



What Is the Value of a Unified Communications Firewall?

Firewall protection for call control and unified communications applications is often dictated as a mandatory requirement in corporate security policies and is becoming established as a best practice. Firewall platforms can provide security services that enhance security without impacting the performance and availability of the unified communications system.

How Do I Select a Firewall for Unified Communications?

Cisco offers a range of firewall platforms to deliver additional security to unified communications deployments. Each of these platforms is positioned to provide key security services for differing deployments. It is important to understand the positioning for each firewall platform and the specific security services they can provide. Security services designed specifically for unified communications deployments can be broken down into four main categories:

- Access control and Network Address Translation (NAT)
- Protocol conformance
- Application inspection and control
- Encryption services

Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliance

The Cisco® ASA 5500 Series delivers advanced multifunction firewall services that protect unified communications systems, combined with a range of encryption solutions. The Cisco ASA 5500 Series is the premier Cisco firewall for enterprise campus and remote-access unified communications deployments, and is the most appropriate solution for protecting Cisco Unified Communications Manager clusters and providing a secure gateway for remote or mobile devices.

Cisco Firewall Services Module

The Cisco Firewall Services Module (FWSM) is optimally deployed in shared data center architectures that are based on the Cisco Catalyst® 6500 Series Switches and Cisco 7600 Series Routers. Although not as feature-rich as Cisco ASA 5500 Series appliances and not positioned for encryption services, the FWSM is an acceptable alternative for enterprises that require a common firewall platform to support voice and data in a single device.

Cisco IOS Firewall

Cisco IOS® Firewall provides protection for voice gateways and for Cisco Unified Communications Manager Express deployments. This cost-effective, integrated firewall and voice solution is commonly positioned in commercial and midrange enterprise solutions. Within larger deployments, Cisco IOS Firewall can play a complementary role to other firewall platforms by providing firewall services at the enterprise branch and for SIP trunk environments.

Cisco Firewall Unified Communications Feature Comparison

	Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliance	Cisco Firewall Services Module	Cisco IOS Firewall
Stateful Inspection (Access Control)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • SIP UDP • SIP TCP • SCCP • RTP/RTCP • H.323 v1-4 • H.323 RAS • H.323 T.38 • MGCP • TAPI/JTAPI • CTI-QBE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (with FWSM 4.0) • SIP UDP • SIP TCP • SCCP • RTP/RTCP • H.323 v1-4 • H.323 RAS • H.323 T.38 • MGCP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (with Cisco IOS Software Release 12.5 and later) • SIP UDP • SIP TCP • SCCP • RTP/RTCP • H.323 v1-4 • H.323 RAS • H.323 T.38
Unified-Communications-Aware NAT	Yes	Yes	No
Protocol Conformance	Yes	Yes	Yes
Application Inspection and Control	Yes (SIP and SCCP)	Yes (FWSM 4.0)	On the roadmap
Remote Access/Secure Connectivity	Yes (IPsec, SSL, DTLS)	No (firewall only)	Yes (IPsec and SSL in the Cisco IOS Advanced Security feature set)
ASA Phone Proxy	On the roadmap	No (use Cisco Unified Phone Proxy)	No (use Cisco Unified Phone Proxy)
TLS Proxy	Yes (Cisco ASA Software Release 8.0)	No (firewall only)	No (on the roadmap)
Positioning	Campus and enterprise Internet edge for remote access	Data center: Unified communications and data applications	Branch office and commercial customers (Cisco Unified Communications Manager Express + Cisco IOS Firewall)



What Are the Benefits of Deploying Cisco Firewall Solutions for Unified Communications?

Cisco firewall solutions address the unique security needs of unified communications deployments, and provide the following benefits:

- Conformance to policy and regulatory requirements for privacy
- Secure deployment of the broadest range of unified communications solutions
- Secure extension of unified communications solutions to remote offices and teleworkers
- Protection against threats aimed specifically at unified communications applications and protocols
- Elimination of lag time between new unified communications services and related security services

For More Information

More information about Cisco firewall solutions for unified communications deployments can be found at <http://www.cisco.com/go/secureuc>.

Why Cisco?

Cisco is the market leader in network security solutions. Because we build both network and security solutions, we are uniquely able to provide the highest level of integration and collaboration between solutions, as well as security support for the latest business-critical applications and services, such as unified communications deployments.