can run monitoring and management agents and use your choice of tools for data replication, backup, and restoration. Furthermore, you have the ability to use every optional module available in Oracle Database. However, this option requires you to set up, configure, manage, and tune all the components, including Amazon EC2 instances, storage volumes, scalability, networking, and security based on AWS architecture best practices. In the fully-managed Amazon Relational Database Service (Amazon RDS) service, this is all taken care of for you.
3. FlashGrid Cluster virtual appliances enable running self-managed Oracle Real Application Cluster (RAC) and Oracle RAC extended clusters (across different AZs) on Amazon EC2. With FlashGrid Cluster you also have full control of the database and have operating system-level access.

4. Running a self-managed Oracle Database directly on VMware Cloud on AWS. VMware Cloud on AWS is an integrated cloud offering jointly developed by AWS and VMware. Like Amazon EC2, you have full control of the database and have operating system-level access. You can run advanced architectures like Oracle Real Application Cluster (RAC) and Oracle RAC extended clusters (across different AZs) in VMware Cloud on AWS.

Whether you choose to run a self-managed Oracle Database on Amazon EC2 or the fully-managed Amazon RDS for Oracle, following the best practices discussed in this whitepaper will help you get the most out of your Oracle Database implementation on AWS. We will discuss Oracle licensing options, considerations for choosing Amazon EC2 or Amazon RDS for your Oracle Database implementation, and how to optimize network configuration, instance type, and database storage in your implementation.

Oracle Licensing Considerations

You can run Amazon RDS for Oracle under two different licensing models - "License Included" and "Bring-Your-Own-License (BYOL)". In the "License Included" service model, you do not need separately purchased Oracle licenses.

Oracle Database licensing on AWS is based on the number of virtual CPUs on the EC2 instance on which the database is installed. For information about Oracle Database licensing, please refer to your Oracle contract on license terms. You can consult with independent third-party license review firms on specific licensing questions and planning on AWS instances. Reach out to your AWS sales representative for more information. A few key points to consider are:

- As stated in [Amazon EC2 Instance Types page](#), each vCPU is a thread of either an Intel Xeon core or an AMD EPYC core, except for A1 instances, T2 instances, and m3.medium.
- AWS offers an [optimize CPU feature](#) in RDS and EC2 instances. You can specify the following CPU options to optimize your instances for specific workload or business needs.
 - **Number of CPU cores:** You can customize the number of CPU cores for the instance.
 - **Threads per core:** You can disable multithreading by specifying a single thread per CPU core.

- VMware Cloud on AWS also offers a [custom CPU core count](#) feature for its host nodes. You have an option of selecting 8, 16, or 32 CPU cores per host for I3, or selecting 8, 16 or 48 CPU cores for R5 host type.
- Any discussion of Oracle licensing policies and costs in this whitepaper is for informational purposes only and is based on the information available at the time of publication. For more specific information, users should consult their own Oracle license agreements.

Amazon RDS License Included

You have the option to include the cost of the Oracle Database license in the hourly price of the Amazon RDS service if you use the License Included service model. In this case, you do not need to purchase Oracle licenses separately; the Oracle Database software has been licensed by AWS. License Included per-hour pricing includes software, underlying hardware resources, and Amazon RDS management capabilities. This service model optimizes license costs, and gives you flexibility when scaling your Amazon RDS instances up or down. You can take advantage of hourly pricing with no upfront fees or long-term commitments. In addition, you can purchase Amazon RDS Reserved Instances under one-year or three-year reservation terms. With Reserved Instances, you can make a low, one-time payment up front for each database instance, and then pay a significantly discounted hourly usage rate.

Note: The hourly license for the License Included model in Amazon RDS is available only for Oracle Standard Edition One and Standard Edition Two. For other editions of Oracle Database on Amazon RDS and any edition of Oracle Database on Amazon EC2, you need to use your own license (that is, acquire a license from Oracle), as discussed in the following section.

Since you are paying for the Oracle license only for the hours in which you use Amazon RDS, the License Included option may help you reduce overall licensing costs for development and testing environments that are active only during business hours. For most businesses, the total business hours per week ($10 \times 5 = 50$ hours) is only about 30% of the total hours in a week ($24 \times 7 = 168$ hours), so this service model could result in considerable savings.

This service model also gives you the flexibility to resize the instance based on your needs, because the license is included in the instance cost. In cases where your regular capacity requirements are much smaller than periodic, predictable spikes, this service model allows you to scale up to absorb the additional capacity needed, and scale down to save on cost. For example, you might have databases that require the performance of

a db.m3.large instance for most days of the month except for the last three days. During the last three days of the month, your database might be heavily used due to payroll processing and month-end closing. In this scenario, you can use Oracle Database on Amazon RDS based on the db.m3.large instance type throughout the month, scale up to db.m3.2xlarge for the last three days, and then scale down again. This could translate to 65% or more cost savings compared to using the db.m3.2xlarge instance for the whole month.

Bring Your Own License (BYOL)

If you already own Oracle Database licenses, you can use the BYOL service model to run your Oracle databases on Amazon RDS. This will result in a lower cost for the Amazon RDS instance because the cost of the Oracle license isn't included. The BYOL model is designed for customers who prefer to use their existing Oracle Database licenses or purchase new licenses directly from Oracle.

If you want to use Oracle Database Enterprise Edition with Amazon RDS, or run your own self-managed Oracle Database on Amazon EC2 or VMware Cloud on AWS, BYOL is the only supported option.

Oracle License Portability to AWS

Subject to the terms and conditions of the specific license agreement, Oracle licenses may be portable to AWS. In other words, your existing licenses can be transferred for use on AWS. These include:

- Server-based licenses (based on CPUs used)
- Enterprise License Agreements (ELA)
- Unlimited License Agreements (ULA)
- Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) licenses
- Oracle PartnerNetwork (OPN) licenses
- Named User Plus licenses

Additional conditions or limitations (including possible costs) may be applicable for licenses that are ported to AWS. Please check your specific license agreement for additional details and limitations.

Oracle licensing applies equally to Oracle Database on Amazon RDS and on Amazon EC2 with the exception that hourly licensing is available only on Amazon RDS.

Choosing Between Amazon RDS, Amazon EC2, or VMware Cloud on AWS for your Oracle Database

Both Amazon RDS and Amazon EC2 offer different advantages for running Oracle Database. Amazon RDS is easier to set up, manage, and maintain than running Oracle Database in Amazon EC2, and lets you focus on other important tasks, rather than the day-to-day administration of Oracle Database. Alternatively, running Oracle Database in Amazon EC2 gives you more control, flexibility, and choice. Depending on your application and your requirements, you might prefer one over the other.

If you are migrating multiple Oracle databases to AWS, you will find that some of them are a great fit for Amazon RDS while others are better suited to run directly on Amazon EC2. Many AWS customers run several databases across Amazon RDS, Amazon EC2, and VMware Cloud on AWS for their Oracle Database workloads.

Amazon RDS might be a better choice for you if:

- You want to focus on your business and applications, and have AWS take care of the undifferentiated heavy lifting tasks such as provisioning of the database, management of backup and recovery tasks, management of security patches, minor Oracle version upgrades, and storage management.
- You need a highly available database solution and want to take advantage of the push-button, synchronous Multi-AZ replication offered by Amazon RDS, without having to manually set up and maintain a standby database.
- You would like to have synchronous replication to a standby instance for high availability for Oracle Database Standard Edition One or Standard Edition Two.
- You want to pay for the Oracle license as part of the instance cost on an hourly basis instead of making a large upfront investment.
- Your database size and IOPS needs are less than the RDS Oracle limits. See the [documentation](#) for the current maximum.
- You don't want to manage backups and, most importantly, point-in-time recoveries of your database.
- You would rather focus on high-level tasks, such as performance tuning and schema optimization, rather than the daily administration of the database.

- You want to scale the instance type up or down based on your workload patterns without being concerned about licensing and the complexity involved.

Amazon EC2 might be a better choice for you if:

- You need full control over the database, including SYS/SYSTEM user access, or you need access at the operating system level.
- Your database size exceeds the 80% of current maximum database size in Amazon RDS.
- You need to use Oracle features or options that are not currently supported by Amazon RDS. See the [documentation](#) for currently supported options in Amazon RDS Oracle.
- Your database IOPS needs are higher than the current IOPS limit. See the [documentation](#) for the current IOPS limit.
- You need a specific Oracle Database version that is not supported by Amazon RDS. For more information, see [Oracle Database Editions](#).

VMware Cloud on AWS might be a better choice for you if:

- Your Oracle databases are already running in on-premises data center in vSphere virtualized environments.
- You need to run Oracle Real Application Clusters (RAC) in the cloud.
- You have large number of databases and you need faster migration (in order of few hours) to migrate to cloud without any migration team man-hours.
- You need to preserve the IP addresses of the databases and applications, when migrating to cloud, to avoid any post-migration re-work.
- You need the performance of NVMe storage in Amazon EC2 bare metal hosts along with data persistence.

Architecting for Security and Performance

Whether you choose to run Oracle Database on Amazon RDS or Amazon EC2, optimizing every component of the infrastructure will enhance security, performance, and reliability. In the following sections, we'll discuss best practices for optimizing network configuration, instance type, and database storage in an Oracle Database implementation on AWS.

Network Configuration

With Amazon Virtual Private Cloud (Amazon VPC), you can provision a logically isolated section of the AWS Cloud that is dedicated to your account. You have complete control over your virtual networking environment, including selection of your own IP address range, creation of subnets, security settings, and configuration of route tables and network gateways.

A *subnet* is a range of IP addresses in your Amazon VPC. You can launch AWS resources into a subnet that you select. Use a public subnet for resources that must be connected to the internet, and a private subnet for resources that won't be connected to the internet.

To protect the AWS resources in each subnet, you can use multiple layers of security, including security groups and network access control lists (ACLs).

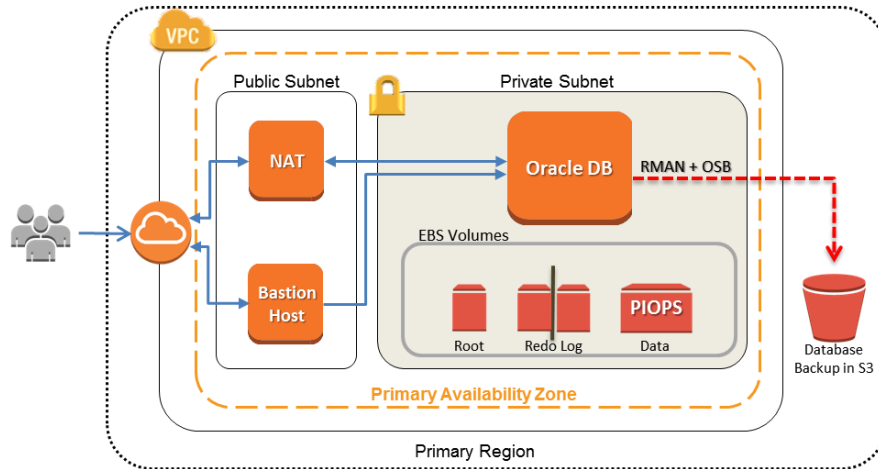
The following table describes the basic differences between security groups and network ACLs.

Security Group	Network ACL
Operates at the instance level (first layer of defense)	Operates at the subnet level (second layer of defense)
Supports allow rules only	Supports allow rules and deny rules
Stateful: Return traffic is automatically allowed, regardless of any rules	Stateless: Return traffic must be explicitly allowed by rules
Evaluates all rules before deciding whether to allow traffic	Processes rules in numerical order when deciding whether to allow traffic
Applies to an instance only if someone specifies the security group when launching the instance, or associates the security group with the instance later on	Automatically applies to all instances in the subnets it's associated with (backup layer of defense, so you don't have to rely on someone specifying the security group)

Amazon VPC provides isolation, additional security, and the ability to separate Amazon EC2 instances into subnets, and allows the use of private IP addresses. All of these are important in database implementation.

Deploy the Oracle Database instance in a private subnet and allow only application servers within the Amazon VPC, or a bastion host within the Amazon VPC, to access the database instance.

Create appropriate security groups that allow access only to specific IP addresses through the designated ports. These recommendations apply to Oracle Database regardless of whether you're using Amazon RDS or Amazon EC2.



Oracle Database in private subnet of an Amazon VPC

Amazon EC2 Instance Type

AWS has a large number of Amazon EC2 instance types available, so you can choose the instance type that best fits your workload. However, not all the available instance types are best suited for running Oracle Database.

If you use Amazon RDS for your Oracle Database, AWS filters out some of the instance types based on best practices, and gives you the various options in T-class, M-class and R-class instances. We recommend that you choose db.m- or r-based Amazon RDS instances for any enterprise database workloads. R5 instances are well suited for memory intensive applications such as high-performance databases.

For the latest information about RDS instances, see [Amazon RDS for Oracle Database Pricing](#). Your choice of the Amazon RDS instance type should be based on the database workload and the Oracle Database licenses available.

If you're running your self-managed database on Amazon EC2, you have many more choices available for the Amazon EC2 instance type. This is often one of the reasons customers opt to run Oracle Database on Amazon EC2 instead of using Amazon RDS.

Very small instance types are not suitable because Oracle Database is resource-intensive when it comes to CPU usage. Instances with a larger memory footprint help improve database performance by providing better caching and a bigger system global area

(SGA). We recommend that you choose instances that have a good balance of memory and CPU.

Choose the instance type that matches the Oracle Database licenses you are planning to use and the architecture you are planning to implement. For architectures best suited for your business needs, see the whitepaper [Advanced Architectures for Oracle Database on Amazon EC2](#).

Oracle Database uses disk storage heavily for read/write operations, so we highly recommend that you use only instances optimized for Amazon Elastic Block Store (Amazon EBS). Amazon EBS-optimized instances deliver dedicated throughput between Amazon EC2 and Amazon EBS. Bandwidth and throughput to the storage subsystem is crucial for good database performance. Choose instances with higher network performance for better database performance.

The following instance families are best suited for running Oracle Database on Amazon EC2.

Instance Family	Features
M family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EBS-optimized by default at no additional cost Support for Enhanced Networking Balance of compute, memory, and network resources
X family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lowest price per GiB of RAM SSD Storage and EBS-optimized by default and at no additional cost Ability to control processor C-state and P-state configuration
R family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimized for memory-intensive applications High-frequency Intel Xeon E5-2686 v4 (Broadwell) Processors DDR4 Memory Support for Enhanced Networking R5b instances support bandwidth up to 60Gbps and EBS performance of 260K IOPS, providing 3x higher EBS-Optimized performance compared to R5 instances. R6g instance, powered by Arm-based AWS Graviton2 processors, deliver up to 40% better price performance over current generation R5 instances.
I family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimized for low latency, very high random I/O performance, high sequential read throughput, and provide high IOPS at a low cost NVMe SSD ephemeral storage Support for TRIM Support for Enhanced Networking
Z1d family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustained all core frequency of 4.0 GHz Delivers a 1:8 vCPU to memory ratio

Database Storage

Most users typically use Amazon EBS for database storage. For some very high-performance architectures, you can use instance storage SSDs, but they should be augmented with Amazon EBS storage for reliable persistence.

For high and consistent IOPS and database performance, we highly recommend using General Purpose (GP2) volumes or Provisioned IOPS (PIOPS) volumes. GP2 and PIOPS volumes are available for both Amazon EC2 and Amazon RDS.

See the [documentation](#) for the latest limits of IOPS per volume for both GP2 and PIOPS volume types. GP2 volumes provide an excellent balance of price and performance for most database needs. When your database requires higher IOPS than what GP2 can provide, PIOPS volumes are the right choice.

For PIOPS volumes, you specify an IOPS rate when you create the volume, and Amazon EBS delivers within 10% of the Provisioned IOPS performance 99.9% of the time over a given year. The ratio of IOPS provisioned to the volume size requested can be a maximum of 30. For example, to get 3,000 IOPS your volume size should be at least 100 GB.

Similar to PIOPS volumes, GP2 volumes are also SSD-based, but the IOPS you get from GP2 volumes can vary from a baseline IOPS up to a maximum burstable 3,000 IOPS per volume. This works very well for most database workloads because the IOPS performance needed from the database varies many times during a period of time based on the load size and the number of queries being executed.

General Purpose (SSD) volume performance is governed by volume size, which dictates the base performance level of the volume and how quickly it accumulates I/O credits. Larger volumes have higher base performance levels and accumulate I/O credits faster.

I/O credits represent the available bandwidth that your General Purpose (SSD) volume can use to burst large amounts of I/O when more than the base performance is needed. The more credits your volume has for I/O, the more time it can burst beyond its base performance level and the better it performs when more performance is needed.

Throughput Optimized HDD volumes (st1) offers low-cost HDD volume designed for intensive workloads that require less IOPS but high throughput. Oracle databases used for data warehouses and data analytics purposes can leverage st1 volumes.

Any log processing or data staging areas like Oracle external tables or external BLOB storage that require high throughput can leverage st1 volumes. Throughput optimized (st1) volumes can handle max 500 IOPS per volume.

Cold HDD volumes (sc1) are suitable for handling legacy systems, which are kept around for the purposes of occasional reference or archive purposes. These systems are accessed less frequently and a few scans are performed per day on the volume.

A good approach is to estimate the amount of IOPS consistently needed for your database, and allocate enough GP2 storage to obtain that many IOPS. Any additional IOPS needed for periodic spikes should be covered by the burst performance based on the available credits.

For information about estimation methods you can use to determine the IOPS needs of your Oracle Database, see the [Determining the IOPS Needs for Oracle Database on AWS](#) whitepaper.

The burst duration of a volume is dependent on the size of the volume, the burst IOPS required, and the credit balance when the burst begins. If you notice that your volume performance is frequently limited to the base level (due to an empty I/O credit balance), you should consider using a larger General Purpose (SSD) volume (with a higher base performance level) or switching to a Provisioned IOPS (SSD) volume for workloads that require sustained IOPS performance greater than 10,000 IOPS. For additional details about GP2 volumes, see the [Amazon EBS User Guide](#).

For Amazon RDS, General Purpose (SSD) storage delivers a consistent baseline of 3 IOPS per provisioned GB and provides the ability to burst up to 3,000 IOPS. If you are already using magnetic storage for Amazon RDS, you can convert to General Purpose (SSD) storage, but you will encounter a short availability impact when doing so. Using Provisioned IOPS, you can provision up to the current maximum storage limit and the maximum IOPS per database instance.

Your actual realized IOPS may vary from the amount you provisioned based on your database workload, instance type, and database engine. For more information, see [Factors That Affect Realized IOPS Rates](#) in the *Amazon RDS User Guide*.

For Oracle Database on Amazon EC2, stripe multiple volumes together for more IOPS and larger capacity. You can use multiple Amazon EBS volumes individually for different data files, but striping them together allows better balancing and scalability.

Oracle Automatic Storage Management (ASM) can be used for striping. Keep data files, log files, and binaries on separate Amazon EBS volumes, and take snapshots of log file

volumes on a regular basis. Choosing an instance type with local SSD storage allows you to boost the database performance by using Smart Flash Cache (that is, if the operating system is Oracle Linux) and by using local storage for temporary files and table spaces.

For Oracle Database on VMware Cloud on AWS, vSAN provides necessary virtualized storage striped across the bare metal hosts. vSAN virtualized storage capability can be used in Oracle RAC for high-performance shared storage.

The VMDK (virtual machine disk) files created for Oracle RAC have to be provisioned for Eager Zero Thick, and be multi-writer flag enabled. VMware has published a [detailed performance study](#) for Oracle databases on VMware Cloud on AWS.

Architecting for High Availability

The three options have different approaches to high availability of Oracle databases.

Amazon RDS

The Multi-AZ feature of Amazon RDS operates two databases in multiple Availability Zones with synchronous replication, thus creating a highly available environment with automatic failover. Amazon RDS has failover event detection, and initiates automated failover when failover events occur. You can also initiate manual failover through Amazon RDS API. Amazon RDS provides [SLA](#) with monthly uptime percentage of 99.95%. A detailed under-the-hood blog post on Amazon RDS Multi-AZ capability is available [here](#). Another option for Amazon RDS Oracle is to use Oracle Active Data Guard. Customers should have their own license for the Oracle Active Data Guard option. Amazon RDS for Oracle support read replicas using Oracle Active Data Guard. Both Multi-AZ and Oracle Active Data Guard options are within the same AWS Region. [Amazon Relational Database Service \(RDS\) for Oracle](#) supports Cross-region Read Replicas with Oracle Active Data Guard. Amazon RDS for Oracle makes it easy to create physical standby DB instances in different AWS Regions from the primary DB instance. It fully manages the configuration of Active Data Guard, and replicates data over secured network connections between a primary DB instance and its replicas running across regions. Amazon RDS for Oracle is also compatible with Oracle GoldenGate. You can choose to replicate the entire database or few tables and schemas with Oracle GoldenGate. Oracle GoldenGate is installed in a hub architecture in an EC2 instance and accesses the Amazon RDS for Oracle instance remotely. Oracle GoldenGate hub can replicate the data to another Amazon RDS for Oracle instance or Oracle database in Amazon EC2 or VMware Cloud on AWS within the same AWS Region. For cross-region instances, the recommended approach is to first replicate to an Oracle GoldenGate hub in another region.

Amazon EC2

Oracle databases on Amazon EC2 support Oracle Data Guard, Oracle Active DataGuard, Oracle GoldenGate options as well. Third-party solutions available in AWS Marketplace also support replication for Oracle databases. Both Oracle and third-party solutions can be used to replicate databases within AWS Region and across AWS Regions as well. Oracle databases can be replicated from and to the customer's on-premises data centers as well. AWS Database Migration Service can also be used to replicate all or a subset of tables.

VMware Cloud on AWS

Since Oracle database is self-managed within VMware Cloud on AWS, all options including third-party agent-based replication are available. To replicate databases across AWS Regions or to the customer's on-premises data center, Oracle Data Guard or Oracle GoldenGate can be used. VMware native technologies such as vMotion or Hybrid Cloud Extension (HCX) can be used to migrate databases between on-premises data centers and VMware Cloud on AWS. For large deployments involving multiple layers of application and database VMs, VMware Site Recovery Manager (SRM) can be considered to orchestrate replication and migration at site level.

Oracle Real Application Cluster (RAC)

VMware Cloud on AWS has capability for multicast support and shared storage. Oracle RAC can be installed on VMware Cloud on AWS. Each Software Defined Data Center (SDDC) in VMware Cloud on AWS can run at the minimum 3 AWS bare metal hosts and maximum of 16 AWS bare metal hosts. VMware Cloud on AWS can run SDDC in stretched cluster fashion across 2 different AWS AZ. This will also allow Oracle RAC to run in extended cluster mode, avoiding the need for a separate Oracle Data Guard setup. VMware Cloud on AWS vSAN supports Oracle ASM. Oracle ASM disk group files are created out of VMDKs. The recommended allocation unit for Oracle ASM disk group for datafiles and log files should be 4 MB. This option is allowed during the creation of ASM disk group and cannot be modified later. For best performance, VMDK should have multi-writer flag enabled, and be provisioned for Eager Zero Thick. Oracle RAC reference architecture for VMware Cloud on AWS is available [here](#).

FlashGrid Cluster

FlashGrid Cluster is a virtual cloud appliance that provides all infrastructure capabilities required for running Oracle RAC on Amazon EC2. This includes multicast support and shared storage. For maximizing database uptime SLA, FlashGrid Cluster allows spreading Oracle RAC nodes across different availability zones.

FlashGrid Cluster is delivered as an AWS CloudFormation template with fully automated deployment of all infrastructure components and Oracle software. FlashGrid software and support fees are billed through AWS Marketplace. FlashGrid architecture details are available in the [whitepaper](#). To launch a FlashGrid Cluster with Oracle RAC visit the [product page](#).

Backup Storage

Most Oracle Database users take regular hot and cold backups. Cold backups are taken while the database is shut down, whereas hot backups are taken while the database is active. AWS native storage services offer a choice of solutions for your needs.

Amazon S3

Store your hot and cold backups in Amazon Simple Storage Service (Amazon S3) for high durability and easy access. You can use [S3](#) file interface to directly back up the database to Amazon S3. AWS Storage Gateway file interface provides an NFS mount for S3 buckets. Oracle RMAN backups written into the NFS mount are automatically copied to S3 buckets by the AWS Storage Gateway instance.

Amazon S3 Glacier

Amazon S3 Glacier is a secure, durable, and extremely low-cost cloud storage service for data archiving and long-term backup. You can use lifecycle policies in Amazon S3 to move older backups to Amazon S3 Glacier for long-term archiving. Amazon S3 Glacier offers three options for data retrieval with varying access times and costs: Expedited, Standard, and Bulk retrievals. For more information about these options, see [Amazon S3 Glacier FAQs](#).

Amazon S3 Glacier Deep Archive

Amazon S3 Glacier Deep Archive is designed for long-term retention and digital preservation for the data that might be accessed once or twice a year. All objects stored

in S3 Glacier Deep Archive are replicated and stored across at least three geographically dispersed Availability Zones, protected by 99.999999999% of durability, and can be restored within 12 hours.

Amazon EFS

Amazon Elastic File System (Amazon EFS) provides a simple, serverless, set-and-forget, elastic file system. With Amazon EFS, you can grow and shrink your file systems automatically as you add and remove files, eliminating the need to provision and manage capacity to accommodate growth.

Backups stored in EFS can be shared with NFS options (read/write, read-only) to other EC2 instances. Amazon EFS uses bursting model for EFS performance. Accumulated burst credits give the file system the capability to drive throughput above its baseline rate. A file system can drive throughput continuously at its baseline rate.

Whenever it's inactive or throughput is below its baseline rate, the file system accumulates burst credits. Amazon EFS is useful when you have to refresh dev and test databases from production database RMAN backups regularly. Amazon EFS can also be mounted in on-premises data centers when connected to your Amazon VPC with AWS Direct Connect. This option is useful when the source Oracle database is in AWS and the databases that need to be refreshed are in on-premises data centers. Backups stored in EFS can be copied to an S3 bucket using AWS CLI commands. See the [documentation](#) for getting started on EFS.

Amazon EBS Snapshots

You can back up the data on your Amazon EBS volumes to Amazon S3 by taking point-in-time snapshots. Snapshots are incremental backups, which means that only the blocks on the device that have changed since your most recent snapshot are saved. When you create an EBS volume based on a snapshot, the new volume begins as an exact replica of the original volume that was used to create the snapshot. The replicated volume loads data lazily in the background so that you can begin using it immediately. If you access data that hasn't been loaded yet, the volume immediately downloads the requested data from Amazon S3, and then continues loading the rest of the volume's data in the background. See the [documentation](#) on creating and managing EBS snapshots.

Management

Automation

Oracle database creation and deployment can be automated using AWS CloudFormation templates. For step-by-step instructions deploying an Oracle database environment, see [Oracle Database on AWS Quick Start](#).

Oracle AMIs

An Amazon Machine Image (AMI) provides the information required to launch an instance, which is a virtual server in the cloud. You specify an AMI when you launch an instance, and you can launch as many instances from an AMI as you require.

Oracle periodically provides official AMIs for some Oracle products, including Oracle Database, on AWS. However, Oracle-provided database AMIs that are available might not always be the latest version. Oracle-supplied AMIs are based on the Oracle Linux operating system.

You are not required to use an Oracle-provided AMI to install and use Oracle Database on Amazon EC2. You can provision an Amazon EC2 instance with an operating system AMI, and then download and install Oracle Database software from the Oracle website, just as you would with a physical server.

After you have the first environment set up with all the necessary Oracle software, you can create your own custom AMI for subsequent installations. You can also directly launch AMIs from [AWS Marketplace](#). You should closely scrutinize any community AMIs provided by third parties for security and reliability before using them. AWS is not responsible or liable for their security or reliability.

AWS Systems Manager

AWS Systems Manager is a collection of capabilities that help you automate management tasks such as systems inventory, applying operational patches, automatic creation of AMIs, and configuring operating systems and applications at scale. Systems Manager uses an SSM (System State Management) Agent to collect inventory, state information within the EC2 instance, and run patch commands. Patch Manager integrates with AWS Identity and Access Management (IAM), AWS CloudTrail, and Amazon CloudWatch Events to provide a secure patching experience that includes event notifications and the ability to audit usage.

Conclusion

Depending on your usage scenario, you can use Amazon RDS for Oracle Database or run a self-managed Oracle Database on Amazon EC2. Regardless of your choice, by following the best practices provided in this paper you can get the best out of your Oracle Database implementation on AWS.

Contributors

The following individuals contributed to this document:

- Devinder Singh, Sr Database Specialist Solution Architect, Amazon Web Services
- Jayaraman Vellore Sampathkumar, AWS Oracle Solutions Architect, Amazon Web Services
- Jinyoung Jung, Product Manager, Amazon Web Services
- Abdul Sathar Sait, Amazon Web Services

Further Reading

For additional information, see:

Oracle Database on AWS

- [Oracle and Amazon Web Services](#)
- [Amazon RDS for Oracle Database](#)
- [Advanced Architectures for Oracle Database on Amazon EC2](#)
- [Strategies for Migrating Oracle Databases to AWS](#)
- [Choosing the Operating System for Oracle Workloads on Amazon EC2](#)
- [Determining the IOPS Needs for Oracle Database on AWS](#)
- [Oracle Database on AWS Quick Start](#)
- [Oracle on AWS Test Drive](#)
- [Getting Started: Backup Oracle databases directly to AWS with Oracle RMAN](#)

Oracle Documentation

- [Licensing](#)
- [Support](#)

AWS Service and Pricing Details

- [AWS Cloud Products](#)
- [AWS Documentation](#)
- [AWS Whitepapers](#)
- [AWS Pricing](#)
- [AWS Pricing Calculator](#)

VMware Documentation

- [Oracle database performance: VMware Cloud on AWS](#)

FlashGrid Documentation

- [FlashGrid Cluster for Oracle RAC on AWS product page](#)
- [FlashGrid Cluster for Oracle RAC on AWS. Knowledge Base](#)
- [Whitepaper: Mission-critical databases in the cloud. Oracle RAC on Amazon EC2 enabled by FlashGrid Cluster engineered cloud system](#)

Document Revisions

Date	Description
September 2021	Updated with new FlashGrid Cluster for Oracle RAC on AWS resources
May 2019	Updated with new EC2 instance types, Amazon S3 Glacier Deep Archive, and VMware Cloud on AWS
January 2018	Updated with new EC2 instance types, Amazon EFS, and AWS Systems Manager
December 2014	First publication