

Preview build — May 2026. The full 14-page edition with CLI snippets, savings sizing tables, and political playbooks ships shortly. This preview maps the 7 patterns we look for in every mid-market SaaS audit.

FinOps 7-Sin Audit Checklist

The 7 cost-bleed patterns we find in every mid-market SaaS cloud audit — same patterns across aviation, media, travel, and enterprise SaaS.

SIN 01 Idle resources hiding in plain sight

Unused EBS volumes, orphaned snapshots, detached load balancers, NAT egress on dev environments, idle CloudFront distributions still billing. Most teams find \$2K-\$15K/month here without trying.

Detect: AWS Trusted Advisor, GCP Recommender, Azure Advisor → "low utilization" reports. Cross-check with Terraform state for orphans.

SIN 02 RI / Savings Plans coverage gaps

Most teams cover 30-60% of their compute. The math says 80%+ is the sweet spot for stable workloads. The 30-50% leakage is straight EC2/Compute discount left on the table.

Detect: AWS Cost Explorer → Savings Plans coverage report. GCP CUDs analytics. Azure Reserved Instance coverage.

SIN 03 Cross-AZ data transfer leakage

The silent line item nobody graphs until it's six figures. Microservices crossing AZs unintentionally, RDS multi-AZ traffic, S3 inter-region pulls, ALB cross-zone load balancing without zone awareness.

Detect: CloudWatch DataTransfer-Regional-Bytes metric, VPC Flow Logs aggregated by AZ pair.

SIN 04 Environment sprawl

Dev/staging/preview environments running prod-tier instance types because someone copied the Terraform module. Preview environments per branch never torn down. Scratch environments from 2 years ago.

Detect: Tag audit by environment, instance-type histogram per env, last-activity-date scan.

SIN 05 S3 / Blob lifecycle gaps

Logs and backups never transitioning to Glacier / Archive. Lifecycle policies missing or only on a few buckets. Versioning enabled without expiration. Multi-part upload garbage from failed uploads.

Detect: Storage class distribution per bucket, lifecycle policy coverage matrix, incomplete multipart inventory.

SIN 06 Database overprovisioning

RDS / Aurora / CloudSQL instances sized for "peak +50%" running at 8% CPU. ElastiCache / Memcached clusters at 0.4% memory. Read replicas serving zero queries.

Detect: CPU + memory utilization percentile bands over 30 days. Query throughput per replica.

SIN 07 Observability tax

Datadog / New Relic / Splunk pricing models you signed without reading the per-host / per-GB / per-event multipliers. Custom metrics cardinality exploding. Log volume from debug-level logs left enabled.

Detect: Per-host cost slice in vendor dashboard, custom-metric cardinality export, log-volume per service.

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Methodology shaped over 6 years across enterprise aviation, media broadcasting, travel platforms, e-commerce, and regulated SaaS environments.

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