

Cloud License Audit Triage Pack

A concise lead magnet for teams that need a repeatable 72-hour response, evidence checklist, and negotiation timeline for cloud or SaaS licensing audits.

Use this pack when: you receive an audit letter, a vendor asks for usage evidence, or procurement needs a clean owner-by-owner response plan.

1) First 72 Hours

- **Day 0 - Acknowledge receipt.** Confirm receipt, name a single point of contact (SPOC), and avoid substantive admissions.
- **Assign owners.** SAM lead, cloud engineer, finance/procurement, and legal counsel.
- **Freeze non-essential changes.** Pause seat changes, role changes, and scaling rules where practical.
- **Protect evidence.** Capture exports before automation or retention windows alter data.

- **Request clarification.** Confirm products, date range, accepted evidence formats, and whether sampling is possible.
- **Estimate exposure.** Reconcile purchased entitlements to current users/seats and identify obvious over-consumption.
- **Ticket every communication.** Keep a clean internal log of requests, deadlines, decisions, and attachments.
- **Escalate early.** Involve legal or external SAM support if the exposure is material or the vendor requests broad access.

2) Minimum Evidence to Preserve

Source	Capture	Format
Cloud billing	AWS CUR, Azure Cost Management export, GCP billing export	CSV, parquet, or signed export
SaaS admin	Seat assignments, product plans, audit logs	CSV + export timestamp
Identity & IAM	Okta / Entra groups, sign-in logs, privileged roles	CSV / JSON + generation notes
Entitlements	POs, invoices, order forms, entitlement certificates	PDF with contract version
Compute inventory	VMs, images, tags, license keys if BYOL applies	CSV / JSON + screenshot fallback

3) Negotiation Levers to Ask For

- Limit the audit to named products, business units, and date ranges.
- Push for sampling where full scans would reveal unnecessary data.
- Ask for a remediation window instead of immediate full true-up.
- Trade rapid purchase of correct entitlements for reduced penalties.
- Use independent third-party verification if findings are disputed.

90-Day Audit Response Timeline

A simple, negotiation-friendly cadence you can adapt to your contracts and vendor relationship.

Window	Goal	What to say / do
Day 0	Acknowledge receipt	Confirm receipt, name SPOC, and state that the team is gathering information.
Day 3	Clarify scope	Ask the vendor to specify products, systems, date range, and accepted evidence formats.
Day 10	Send preliminary pack	Provide an executive summary and raw exports, or request a written extension.
Day 20-30	Negotiate scope	Propose sampling, a narrower system list, or independent verification.
Day 30-45	Negotiate remediation	Push for phased true-up, credits, or capped retroactive charges.
Day 45-90	Finalize or dispute	Complete remediation or move findings into the formal dispute path with counsel.

Build Your Internal SOP Around These 5 Controls

- Automated daily or weekly exports into a secure evidence repository
- Nightly seat-to-HR or IdP reconciliation with anomaly alerts
- IAM to CMDB ownership mapping for faster evidence retrieval
- Monthly true-up review by business unit and procurement
- Audit-friendly contract language at renewal: evidence list, scope limits, and remediation windows

Tip: Save this PDF in your internal compliance runbook and attach the timeline infographic to your incident or procurement playbook.