



# Cisco Integrated Customer Experience

## Cisco Services FAQs

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## SPBase, SMARTnet, Video, and Software Application Support

### Cisco SPBase and Cisco SMARTnet Services

**Q. What is Cisco® SPBase and SMARTnet® support?**

A. As part of the Cisco Technical Support Services portfolio, the Cisco SPBase and the SMARTnet programs offer innovative customer solution services that provide enhancement and maintenance support resources during the operational lifetime of Cisco products.

**Q. What is included with Cisco support services for Scientific Atlanta products?**

A. Cisco SPBase and SMARTnet support includes:

- Software support on the licensed operating system software
- Software updates, including maintenance, minor, and major releases (does not include feature upgrades)
- Access to the Cisco Video Technical Assistance Center (VTAC) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Registered access to Cisco.com, for easy access to online technical information and service request management

**Q. What is Cisco Video Software Support Service?**

A. Video delivery system software is at the core of managing and delivering key services to your customers and partners. The Cisco Video Software Support Service (formerly Network Support Agreement) is essential to keeping these business-critical applications available, secure, and operating at an optimum performance level. The service delivers timely, uninterrupted access to Cisco's latest video delivery system software updates and extensive support resources, helping you maximize business continuity, improve your competitiveness, and make the most of limited resources through increased productivity.

**Q. Will there be Advanced Hardware Replacement available for SP Base and SMARTnet service?**

A. Advance Replacement (AR) will be available on selected components once the SA products have been integrated into the Service Supply Chain.

**Q. What is included in Cisco's Return for Repair service?**

A. Cisco will provide Return for Repair service, whereby you return failed hardware to Cisco for repair. Cisco will use commercially reasonable efforts to repair or replace, at Cisco's discretion, and return the product to you.

**Q. Why should a customer buy Cisco support services?**

A. By covering Cisco products with a Cisco SPBase or SMARTnet contract, a customer can:

- Maximize product and network availability, reliability, and stability
- Reduce the cost of network ownership by using Cisco expertise, knowledge, and availability
- Increase return on investment (ROI) by having access to Cisco operating system software enhancements
- Better manage scarce internal expert resources at all locations
- Improve productivity and revenue per employee with access to tools and technical support documentation that can increase self-sufficiency and technical knowledge

**Q. How do Cisco support services differ from SciCare services?**

A. The services, people, and basic service coverage are comparable.

**Q. Who can purchase SPBase, SMARTnet, SAS, or Video Software Support services?**

A. Cisco direct customers can purchase SPBase, SMARTnet, SAS, or Video Software Support services. Customers who purchase through Cisco partners can purchase SMARTnet and/or SAS.

Cisco CBR partners can purchase and resell SMARTnet and/or SAS. Cisco 2-tier partners follow typical Cisco process and purchase through distributors.

**Q. How can you purchase SPBase, SMARTnet, SAS, or Video Software Support services?**

- A. You may purchase SPBase, SMARTnet, SAS, or Video Software Support services directly from Cisco through your Cisco account manager, or SMARTnet and SAS Service through our global network of highly qualified Cisco partners. You may find a partner near you through the Cisco Partner Locator at [www.cisco.com/go/partnerlocator](http://www.cisco.com/go/partnerlocator).

**Q. What support is provided through Cisco.com?**

- A. Cisco.com includes interactive consulting tools, a database, and knowledge transfer resources. It also includes product documentation.

Online troubleshooting tools and support resources include:

- Software Advisor: Features information and compatibility assistance
- TAC Case Collection: Identifies and troubleshoots common problems
- My Tech Support: Offers personalized webpage with customized links
- Output Interpreter: Provides problem resolution recommendations
- Peer-to-peer online forums: Enables sharing with others in your industry
- Technical Support Newsletter: Keeps you up-to-date and informed

These and other help tools and resources are available on the Technical Support and Document website at [www.cisco.com/techsupport](http://www.cisco.com/techsupport).

**Q. If a product is already covered under the standard Cisco warranty, is there an advantage to choosing Cisco support services during the warranty duration?**

- A. Warranties are short-term commitments for Cisco to repair and/or replace defects in Cisco products. They are limited in duration and the support that they offer. The Cisco SPBase and SMARTnet programs provide more robust levels of support than is available under a Cisco warranty and can be purchased to deliver support and maintenance for at least five years after first product shipment. Services available under a Cisco SPBase/SMARTnet service contract that are not covered under a warranty are:

- Return for Repair
- Continuous technical support through Cisco TAC
- Latest software updates
- Registered access to Cisco.com
- Advanced Hardware replacement (where available)

**Q. Are Cisco software updates included with the Cisco SPBase or SMARTnet contract?**

- A. Yes. For Cisco operating systems, all software updates for licensed feature sets for the customer's covered platform are part of the basic program. Software updates include bug fixes, maintenance, and minor and major releases within a feature set. There is no additional charge for updates as long as the product remains under Cisco SPBase or Cisco SMARTnet coverage. Upgrades to new licensed feature sets are not included.

See question below on Cisco Software Application Support for details.

**Q. Are feature set upgrades included in the Cisco SPBase or SMARTnet programs?**

- A. No. A feature set upgrade is a separately licensed and priced software release that contains enhanced configurations and/or features that provide additional capabilities. These feature set upgrades are not available as part of a Cisco SPBase or Cisco SMARTnet program.

**Q. What software is included with Cisco SPBase or SMARTnet?**

A. Customers are entitled to all operating system software updates within their licensed feature sets for their covered devices. The coverage includes updates to operating system bug fixes, maintenance, and minor and major releases (within existing feature sets).

**Q. What are the problem severity levels and associated responses?**

A. To help ensure that all service requests are reported in a standard format, Cisco has established service request severity definitions as indicated below. These severity levels may not be applicable across all market segments and technologies. Severity levels and escalation guidelines may also vary based on the existing applicable agreement.

- **Severity 1 (S1):** Network is “down,” or there is a critical impact to business operations. Customer and Cisco will commit all necessary resources around the clock to resolve the situation.
- **Severity 2 (S2):** Operation of an existing network is severely degraded, or significant aspects of business operation are negatively affected by inadequate performance of Cisco products. Customer and Cisco will commit full-time resources during normal business hours to resolve the situation.
- **Severity 3 (S3):** Operational performance of the network is impaired, although most business operations remain functional. Customer and Cisco are willing to commit resources during normal business hours to restore service to satisfactory levels.
- **Severity 4 (S4):** Customer requires information or assistance with Cisco product capabilities, installation, or configuration. There is little or no effect on business operations.
- **For S1 or S2 service requests:** if the customer’s production network is down or severely degraded the customer must contact the Cisco TAC via telephone. Cisco TAC engineers are assigned immediately to S1 and S2 service requests to help keep the customer’s business operations running smoothly.

**Q. What is the escalation process?**

A. If a customer does not feel that there is adequate forward progress, or feels that the quality of Cisco service is not satisfactory, Cisco encourages the customer to escalate the problem ownership to the appropriate level of Cisco management by asking for the VTAC Duty Manager.

**Note:** Severity 1 and 2 escalation times are measured in calendar hours, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Severity 3 and 4 escalation times correspond with standard business hours.

## **Cisco Software Application Support**

**Q. What is Cisco Software Application Support?**

A. Cisco Software Application Support (SAS) is a support program for Cisco software, and may or may not be combined with SPBase or SMARTnet. It includes VTAC support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year access to Cisco.com, and software updates (maintenance and minor releases, not major releases).

**Q. Is Software Application Support plus Upgrades (SASU) available for the Cisco Video & Connected Home products?**

A. No. SASU is not available.

**Q. How are users notified of new software releases under the SPBase/SMARTnet and/or SAS contract?**

A. New releases are announced in product bulletins posted on Cisco.com under the Product Alert Tool (<http://tools.cisco.com/Support/PAT/do/ViewMyProfiles.do?local=en>) and in the Technical Support Newsletter, which users can sign up for at [www.cisco.com/techsupport](http://www.cisco.com/techsupport).

- Q. How does a customer obtain software updates included with SPBase/SMARTnet or SAS support?**
- A. Cisco software updates are available for download from the Cisco.com Software Center at [www.cisco.com/en/US/support/index.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/support/index.html) or can be requested by contacting Cisco VTAC support.
- Q. Can a customer purchase Cisco SPBase or SMARTnet services for a Cisco device that has not been covered previously by a service contract?**
- A. Yes, the customer must be using the current version of the software. If the software is one or more releases old, the customer must first purchase the current release before Cisco SMARTnet services can be purchased for each device. Additionally, the product must be inspected by Cisco to ensure all components and software are approved and in working condition.
- Q. Where are Cisco support services available?**
- A. Cisco SPBase/SMARTnet support is available throughout the world with some service-level exceptions in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Cisco is continually expanding its service areas. In addition, the Cisco Service Availability Matrix (SAM) tool can be used to verify the available product services worldwide. Information is available at <http://tools.cisco.com/apidc/sam/search.do>.

## Warranty

- Q. What is the Cisco warranty?**
- A. Warranties are short-term commitments for Cisco to repair and/or replace defects in Cisco products. They are limited in duration and the support they offer. Also, warranties do not include Cisco TAC support, software updates, or any of the additional benefits obtained under a support service contract. It is the responsibility of Cisco to repair and/or replace the Cisco product during the warranty duration.

Elements covered under a Cisco warranty are:

- **Hardware:** This guarantees that the piece of hardware will be free of defects in material and workmanship under normal use, or it will be repaired or replaced by Cisco.
- **Software:** This guarantees that the physical media are free from defects, or they will be replaced by Cisco. Also, the warranty guarantees that the software generally conforms to the published specifications for the product. The warranty is explicitly “as is,” and no new releases are included.

**Video and Connected Home products** are warranted for one to five years; software is warranted for 90 days.

- Q. What technical support services are available for the Cisco Video and Connected Home products?**
- A. For customers with a direct purchase relationship with Cisco, Cisco offers SPBase Return for Repair, SMARTnet Return for Repair, and Software Application Support (SAS) for software products.

For customers who purchase through partners, Cisco offers under SMARTnet, Cisco Core-Support Migration Service (TAC, web, and online access: Year 1; full SMARTnet: Year 2), SMARTnet Return for Repair, and Software Application Support for software products.

## Cisco VTAC Support

- Q. What is VTAC?**
- A. VTAC stands for the Video Technical Assistance Center and provides technical support for Cisco video products including, but not limited to, transport, encoding, and muxing for SP customers.

**Q. What service does the Cisco VTAC offer?**

A. The Cisco VTAC provides service contract holders with:

- **Expert assistance:** To complement your in-house resources, the Cisco VTAC employs a highly skilled staff who offer you years of video and networking experience, including many customer support engineers with networking and CCIE® certifications as well as research and development engineers. Cisco engineers hold more than 800 U.S.-issued patents, are often asked to speak at technical conferences, and have authored numerous industry white papers and books.
- **Fast problem resolution:** The Cisco VTAC provides constant measurement of customer satisfaction and time-to-resolution tracking.
- **High level of knowledge:** The Cisco VTAC offers depth and breadth of expertise with Cisco devices and operating system software, as well as a broad range of networking environments (such as voice, video, and data communications) and technologies (such as access dial, Cisco IP telephony, LAN switching, optical networking, security, content delivery networks [CDNs], storage area networks [SANs], IP routing, and wireless). Cisco TAC engineers have a minimum of five years of industry experience, and Cisco provides continuous training to try to help ensure our technical staff stays current with the latest technologies.
- **Support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year in multiple languages:** By email or telephone, the Cisco TAC is there when you need it. In addition, to support the TAC, Cisco uses a powerful virtual lab, equipped with all Cisco devices and Cisco software versions, as an invaluable engineering resource and knowledge base for training, product information, and testing of network problems.

**Q. How does a customer or partner open a case with Cisco TAC?**

A. Customers with an SPBase, SMARTnet or SAS service contract can open a case through Cisco.com ([www.cisco.com/en/US/support/index.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/support/index.html)). Customers or partners must have their Cisco service contract number or hardware serial number and a Cisco.com user login when opening a case via the web.

SPBase/SMARTnet or SAS customers with Severity (Priority) 1 or 2 cases, or customers covered by warranty only, must call TAC. For more information on opening a technical support case and for regional TAC telephone numbers, refer to Cisco.com at: [http://www.cisco.com/en/US/support/tsd\\_cisco\\_worldwide\\_contacts.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/support/tsd_cisco_worldwide_contacts.html).

Customers can also open technical support cases by sending an email to [tac@cisco.com](mailto:tac@cisco.com).

**Q. Is support available from the Cisco TAC even without a service contract?**

A. Yes. The Cisco TAC will help you if you do not have a Cisco service contract, but you will be requested to pay a "per-incident fee" (otherwise known as Time and Materials), or to purchase a service contract. TAC support is not included with warranty.

**Q. How does the Cisco TAC prioritize support service requests?**

A. Cisco processes allow for customers to designate the severity of every service request reported. Priorities are based on the assigned severity levels.

**Q. Who is responsible for returning defective parts that have been replaced through the SPBase/SMARTnet program?**

A. The Cisco SPBase/SMARTnet customer or partner is responsible for obtaining a return-materials authorization (RMA) number to return the product. Policies outside the United States and Canada might vary by region. Contact your local Cisco representative for details about the policy in your region.

## Advanced and Other Services

### Q. Does Cisco offer Advanced Services?

A. Yes. Using the Cisco Lifecycle Services approach, Cisco and its partners provide a broad portfolio of services that address all aspects of deploying, operating, and optimizing a customer's network. The advanced services leverage the statement of work (SOW) to define the deliverables. A training curriculum is also available that can be tailored to fit individual customer needs. More information on Cisco's Advanced Services is available at [http://cisco.com/en/US/products/svcs/ps2961/serv\\_category\\_home.html](http://cisco.com/en/US/products/svcs/ps2961/serv_category_home.html).

### Q. Describe the available user manuals and product documentation.

A. User manuals and other product documentation are available on Cisco.com at [www.cisco.com/public/support/tac/documentation.html](http://www.cisco.com/public/support/tac/documentation.html).

### Q. How is product "end of life" handled?

A. Products reach the end of their product lifecycle for a number of reasons. These reasons may be due to market demands, technology innovation and development driving changes in the product, or the products simply maturing over time and being replaced by richer technology functionality. Although this is an established part of the overall product lifecycle, Cisco recognizes that end-of-life milestones prompt companies to review the way in which end-of-sale and end-of-life milestones affect the Cisco products in their networks. With that in mind, we have set out below our end-of-life policy to help customers better manage their end-of-life transition and to understand the role that Cisco can play in helping to migrate to alternative Cisco platforms and technology.

As a general rule, Cisco will provide six months' notice of the affected product's end-of-sale date and/or the last day when the affected product can be ordered. This notice will appear on Cisco.com site ([www.cisco.com/en/US/products/prod\\_end\\_of\\_life.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/prod_end_of_life.html)). Customers are encouraged to visit this site regularly because it contains useful information regarding Cisco's end-of-life program. Sign up to receive notification here: [www.cisco.com/cgi-bin/Support/FieldNoticeTool/field-notice](http://www.cisco.com/cgi-bin/Support/FieldNoticeTool/field-notice).

Access to Cisco's Technical Assistance Center (TAC) will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for a period of five years from the end-of-sale date for hardware and operating system software issues and for a period of three years from the end-of-sale date for application software issues.

Spares or replacement parts for hardware will be available for a period of five years from the last date of sale. Cisco will provide spares and replacement parts in accordance with our Return Materials Authorization (RMA) process.

Where available, Cisco will provide bug fixes, maintenance releases, work-arounds, or patches for critical bugs reported via the TAC or Cisco.com website for a period of five years from the end-of-sale date for operating system software and for a period of three years from the end-of sale date for application software. Bear in mind that it may be necessary to use a software upgrade release to correct a reported problem.

The customer will need to help ensure that they have a current and fully paid support contract with Cisco. Customers should contact their Cisco Support Account Manager regarding fees payable during the end-of-life period, so that Cisco can provide support right through the end-of-life transition period.

Below are guidelines that should be followed to help ensure that customers receive effective support for the affected products within their network:

- For hardware or software that is not covered under a service contract, customers may add the product(s) to a current service contract or purchase a new service contract until twelve months after the last date of sale date.
- Service contracts that have not been renewed or have lapsed after twelve months of the last date of sale date are not renewable.

- Renewal of the customers' service contracts will generally be available until the last year of support, but will not extend beyond the last date of support.

The following bulleted items provide the definitions to some terms related to end of life:

- **End-of-product lifecycle:** Process that guides the final business operations associated with the product lifecycle. The end-of-life process consists of a series of technical and business milestones and activities that, once completed, make a product obsolete. Once obsolete, the product is not sold, manufactured, improved, repaired, maintained, or supported.
- **End-of-sale date:** Last date to order the product through Cisco point-of-sale mechanisms. After this date, the product is no longer for sale.
- **Hardware:** Physical product and its physical components.
- **Operating system software:** Cisco operating system software that runs on Cisco hardware.
- **Application software:** Cisco software that requires the presence of some operating system software.
- **Software maintenance support:** Time period that Cisco may release any software maintenance releases or bug fixes to the software product. After this date, Cisco Engineering will no longer develop, repair, maintain, or test the product software.

**Q. Does Cisco provide onsite supply of critical spare parts?**

- A.** No. Customers or partners may purchase spares if needed for critical applications. It is standard process for the customer or partner to inform Cisco of changes to their service contract.



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