

## **FOCUS data: Who is the audience?**

This story describes an incident of confusion arising from inexperienced interrogation of FOCUS cost data.

The author (Peter Chance, Certero) is a FinOps Practitioner who has an extensive infrastructure background and has been working with cloud optimisation since the beginnings of FinOps in 2019.

## **Who Should Read this Story?**

This story is primarily aimed at organisations and Practitioners beginning their FinOps journey.

## **Story Content**

Our organisation leverages FOCUS data and our cloud management reporting platform to furnish the organisation's FinOps personas with a range of reporting levels:

- High-level summary reports
- Exploratory, categorised/aggregated reporting
- Filterable and exportable source FOCUS data

A key persona in our organisation is, of course, the Finance team, who are tasked with reconciliation of invoices and are interested in investigating and understanding variations. They use the summary and exploratory reporting levels, but for unanswered questions they may feel the need dip into the source FOCUS cost data.

As we know, FOCUS cost data affords opportunities to efficiently derive great value, with less processing and cross-referencing than ever before, and for this we're thankful for the work of the FOCUS project team, the support of the FinOps Foundation, and the rapid adoption by cloud service providers.

Cost data, even that which adheres to FOCUS, is necessarily complex because there are many insights that the data needs to convey, encompassing themes such as accounts & costs, discount instruments & their efficiency, software licencing, and engineering concepts such as services, resource types, & SKUs. Not all personas are going to understand these themes; and this is the case in our story where our Finance persona, investigating invoice variances, was looking at source FOCUS cost data for answers, but did not understand software licencing nor how its nuances manifest in the data.

So, what happened? Finance asked the question *“What was the reason for changing Azure server001 and server002 from ‘Ebdsv5 Series VM’ to a ‘Ebdsv5 Series Windows VM?’*” It’s evident that Finance are looking at source FOCUS cost data, and don’t understand the nuances of *ChargeDescription*. We intentionally don’t expose those nuances in constructed reports.

The response to Finance was that nothing was changed; we simply have a couple of servers jumping in and out of committed use discount coverage and the cost data records are flip-flopping between inclusive and separate Windows licence costs. To root cause, of course, was that a new server was commissioned without consideration of committed use discounts.

### **Lessons Learned**

The direct takeaways from our story are that:

- Not everyone will have the experience to fully understand FOCUS cost data.
- Reporting will ideally be constructed to eliminate the urge to delve into source data.
- FinOps reporting is an evolutionary process involving collaboration between Practitioners and other personas.
- Leveraging the capabilities of FOCUS makes it simple to construct enlightening reporting to identify gaps in the governance of cloud deployment and committed use discounts.
- FinOps Certified FOCUS Analyst training will help those needing to generate, ingest, or analyze FOCUS datasets.