

Iden vs Entra ID Governance

Coverage, control, and cost: a detailed breakdown for IT and security teams evaluating IGA solutions.

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Microsoft owns the directory enterprise IT runs on: AD, M365, Entra SSO. The governance layer is a different story. Non-Microsoft SaaS, contractors, service accounts, 90%+ of your stack without SCIM. None of it covered well.

Entra ID Governance also comes with two separate tax layers: E5 tax to unlock governance features and SCIM tax for every SaaS. This guide covers what each does well, where it breaks, and how to choose.

When to choose Entra ID Governance

Entra ID Governance works if your stack is genuinely Microsoft-first and you're already on the tier that unlocks it. Fewer teams fit that description than Microsoft's sales motion implies.

- Your whole stack runs on Microsoft. M365, Teams, SharePoint, Azure. Native governance with no extra vendor.
- You're already on E5. The Governance step-up is \$4/user/mo. Low bar if you're already there.
- Basic certifications are enough: Microsoft apps, a handful of SCIM-ready SaaS, two reviewer levels maximum.
- Dedicated Microsoft identity engineer on staff. Someone who owns the Entra model and keeps it current.
- Contractors and external partners are minimal. No complex guest lifecycle, no large partner population.

When to choose Iden

Most IT teams hit Entra ID Governance's edges faster than expected. If you've tried to govern Notion or Salesforce through Entra and ended up building Logic Apps or just accepting the

gap, you already know.

- More than half your stack is non-Microsoft SaaS. Notion, Figma, Salesforce, GitHub Standard. Entra can't govern them.
- Contractors. Entra treats them as B2B guests with no lifecycle, and charges \$0.75/guest/mo for any governance action since January 2026.
- You're on E3, not E5. The upgrade is \$21/user/mo more, higher per user than Iden's full price, before the SCIM tax.
- SOD enforcement across more than a few Microsoft apps, or across systems Entra can't see.
- Service accounts, API keys, OAuth grants. Entra needs a separate \$3/workload SKU, which still doesn't cover managed identities.
- Audit logs beyond 30 days. Entra defaults to 30. SOC 2, HIPAA, or SOX evidence means building an Azure Monitor pipeline yourself.
- Internal tools, legacy systems, or homegrown apps. Entra has no path to them. Iden builds connectors in 48 hours.

Already on Entra SSO? Entra keeps handling authentication and MFA. Iden handles governance on top. Different tools, different jobs.

Shared capabilities

Before the differences, here's what's equivalent. Both handle the core of identity governance.

Capability	Entra	Iden
JML workflows (joiner, mover, leaver)	✓	✓
Access certification campaigns (UARs)	✓	✓
SCIM provisioning	✓	✓
Self-service access requests	✓	✓
Separation of duties	✓	✓
Policy-based access control	✓	✓
Audit logs and compliance reporting	✓	✓

Capability	Entra	Iden
Teams, Slack, and email notifications	✓	✓

Where they differ

That's where the overlap ends. Outside the Microsoft ecosystem, coverage, control, and cost are where the gaps show up.

1. Iden covers your entire stack. SCIM or not.

Microsoft governs what's in Entra: M365, Teams, SharePoint, and apps with SCIM on an enterprise plan. Across the ~300 apps most IT teams run, fewer than 4% include SCIM on a standard plan. The other 96% are on their own.

Iden uses 180+ connectors. SCIM where available, API-based where not, custom-built for everything else. Internal tools, legacy systems, homegrown apps, all covered. First 15 apps in under an hour. Anything not in the catalog, Iden builds a connector in 48 hours.

Capability	Entra	Iden
Non-SCIM apps	Not governed	180+ connectors native
Non-Microsoft IdP(s)	Entra only	Any IdP
NHI governance	Separate SKU (\$3/workload/mo)	Native
On-prem beyond AD/LDAP	Not supported	All, incl. mainframes
Shadow IT discovery	No	Yes
SaaS license waste	No	Yes
Time to first 15 apps	Weeks	<1 hour
Custom connectors	Partner/API build, days to weeks	Ships in <48 hr

2. Controls that go deeper than Entra's.

Coverage gets you connected. Control is where the governance actually happens, and where Entra ID Governance's limits start to compound.

Entra governs at group and access package level. Not entitlements. Access reviews tell you whether someone is in a group, not what they can actually do inside the app. That limit carries through to certifications, SOD, everything downstream.

On-prem AD group tasks don't work in Lifecycle Workflows. Only cloud-native groups are supported. If your on-prem AD is still the source of truth for app authorization, that gap is yours to manage.

Audit logs default to 30 days. Custom reports mean exporting to Azure Data Explorer: KQL expertise, separate infrastructure, ongoing maintenance. For SOC 2, HIPAA, or SOX, you need that pipeline built before the audit, not during it.

Iden governs at the entitlement level. Long-term audit retention included. Contractor and NHI lifecycle native, no Logic Apps, no B2B guest workarounds.

Capability	Entra	Iden
Permission granularity	Group / access package	Entitlement-level
On-prem AD group tasks in workflows	Not supported	Supported
Audit log retention	30 days (default)	Long-term
Custom reporting	Needs Azure Data Explorer	Built in
Contractor lifecycle	B2B guest workaround	Native
NHI lifecycle	Separate SKU required	Native
SOD entitlement-level coverage	Microsoft apps only	Full stack
Proxy access requests	Not supported	Supported
Reviewer decision revision	Not supported	Supported
Engineering dependency	High	None

3. Two taxes: E5 tax + SCIM tax.

The capability gaps are one thing. Cost is where they show up twice: once on your Microsoft invoice, once at every SaaS renewal.

Entra ID Governance runs about \$13/user/mo: P2 plus the Governance step-up, or P1 plus the full add-on. That's before either tax hits.

Most mid-market companies are on M365 E3, not E5. E3 includes Entra P1, no PIM, no full access reviews, no Lifecycle Workflows. Getting governance means upgrading to E5. That's a \$21/user/mo delta. More per user than Iden's full price.

E5 tax: M365 E3 to E5 to unlock governance

Headcount	Monthly delta	Annual delta
300 users	+\$6,300/mo	+\$75,600/yr
500 users	+\$10,500/mo	+\$126,000/yr
1,000 users	+\$21,000/mo	+\$252,000/yr

Before the SCIM tax. Before guest billing. Before Workload ID Premium for service accounts.
Iden: \$7.50/user/mo. No E5 required.

SCIM tax: then the SaaS upgrades hit

The SCIM tax: ~70% of your stack locks SCIM behind enterprise tiers. You upgrade just to automate provisioning, on top of the E5 upgrade you already paid.

App	Standard plan	Enterprise (for SCIM)	Jump
Salesforce	Starter (\$25/u/mo)	Enterprise (\$175/u/mo)	7x
Figma	Professional (\$16/u/mo)	Enterprise (\$90/u/mo)	5.6x
GitHub	Team (\$4/u/mo)	Enterprise (\$21/u/mo)	5.3x
Slack	Pro (\$7.25/u/mo)	Business+ (\$15/u/mo)	2.1x
Notion	Plus (\$10/u/mo)	Enterprise	?
Linear	Basic (\$10/u/mo)	Enterprise	?

On a 300-person team, the Figma upgrade alone is **+\$22,200/year** just to unlock automated provisioning. Iden works on standard plans. No upgrades required.

Then guest billing: \$0.75/guest/mo, Azure-billed, since January 2026. Service accounts: separate SKU. Workload ID Premium at \$3/workload/mo. Not in E5 or Entra Suite.

Iden starts at \$7.50/user/mo. No E5 tax. No SCIM tax. No guest tax. No NHI SKU.

Pricing comparison

	Entra	Idea
Starting price (full governance)	~\$13/user/mo*	\$7.50/user/mo
Microsoft E5 required	Yes (or P2 + add-on)	No
SCIM tax	~70% of your stack	No
Guest / contractor billing	\$0.75/guest/mo	Included
NHI governance	Separate SKU (\$3/workload/mo)	Included
Audit retention	30 days (Azure Monitor extra)	Long-term included
Implementation time	Weeks	Under 24 hours
SaaS spend optimization	Not available	Built in

*P2 (\$9) + Governance step-up (\$4), or P1 (\$6) + full Governance add-on (\$7).

Common questions

We're already on Entra for SSO. Does this replace it?

No. Entra keeps doing SSO and MFA. Idea handles governance on top: non-Microsoft apps, contractors, service accounts. Different tools, different jobs.

We're on E5. Why not just use the Governance add-on?

If your stack is pure Microsoft, worth trying. When you hit non-Microsoft SaaS, contractors, or service accounts you need to govern, you'll find the gaps. Idea governs what Entra can't reach.

What about our on-prem Active Directory?

Idea governs on-prem systems natively, including AD. Entra's Lifecycle Workflow group tasks don't work for groups synced from on-prem AD. Cloud-native groups only.

How does Idea handle B2B guests, contractors and partners?

For Idea, it's just another identity. Native lifecycle management and governance without the \$0.75/guest/mo extra.

What does implementation actually look like?

Iden's onboarding team handles it. First 15 apps in under an hour. Roll out in batches. Custom connectors shipped in 48 hr. Your team doesn't touch it.

We have a SOC 2 audit in 3 months. Is that enough time?

Yes. Most customers are audit-ready within 2 weeks of go-live. Evidence in real-time, not capped at 30 days or locked behind an Azure Monitor pipeline you need to build first.

See how your Entra ID governance gaps close with Iden.

No deck. No discovery call. Just the product, with your apps, your IdP, your actual environment.

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