

Solution Scorecard for Colocation Provider: QTS

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Initiatives: [Data Center Infrastructure for Technical Professionals](#)

Based on Gartner's 154 criteria for colocation providers, QTS received an overall solution score of 53 out of 100. I&O technical professionals should leverage this assessment and the companion tool when selecting colocation providers.

Overview

Key Findings

- QTS received an overall solution score of 53 out of 100. It meets 58% of Gartner's Required criteria, 48% of Preferred criteria and 26% of Optional criteria making it a scenario-specific option for technical professionals.
- QTS scored 100% in required network services and 100% in preferred and optional security services.
- Customers often have favorable remarks when sharing their QTS experience with Gartner. QTS reports a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 80+ for service and support. This is validated by Gartner's [Peer Insights](#) "Would Recommend" score of 94% and customer reviews.
- QTS is not listed as an Amazon Web Services (AWS) Direct Connect partner for any of its European or APAC regions. It is not listed as a Microsoft Azure ExpressRoute partner or Google Cloud Interconnect partner for any region. QTS connectivity can be achieved with Megaport or PacketFabric, depending on availability and the region.

Recommendations

I&O technical professionals evaluating colocation providers for data center consolidation and modernization initiatives should:

- Select QTS for use cases with North America presence requirements, robust network and security services, and if they are focused on green and sustainability initiatives.

- Prioritize QTS when selecting colocation facilities and services where sustainability, customer experience and a robust service delivery platform are needed.
- Accelerate hybrid transformation initiatives by leveraging a combination of QTS's North America presence, SDN connectivity, customer support, security and compliance, and disaster recovery services.

What's New in This Update

This research complements the [Solution Criteria for Colocation Providers](#). This is the first version of the QTS Solution Scorecard.

Note: We have a new format for our Solution Scorecards. A complete version of the current criteria and scoring is available at [Gartner CloudScores](#). You can also access the data in the downloadable Excel file. Note, however, that the CloudScores data may not be available until several days after this document's publication.

[Download the Excel Tool for This Document](#)

Bottom-Line Assessment

Gartner's bottom-line assessment is that QTS is suitable for many traditional colocation use cases. We recommend evaluating QTS for hybrid and hyperscale colocation scenarios.

This Solution Scorecard is scored based on Gartner's [Solution Criteria for Colocation Providers](#), which provides a detailed explanation of requirements for each of our 154 criteria.

Organizations are selecting colocation providers based on advanced services to enable innovation and drive business value from the core to the edge. Colocation providers are no longer a simple hoteling experience for your infrastructure. Location, resilience, space, power and cooling are still core considerations but connectivity to partners through a marketplace, direct connectivity to the major cloud providers and bare metal services are now key criteria. Traditional colocation requirements are still critically relevant. They are highly applicable to traditional colocation use cases and do not adequately account for the rise in infrastructure modernization, edge use cases and cloud adoption.

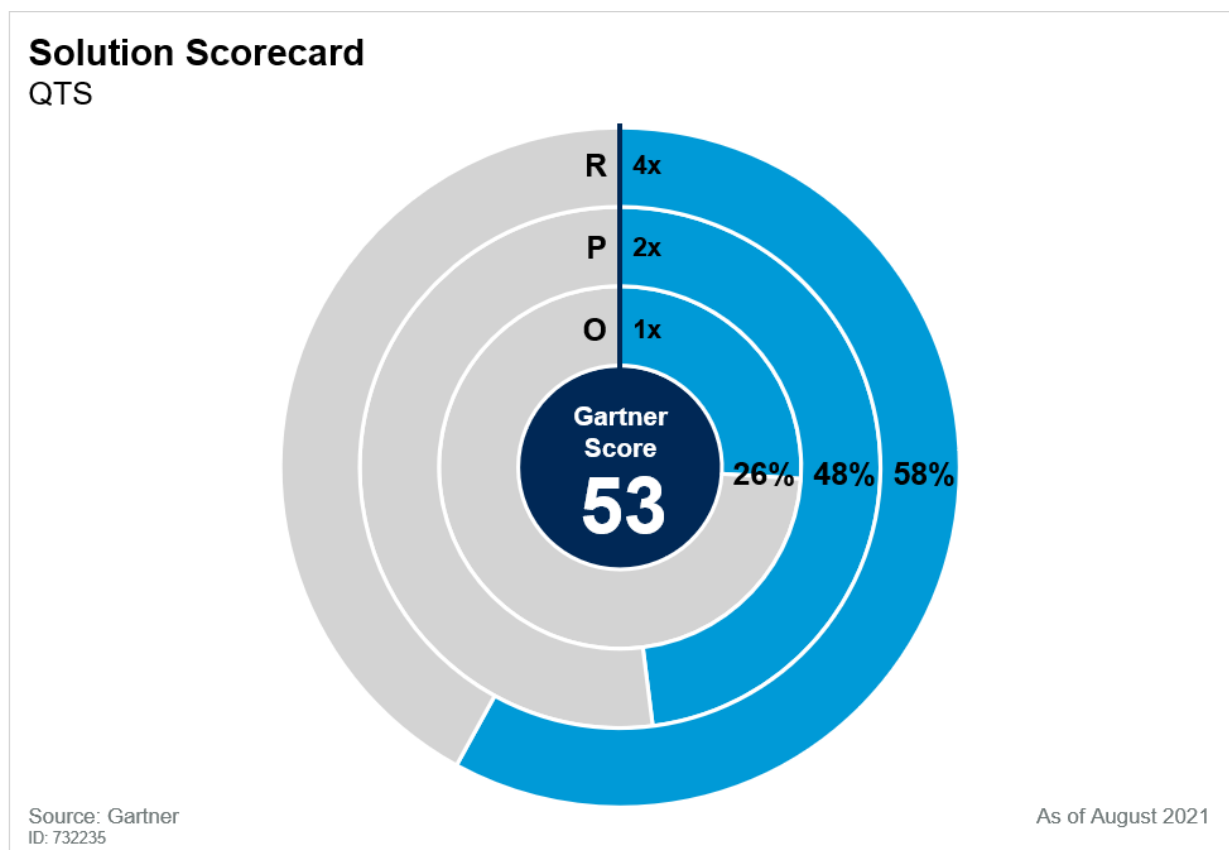
The list of criteria can be thought of as a starting point and is not exhaustive. The criteria selected in this research are based on numerous customer conversations considering colocation providers as part of an overall infrastructure transformation strategy. Infrastructure location, cloud connectivity, migration services, network services, disaster recovery, security and pricing are often the key inflection points for customers. Technical professionals should modify the toolkit to meet their needs by adding, deleting and recategorizing criteria as required.

Solution Scorecard and Feature Snapshot

Figure 1 shows that QTS has an overall solution score of 53 out of 100. It also shows that QTS meets 58% of Gartner's Required criteria, 48% of Preferred criteria and 26% of Optional criteria.

[Download all graphics in this material.](#)

Figure 1: Solution Scorecard – QTS



Gartner

Note: The above scores, and those in the downloadable Excel file, are accurate as of the published date. The scores will be periodically updated, and the updated data will be available on [Gartner CloudScores](#). Note, however, that the CloudScores data may not be available until several days after this document's publication.

Solution Scorecard Calculation

Gartner uses a weighted system to calculate the overall score:

- Required criteria are assigned a weight multiplier of 4
- Preferred criteria are assigned a weight multiplier of 2
- Optional criteria are assigned a weight multiplier of 1

Clients should adjust these criteria and their weighting to reflect their organization's needs using the companion Microsoft Excel workbook. The How To worksheet provides guidance on using and modifying the workbook. To omit weighting, clients should assign a multiplier value of 1 to all criteria.

Solution Criteria Framework

Gartner developed the Solution Criteria framework to address the current and future needs of our clients. This framework categorizes market features as:

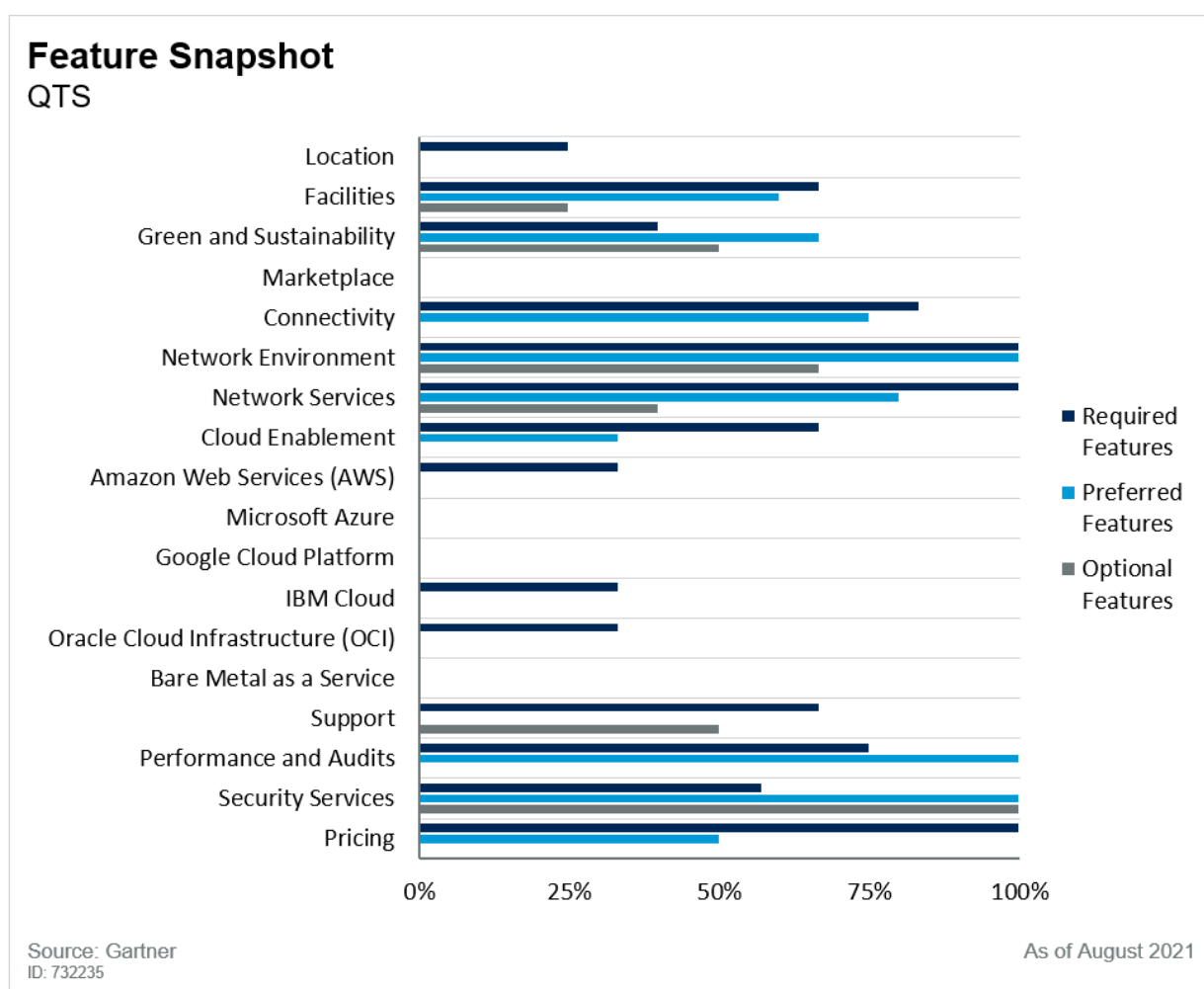
- **Required:** Colocation and interconnection capabilities that are essential to developing, deploying, and managing mission-critical, secure and compliant production applications. Missing Required capabilities may be deal breakers that require specific risk mitigation or render the provider unsuitable for some use cases.
- **Preferred:** Capabilities that are necessary, but not vital, to a broad range of use cases. Missing Preferred capabilities will often need to be supplemented with other solutions. Most customers will have at least one application that requires these capabilities.
- **Optional:** Capabilities that are beneficial for specific use cases but which many customers will not need. In many cases, these capabilities represent emerging technologies.

In order to receive a “Yes” rating for any criterion, the provider must meet all of the defined functionality in the solution criteria definition – not just a partial subset. Likewise, the service must be generally available to all customers, with formal pricing and SLAs clearly defined and documented. Anything less than meeting the above two conditions will result in a “No,” even if the provider meets a partial set of the criteria.

Technical professionals should take note of these key details because the explanations reveal what functionality exists and possible workarounds for missing capabilities.

Figure 2 shows the QTS feature snapshot.

Figure 2: Feature Snapshot – QTS



Note: The above scores, and those in the downloadable Excel file, are accurate as of the published date. The scores will be periodically updated, and the updated data will be available on [Gartner CloudScores](#). Note, however, that the CloudScores data may not be available until several days after this document's publication.

Strengths

QTS has the following key strengths:

- **Network environment:** QTS met 100% in all Required and Preferred criteria in the network environment category. Network environments and the associated criteria are often heavily weighted by many organizations when selecting a colocation facility. Developing and scaling networking initiatives that service infrastructure and data-everywhere environments play a critical role in today's multicloud/hybrid core-to-edge environments.
- **Network services:** QTS scored well by meeting 100% of the required network services requirements. QTS meets the criteria of six nines of network service SLA, network on demand (NoD), load balance, network firewalls and distributed denial of service (DDoS) mitigation. QTS Switchboard is a software-based networking service that enables the customer to order and provision connectivity through its SDP or published APIs. The service is fully automated and supports multiple virtual connections over one physical port. It supports multiple connectivity use cases, including connectivity within a QTS data center, connectivity between QTS data centers, connectivity to a carrier hotel and connectivity to CSPs primarily through an interconnect provider such as Megaport or PacketFabric.
- **Facilities:** QTS receives scores high in the facilities, green and sustainability, security services, and connectivity categories. QTS offers customers an excellent choice when seeking highly dense network environments that are secure yet eco-friendly. QTS offers service transports between a customer's cage to another QTS-managed distribution panel located within the same QTS-managed data center. QTS has commitment to green and sustainability initiatives of procuring 100% of its power from renewable energy sources by 2025 and is pursuing green building certifications in 90% of its facilities by 2025.

- Customer satisfaction: Gartner customers report that they have received excellent support in general by QTS. Customers report they are happy with QTS support and have provided excellent customer satisfaction results despite missing Gartner's remote hands service SLA of 1 hour or less criterion. QTS is focused on service delivery, with a self-reported NPS score of 80+. This correlates with Gartner's Peer Insights "Would Recommend" score of 94. QTS services a wide range of customers with high-touch requirements. It also supports hyperscalers, large-scale wholesale, all forms of enterprise, federal/state/local, and a variety of private and public cloud strategies.
- Performance and audits: QTS met 75% of Required and 100% of Preferred criteria in the performance and audits category. QTS Service Delivery Platform includes a dashboard for tracking environmental metrics. Metrics are ingestible via API and in situations where thresholds are breached on an ongoing basis, customers are entitled to contract termination without liability for termination fees. QTS logs all customer configuration changes, and these logs are available for customer consumption. Additionally, QTS facilitates the conducting of audits by customers or third-party contractors.
- Software-defined platform: Service delivery platform (SDP) is a software-defined, colocation orchestration platform enabling visibility into QTS data centers. Customers can view and self-manage their environment in real time through the use of APIs. Its API-first approach allows the SDP platform to be extensible. Customers can access QTS facilities and cloud infrastructures, products, and operational systems data. SDP applications include 3D Mapper, Asset Manager, Notification Center and Data Hall Sensor Analytics. Live heat maps allow customers to see outages in real time in addition to areas with potential and existing performance issues.

Weaknesses

QTS has the following key weaknesses:

- Limited global presence: International presence is limited. QTS openly acknowledges the need for globalization to address multinationals and has been growing steadily in new geographies. For example, it recently purchased two data centers in the Netherlands.

- Nascent marketplace: Has a nascent connectivity marketplace presence. Its newly announced software-defined interconnection platform, Switchboard, is designed to facilitate a marketplace ecosystem but does not currently offer any form of connectivity discovery or customer service capabilities. QTS is developing a marketplace for connectivity discovery and customer services, but it was not generally available at the time of this scorecard publication.
- No bare-metal-as-a-service support: QTS does not offer bare metal as a service offerings for critical infrastructure such as networking, servers or storage.
- Limited to no native cloud onramp support: QTS is not listed as an AWS Direct Connect partner for any of its European or APAC regions. It is not listed as an Azure ExpressRoute partner or Google Cloud Interconnect partner for any region. QTS connectivity can be achieved with Megaport or PacketFabric, depending on availability and the region.

Reasons to Deploy

Gartner recommends QTS in situations where:

- You are looking for a premiere North America colocation and megascale data center solution with dense connectivity options, a wide range of network services and high-touch customer service.
- You require a network environment with a range of SD-WAN, MPLS, transports, dark fiber, subsea cables and cloud access that can scale on-demand.
- You require network services with six nines of availability, NoD, load balancing, network firewalls and distributed DDoS mitigation.
- You prefer a service delivery platform that provides remote management with real-time visibility and control of your environment to enable better business decisions faster.

Reasons to Not Deploy

Gartner recommends refraining from QTS in situations where:

- You are a global organization requiring infrastructure presence in Europe, APAC or the rest of the world.

- Your application requirements require direct in building connectivity to multicloud web service connectivity such as Azure ExpressRoute, Google Cloud Interconnect or IBM Cloud Direct Link.
- You currently require, or think you might require over the next three to five years, access to on-demand, single-tenant bare-metal-as-a-service offerings for compute and storage.
- If you need access to a robust active marketplace of vendors and partner offerings.
- If you need managed cloud migration services.

Analysis

QTS Realty Trust is a premier colocation and megascale data center company offering dense connectivity options, a wide range of network services and high-touch customer service offerings. QTS addresses hyperscalers, enterprises and government entities providing data center space that is secure, offering compliant infrastructure and robust connectivity solutions. QTS supports over 1,200+ customers across 23 locations worldwide: 21 in North America and two in Europe. Within North America it has approximately 7 million square feet of owned data center space. QTS has six build-to-suit locations and six hosted private cloud locations. It has one AWS Direct Connect node in Chicago and four AWS cloud ramp locations. It also offers managed AWS and Azure services.

QTS has a unique focus on customer service as reflected by its self-reported Net Promoter Scores (NPSs), averaging 80+ for ongoing service and 95 for implementation. This is validated by its Gartner Peer Insights “Would Recommend” score of 94% and customer reviews. It measures NPS scores weekly and publishes the scores on a rolling 12-month basis on its website. NPSs are leveraged internally to improve the overall customer experience. Its focus on customer service and measuring service performance to enhance the customer experience should result in long-term customer retention. QTS reports having a low customer churn rate.

QTS provides customers with a colocation orchestration platform called Service Delivery Platform (SDP). This platform enables customers to monitor and manage QTS data centers. By leveraging SDP and the associated APIs, customers can programmatically make business decisions through the use of real-time analytics for power, cooling, humidity and other environmental information. QTS Switchboard enables self-service, one-to-many provisioning from a single port. It provides for online ordering 24/7 and includes the physical cross-connect to enable the service. The service enables local, metro, carrier, long-haul and cloud connectivity to AWS, Azure and Google through interconnect partners like Megaport and PacketFabric. A key feature of Switchboard includes single order and a single bill from QTS. Additional SDP tools include CloudCheckr, an on-demand cost management and tracking solution for AWS and Azure cloud resources. Power Analytics and Asset Manager provide customers with greater control, increased security and adherence of compliance. QTS recently released the smart family of SDP applications leveraging automation, AI and machine learning techniques.

Required Features for Production

QTS meets 58% of Gartner's Required colocation criteria. Note that all features of the criteria must be met to receive a "Yes" score. Partial fulfillment is scored as a "No."

Some missing criteria that organizations typically require include:

- **Location:** QTS does not meet all the requirements of this criterion. QTS has limited international presence with limited reach in EMEA and no presence in APAC or the rest of the world (ROTW).
- **Marketplace:** QTS has a nascent connectivity marketplace presence. SDP and Switchboard are designed to accelerate their marketplace ecosystem.
- **Native Cloud Onramp:** QTS does not meet the requirements of this criterion with the exception of being AWS Direct Connect, Oracle Cloud Infrastructure FastConnect and IBM Cloud Direct Link partners in North America. QTS does not offer native cloud onramping for Microsoft Azure and Google Cloud. Connectivity for these services can be achieved via PacketFabric and Megaport.
- **Pricing:** QTS does not meet the requirements of this criterion. QTS pricing is not publicly available on its website. It does not offer detailed billing data through its service portal.

Preferred Features for Production

QTS meets 48% of Gartner's Preferred colocation criteria. Note that all features of the criteria must be met to receive a "Yes" score. Partial fulfillment is scored as a "No."

Some missing criteria that organizations typically require include:

- **Bare Metal as a Service:** QTS does not offer BMaaS for servers or storage as specified by the criteria.
- **Cloud Enablement:** QTS does not offer any cloud migration services or provide customers with reference architectures/templates to assist with planning and implementation of cloud services.
- **Infrastructure Procurement:** QTS does not offer the ability to acquire/procure server, storage or networking on the customer's behalf. QTS does offer procurement services on behalf of its customers for infrastructure (such as racks, cable trays, ladder racks and conduits) on a contract basis.
- **Professional Services:** QTS does offer professional services.
- **Disaster Recovery Service:** QTS does not offer DRaaS. QTS has an "Organizational Resilience Plan," designed to assist customers with their disaster recovery initiatives. The company does not, however, offer a cross-region disaster recovery service (DRaaS) or offer disaster recovery consulting services. However, this feature is planned for future releases. QTS data centers can be leveraged as a DR site for customers who wish to implement their own DR solution.

Optional Features for Production

QTS meets 26% of Gartner's Optional colocation criteria. Note that all features of the criteria must be met to receive a "Yes" score. Partial fulfillment is scored as a "No."

Some missing criteria that organizations typically require include:

- **Disaster Recovery Consulting:** QTS does not offer DRaaS. QTS has an "Organizational Resilience Plan," designed to assist customers with their disaster recovery initiatives. The company does not, however, offer a cross-region disaster recovery service (DRaaS) or offer disaster recovery consulting services. However, this feature is planned for future releases. QTS data centers can be leveraged as a DR site for customers who wish to implement their own DR solution.

- **Network Environment:** QTS does not meet the requirements of this criterion. At the time of this assessment, they do not provide global billing support.
- **Network Function Virtualization:** QTS does not offer network function virtualization capabilities or offer services which support virtual customer premises equipment.

Evidence

All ratings in this research are based on vendor surveys or briefings, publicly available sources and interactions with Gartner clients who have used QTS.

Recommended by the Authors

Some documents may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

[Solution Criteria for Colocation Providers](#)

[2021 Planning Guide for Cloud and Edge Computing](#)

[Preparing for Data Center Consolidation and Migration Projects](#)

[Solution Comparison for Colocation Providers](#)

[Toolkit: RFP Template for Colocation Provider Selection and Comparison](#)

[Your Data Center May Not Be Dead, but It's Morphing](#)

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