



Sitecore Azure 1.0.3

Sitecore Azure Troubleshooting Guide

A Guide for Sitecore Administrators

Considerations and Troubleshooting

This section describes Consideration for implementing solutions with Windows Azure, SQL Azure, and Sitecore Azure and troubleshooting steps.

ASP.NET Considerations on Windows Azure

Consider the following for any ASP.NET application such as Sitecore on Windows Azure.

- Eliminate use of ASP.NET session or consider `TableStorageSessionStateProvider` for session management.
- Remote access to the Windows Azure environment is extremely limited. You cannot attach a debugger to the Windows Azure environment. You cannot directly access the file system of a Windows Azure environment, including log files.
- Before moving to the cloud, consider any integration within the solution to internal applications.
- Use configuration files rather than Windows IIS Manager.
- You cannot deploy an individual file to Windows Azure. You must deploy the entire document root.

SQL Azure Considerations

Consider the following when using SQL Azure with applications such as Sitecore.

- When accessing an SQL Azure database from a remote location, performance depends on network conditions and other factors.
- Use an encrypted connection over port 1433 when accessing SQL Azure remotely (outbound access from the content management environment).¹
- SQL Azure licensing limits the maximum database size.²
- SQL Azure requires SQL Server 2008R2 or later SQL Management Studio.

¹ For information about SQL Azure security, see <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ff394108.aspx>.

² For information about SQL Azure sizing and licensing, see <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ee336245.aspx#dcasl>.

Sitecore Azure Considerations

When you use Sitecore Azure:

- You cannot use the automated installer to install Sitecore on Windows Azure. You can use the automated installer to create a local Sitecore instance, and then use Sitecore Azure to replicate that environment to the cloud.
- Sitecore Azure *only* supports SQL Azure databases.
- Sitecore Azure does not support file media.
- Windows Azure uses certificates to exchange files securely over HTTP. Sitecore Azure generates a unique certificate automatically for each instance. Sitecore Azure subscriptions are restricted to specific certificates and licenses. SQL Azure uses IP address restrictions for database security. Work with Sitecore Azure services if you plan to move your content management instance from one machine or location to another.
- Sitecore has not tested modules including the Online Marketing Suite (OMS) on Windows Azure.
- Sitecore developed Sitecore Azure for Sitecore CMS 6.3 (and later versions) targeting the 3.5 version of the .NET framework. Sitecore Azure will support .NET 4 when Sitecore CMS supports .NET 4.
- Because Sitecore Azure does not deploy the `/sitecore` directory, you should configure the `ErrorPage`, `ItemNotFoundUrl`, `LayoutNotFoundUrl`, `LinkItemNotFoundUrl`, `NoAccessUrl`, `NoLicenseUrl`, and `SystemBlockedUrl` settings in the `web.config` file to specify files that exist outside of the `/sitecore` directory.

Troubleshooting Sitecore Azure Installations

1. When you try to run the Sitecore Azure application it cannot be started and hangs in the “Connecting to the cloud” state. Check to see that the `Website\sitecore\admin\Azure\certificate.cer` file was created during Sitecore Azure installation. If the file does not exist, run the `makecert.bat` file to create it. `Makecert.bat` must be run with Administrator privilege.

Troubleshooting Sitecore Azure

To troubleshoot Sitecore Azure:

- Restart ASP.NET.
- Clear the browser cache.
- Investigate the Sitecore logs in the content management environment for errors.
- Suspend and restart the instances at a location.
- Remove the instances from the environment and deploy again.
- After initiating a deployment, copy the `$dataFolder/WebRole` subdirectory to a temporary location, configure that subdirectory as the document root of an IIS web site, and diagnose that site.

- Temporarily set the `mode` attribute of the `/configuration/system.web/customErrors` element in the `web.config` file to `Off`.

Warning

Setting the `mode` attribute to `Off` can expose detailed error information in the Sitecore Azure environment. Consider other techniques to protect the application while `mode` is `Off`. Remember to set `mode` to `On` or `RemoteOnly` after diagnosis, and remember to deploy that change.