



QUESTION AND ANSWER

CISCO METRO ETHERNET SERVICES AND SUPPORT

This guide provides common questions and answers regarding services and support for Cisco Metro Ethernet.

Q. What do you mean by planning, design, implementation, operation, and optimization (PDIOO) services?

A. Cisco Systems® has defined a package of services specifically aligned to establish success in each of the PDIOO phases of your network lifecycle.

Cisco® focuses on meeting service providers' "new-build" requirements through flexible service component activities and deliverables mapped to each of the planning, design, and implementation (PDI) phases.

For instance, in the design phase Cisco provides a service for design validation. This service uses best practices and experience with large Metropolitan (Metro) Ethernet networks to help proactively identify and address issues in the design that could incur significant costs due to performance or scalability issues.

When a service provider's Metro Ethernet network is operational, Cisco addresses that service provider's requirements through service components within the operate and optimize phases.

In the optimize phase, for example, Cisco has a performance and engineering optimization component to establish reporting metrics that are continuously captured and reported against baseline metrics to make sure the network is performing to agreed specifications and adhering to best practices.

Additionally, Cisco offers customers curriculum planning and Metro Ethernet-focused training. The training is available through predefined classroom sessions as well as customized, instructor-led training designed to increase the skills of your technical resources.

Q. What does Cisco offer that I cannot get from a partner?

A. Cisco has experience with the many architectures that service providers worldwide are deploying. Cisco is experienced with large deployments of business-to-business architectures such as Layer 2 VPNs, the migration from point-to-point to multipoint-to-multipoint architectures (VPLS – Virtual Private LAN Service), and also with the complexities introduced by data, voice, and video services on a Metro Ethernet network infrastructure services offered to individual end customers.

Cisco Metro Ethernet services have been applied in production environments as well as in extensive lab environments within Cisco. Activities such as design guides, deployment guides, and scalability best practices are results of intensive testing by Cisco engineers. The benefits of this experience can be applied to your network to reduce the learning curve in service provider implementations.

Cisco has designed and helped operate some of the largest Metro Ethernet networks in the world and Cisco engineers understand the pitfalls and the critical gaps that need to be addressed.

Q. What advantage would Cisco resources have over my experienced network operations resources?

A. The transformation from time-division multiplexing (TDM) architectures to packet data architectures can require a significant learning curve for service providers' operations resources.

The Cisco Advanced Services team has collected and developed many tools, templates, and best practices based on challenges designing and implementing some of the largest Metro Ethernet environments in the world.

The information about performance, scalability, and security is continually updated, and Cisco engineers have the benefit of sharing customer experiences in a global environment. Up-to-date on the various solutions architectures, Cisco engineers typically act as a “first customer” to the solutions teams. Having experience with varied Metro Ethernet architectures, Cisco engineers can quickly identify important implications and remedies for selected architectures.

Q. I already have a Cisco Advanced Services contract; are issues related to Metro Ethernet covered under that contract?

A. If the services you require for your Metro Ethernet network are already covered under the existing contract, coverage is provided for your Metro Ethernet network. The added complexities of end-user services being implemented over your Metro Ethernet network may require services in addition to your existing contract. Your Cisco service account manager is best positioned to evaluate your needs based on service requirements and can assist you with establishing and using the services most suitable for your situation.

Q. Are these services delivered by Cisco?

A. Cisco delivers most of the Cisco Advanced Services for Metro Ethernet. For onsite resource-intensive type activities such as implementation and “rack and stack,” Cisco engages with industry-recognized partners for these areas of specialization.

Q. Why does Cisco offer a services package just for Metro Ethernet?

A. Extensive market research found that specific requirements for the Metro Ethernet technology, complexity, and lifecycle support justify the need to package a service offer targeted to service providers entering this emerging market.

Although Ethernet is a widely used technology in a LAN environment, the introduction into the WAN and the use of Ethernet as a transport for various end-user services is complex. Additionally, the migration or deployment of a multipoint-to-multipoint architecture requires consideration of deployment issues that affect scalability and performance issues that Cisco has already tested in its lab environment.

Cisco Advanced Services helps you address the complexities of these services over a common infrastructure.

Q. Can I decide which services I might need after a project starts and purchase them on a time-and-materials basis as needed?

A. The decision to engage in this manner often means that some critical component will be overlooked or you will likely need unplanned additional resources to fill in an unforeseen gap. Operational complexity, provisioning, and management, as well as thorough preparation and planning of a Metro Ethernet project, must not be underestimated. Unforeseen issues and delays can mean missing a market or revenue opportunity. Cisco experience and project methodology with Metro Ethernet networks means that potential issues from the design through operations phases are addressed in the planning phase to minimize gaps and the need for unplanned resources.

The ability to offer a multitude of services to the end customer is a primary benefit of a Metro Ethernet architecture. Providing these value-added end-customer services depends on a well-architected and well-designed foundation infrastructure.

Q. Can I use the Cisco systems engineer’s design, and call technical support when there is a problem?

A. Cisco systems engineers typically provide services that assist customers with a high-level understanding of their technology requirements. These services generally are related to presales activities. The Cisco Advanced Services for Metro Ethernet are centered on providing comprehensive PDIOO support. The Cisco Advanced Services resources have a depth of expertise that can address postsales activities and ongoing operational requirements that may be required at multiple sites.

PDI services are critical particularly when:

New enterprise customers are buying the services beyond the original planned demand

You need to ensure best practices are being followed for ongoing performance and optimization of the network

New software features are available and a timely software deployment is critical

A software strategy is required during the introduction or upgrade of new equipment

Q. The Metro Ethernet solution is simply a group of Ethernet switches how difficult can it be to build and support?

A. Metro Ethernet encompasses many protocols and technologies, often including managed services; that is, data, voice, and video services, on a common platform. It is very difficult to integrate these services together as an end-to-end solution on a shared infrastructure. The migration of customers on existing point-to-point platforms to an Ethernet architecture and the migration to multipoint-to-multipoint architectures are also critical considerations. Security is also a critical issue, because Ethernet was originally designed to facilitate communication between local users.

Q. How do the Metro Ethernet services improve my time to revenue or cost savings?

A. The PDI activities follow a proven process based on adherence to a methodology and practices captured from experience. The Cisco Advanced Services for Metro Ethernet can speed the deployment of your network and increase the rate of service adoption by helping you meet your market windows. Through the operations and optimization phase, Cisco Advanced Services for Metro Ethernet improves efficiencies of your network operation, thus allowing you to realize a faster and more profitable return on investment (ROI).

Q. We have owned the type of equipment specified by the Cisco solution architecture and I have a staff with expert-level experience on the equipment. Do we still need Cisco Advanced Services for Metro Ethernet?

A. The network services offered over the hardware architecture are the primary benefits of the Cisco solution. The Cisco solution comprises of flexible components that allows selection from a variety of architectures. Cisco Advanced Services engineers have experience defining and implementing a variety of architectures for service providers throughout the world. This experience working on your network means the service provider will be able to avoid common pitfalls and understand the implications of their architectural decisions. Although your resources are critical in building the solution, Cisco resources can assist with the complexity of running the many services over a common transport.

For more information about Cisco Metro Ethernet Services and Support, contact your local service account representative.



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