Cisco Solution Support

Software Subscription Coverage Expansion

Internal and Partner FAQ

August 2020

Overview

Q. What update is being made to Cisco® Solution Support?

A. We are continuing to expand Solution Support coverage to include software subscriptions associated with select Cisco hardware. In this update, Solution Support coverage will now extend to our enterprise networking architecture, specifically Cisco Catalyst® Switch products, Cisco routing products, and Cisco wireless products, joining Cisco collaboration products, data center networking switches, and Tetration appliances in our security architecture as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Solution Support coverage for software subscriptions associated with Cisco hardware

Products	
Enterprise networking	
NEW: Coverage available August 16, 2020	
Cisco Catalyst Switches	Cisco Catalyst 2000, 3000, 4000, 6000, 9000 Series Switches
Cisco Wireless	Cisco Catalyst 91xx Series Access Points, Cisco Aironet 1815, 1830, 1840, 1850, 2800, 3800, 4800 Access Points, Cisco Aironet 1800S Series Network Sensor
NEW: Coverage available September 21, 2020	
Cisco Routers	ISR1000, ASR1000, 4200ISR, 4300ISR, and 4400ISR
Previously available	
Collaboration	
Cisco Calling Cisco Meetings Cisco Contact Center	All Cisco Collaboration products

Data center	
Cisco Data Center Networking	Cisco Nexus 3000, 9300, 9500 Series Switches[1]
Security	
Cisco Tetration	Cisco Tetration Appliance and Virtual Editions[2]

[1] Solution Support is embedded in the software subscriptions associated with the noted Nexus Series Switches.

[2] Solution Support is embedded in the on-premises software subscription for Tetration. You will not see a standalone software product for this solution in our ordering systems.

Q. Why is Cisco extending Solution Support coverage to software subscriptions?

A. Companies worldwide are increasingly relying on software to perform core functions in their IT infrastructure. They are purchasing that software through subscriptions to meet budget and operations requirements. As Cisco continues our transition to selling software subscriptions, we are adding Solution Support coverage for software subscriptions associated with Cisco enterprise networking routers, switches, and wireless products (as detailed in this document) where it was not a purchase option before in order that customers continue to get complete coverage across their solution deployment.

Q. What is the difference between Software Support Basic that may be included with my purchase of a software subscription and Solution Support?

A. The difference is Solution Support's advanced features, which are added to those of Software Support Basic. Solution Support features and benefits include:

PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT
Feature: Cisco solution expert centralizes support across a multivendor or multiproduct deployment
Benefit: Expedites connection to an expert on the deployment; eliminates your need to identify which provider to call

DEEP ARCHITECTURE EXPERTISE
Feature: On Cisco hardware and software products and integration with Solution Support Alliance Partner products within and across our technology architectures
Benefit: Often results in immediate resolution of solution- or product-level issues

PRIORITY RESPONSE

Feature: Prioritization over product cases of the same severity within an engineer team; a 30-minute response objective for severity 1 and 2 cases

Benefit: Helps minimize IT and business disruption

PRODUCT SUPPORT TEAM COORDINATION

Feature: We orchestrate Cisco and Solution Support Alliance Partner teams throughout issue resolution, bringing a solution-level perspective

Benefit: Eliminates your need to manage complex issues and multiple support teams; helps maintain interoperability within the deployment

MANAGES CASE TO RESOLUTION

Feature: Accountability for actively managing issues involving multivendor or Cisco products, from first call to resolution.

Benefit: This accountability is especially critical for multivendor, multiproduct issues, as no single product support team is responsible for the solution as a whole, and the Solution Support engineer provides the continuity required to help ensure an efficient resolution process.

NO TRIAGE REQUIRED

Feature: Eliminates your need to isolate an issue to a specific product before contacting us for help

Benefit: Expedites connection to a solution expert for issue resolution or if you need guidance, information, etc.

BROAD SOLUTION VIEW

Feature: We can look beyond your original case for areas to optimize or known issues to course correct or resolve if a new issue is uncovered

Benefit: Helps further minimize IT and business disruption

RETAIN DIRECT CONTACT WITH ALLIANCE PARTNERS

Feature: Contact Alliance Partners for their product support, information, or guidance as needed on their products

Benefit: Flexibility to interact with the experts you need, when you need them

ONE SERVICE, PORTABLE COVERAGE

Feature: Your purchase of one service, Solution Support, includes Cisco Smart Net Total Care or Software Support Basic; and when you purchase Solution Support for a product in a solution, let's say a Catalyst Switch, the service coverage stays with the switch if you decide to deploy it in other solutions.

Benefit: This makes it easy receive a side variety of features in one ordering or renewal motion; and while you must purchase Solution Support for each Cisco product in a deployment to get service entitlement, you don't need to repurchase it for products that may have been covered in a previous deployment.

PREDICTABLE COSTS

Feature: Available on our standardized price list and ordering tools

Benefit: Helps you more accurately forecast and plan for expansions or new deployments

Q. How will Solution Support be priced for software subscriptions?

A. For most subscription software products, Solution Support will be priced at a 15% of the annualized software subscription list price. As it has in the past, pricing may vary by technology architecture (collaboration, data center, enterprise networking, IoT, security, and service provider). Please see the [Cisco Commerce List Price Catalog](#) for pricing on the solution you are quoting to your customer.

Q. What incentives exist for Cisco and Partners to sell Solution Support for software subscriptions?

A. To help accelerate adoption of the expanded Solution Support coverage, Cisco will provide a promotional discount to customers for new attach and renewals. From August 16, 2020 through January 23, 2021, Cisco and Partners can offer a 25% discount off the price list reflected in the resale agreement for eligible products. The promotional discount will be automatically applied to orders. All newly created service SKUs under the SSTCM GSP are eligible for the promotion. Additional standard incentives will be stackable with this promotion:

- [Cisco Services Partner Program](#) standard services discounting
- Services attach / premium / multi-year / renewal rebates
- [Value Incentive Program Annuity and 34 renewal rebate](#) (product/software)

Q: What happens if I have presented an enterprise networking deal to my customer before August 16th and now it requires adding Solution Support to the switching and wireless software subscriptions?

A: Any new deals that include enterprise networking switching and wireless hardware and its associated software that have been created, approved and presented to the customer before August 16th, but are closing after August 16th, can proceed with a 100% discount on the new software subscription SKUs that are required to complete the deal. The same applies to renewals, with an important distinction below on timing.

The 100% discount has been pre-arranged with the DSA. Submit any requests indicating the addition of Solution Support to software subscriptions that did not appear in the original quote, whether new or renewing.

New deals – time parameters:

- The quote protection aligns with the 30-day price protection from the time the new quote is validated. If a new quote is validated 29 days before August 16th, there is a one-day window for submission to the DSA for the 100% discount. If a new quote is validated 1 day before August 16th, there is a 29-day window for submission to the DSA for the 100% discount. Calculate accordingly to determine your submission window so you can take advantage of the discount.
- This offer does not apply to deals created after August 16th.

Renewals – time parameters:

- The quote protection aligns with the 60-day price protection from the time the renewal quote is validated. If a renewal quote is validated 59 days before August 16th, there is a one-day window for submission to the DSA for the 100% discount. If a renewal quote is validated 1 day before August 16th, there is a 59-day window for submission to the DSA for the 100% discount. Calculate accordingly to determine your submission window so you can take advantage of the discount.

Note: New and renew deal definitions and associated quote validity for customers or Partners is governed by Cisco's Global Renewal Policy.

Q. The new Success Tracks portfolio is available for Cisco Campus Network solutions, as is Solution Support. Is there guidance on what I should position as the lead offer?

A. For our Campus Network solutions, we are directing all internal sales teams and Cisco Partners to lead with Success Tracks. If that offer does not resonate with your customer,

then position Solution Support. For all other Cisco enterprise networking solutions where Success Tracks is not yet available, lead with Solution Support. Learn more about Success Tracks for Campus Network solutions on the SalesConnect hubs for [Cisco sales teams](#) and [Cisco Partners](#).

Requirements

Q. If my customer is purchasing or renewing Solution Support on their hardware devices, should they also purchase Solution Support for the software subscriptions associated with their hardware?

A. Yes. As always, for customer entitlement to this solution-level service, Solution Support must be attached where it's available to all Cisco hardware and software in a deployed solution. In some transactions, our commerce tools will automatically add Solution Support to the software subscriptions.

Note: Depending on the system used to transact the purchase, there may be no option to remove Solution Support from the software subscription and retain it on the hardware. It is a requirement that Solution Support be applied to all applicable Cisco products used in a covered solution.

Q. Is Solution Support mandatory for Cisco software subscriptions?

A. No. But Solution Support is the right kind of support for software subscriptions associated with hardware use in a multiproduct, multivendor solution deployment. Solution Support is the default service in Cisco ordering systems for most of our hardware and software. Customer preferences can override this default.

Refer to table 2 below to see what kind of Cisco Support Service is embedded, optional, or the only option within the technology architectures where coverage for software subscriptions is available (collaboration, enterprise networking, and security).

Table 2 Support Service attach options and requirements

	Technology architecture	Solution Support	Software Support Basic	Software Support Enhanced	Software Support Premium
New	Enterprise networking	• Optional for routing, switching, and wireless software and hardware	• Embedded in routing, switching, and wireless software subscriptions	• N/A	• N/A
Current	Collaboration	• Optional for collaboration software and hardware • Includes additional features only available for collaboration solutions	• Embedded in collaboration software subscriptions	• Optional for most collaboration software subscriptions • Includes underlying Solution Support [3]	• Optional for most collaboration software subscriptions • Includes underlying Solution Support [3]
Current	Data center networking	• Embedded in data center networking software subscriptions with no other support service option	• N/A	• N/A	• N/A
Current	Security	• Embedded in Tetration software subscriptions with no other support service option	• Embedded in security software subscriptions	• Optional for security software subscriptions	• Optional for security software subscriptions

[3] Solution Support is part of Support Services for Collaboration and offers unique features only for collaboration solutions. Find complete details in the [Cisco Support Services for Collaboration service definition](#).

Comparing Support Services

Q. Which Support Services are available for solutions within our technology architectures?

A. See table 3 below for a high-level view of which Support Services are eligible for solutions within our technology architectures.

Table 3 Cisco Support Services mapping to our technology architectures

Technology architecture	Software Support Basic	Software Support Enhanced	Software Support Premium	Solution Support (Nested service, Includes SWSS Basic)
Data center	●			●
Enterprise networking	●			●
IoT	●			●
Security	●	●	●	● [4]

For the collaboration architecture, there is a different service "nesting" structure and additional Solution Support deliverables. Refer to the resources section below for links to more information.

Technology architecture	Software Support Basic	Solution Support (Nested service, Includes SWSS Basic)	Software Support Enhanced (Nested service, Includes Solution Support)	Software Support Premium (Nested service, Includes Enhanced)
Collaboration	●	●	●	●

[4] Limited coverage in the first quarter of CY20, with additional software subscription coverage to be added going forward.

Q. Why would my customer choose Solution Support instead of Software Support Basic, which is included with the software subscription. And for Cisco collaboration and security solutions, why would I choose Solution Support instead of Software Support Enhanced or Premium?

A. Solution Support is purpose-built for multiproduct, multivendor solution environments. While product support can be appropriate for customers who have a large, well-trained IT system administration, most customers purchasing multiproduct, multivendor Cisco solutions choose to rely on Solution Support's high value features, such as a primary point of contact with architecture expertise across hardware and software from Cisco and other technology providers, and priority response times.

Q. How do support services available for Cisco collaboration and security solutions compare to Solution Support?

A. Table 3 shows the service options available for Cisco collaboration and security software.

Solution Support offers additional, unique features for Cisco collaboration solutions. Find information on SalesConnect for [Cisco sales teams](#) and [Partners](#), and on Cisco.com for [customers](#).

Support Services for Cisco security software is available separately from Solution Support. Find information on SalesConnect for [Cisco sales teams](#) and [Partners](#), and on Cisco.com for [customers](#).

Enterprise Agreements

Q. Can Solution Support be ordered for software subscriptions as part of an Enterprise Agreement?

A. Yes, as we make Solution Support available for software subscriptions, then it will be made available through Enterprise Agreements. Note that there will be a lag between ordering a la carte and via an Enterprise Agreement.

Ordering

Q. When will I be able to order Solution Support for the software subscriptions associated with enterprise networking routing, switching, and wireless?

A. Ordering for routing, switching, and wireless software subscription products will be available on August 16, 2020.

Q. Who can order Solution Support for software subscriptions?

A. Solution Support is available through direct sale and through Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners that are authorized to resell Cisco Branded Services.

Q. How do I order Solution Support for software subscriptions?

A. The same way you order Solution Support today for Cisco hardware and perpetual software licenses: Attach to each Cisco software subscription and its associated Cisco hardware product in the solution for customer entitlement to solution-level support. The new GSP for software subscriptions is "SSTCM" and will be reflected in the ordering tool beginning August 16, 2020 (figure 1).

Figure 1 Example of Solution Support attach to enterprise networking software subscription

Q. Does the duration of the Solution Support contract for the software subscription need to match the duration of the software subscription itself?

A. No, but with a caveat. While it is recommended that the duration of Solution Support contract match the duration of the software subscription, it is not a general requirement. For enterprise networking switching and wireless products, the duration of the Solution Support contract on the software subscription can be shorter than that of the software subscription itself, but it cannot not exceed the duration of the software subscription. However, in all cases, the duration of the Solution Support contract on the software subscription should match the duration of the Solution Support contract on the associated hardware. Enterprise networking routing products may be an exception to this general rule. For a period of time, our ordering tools may require that the Solution Support service contract term match the software subscription term. As we move through 2020, the Cisco IT team is working to address this exception to align the duration rules for routing with those for switching and wireless products.

Q. Can I co-term Solution Support on subscriptions with other Solution Support contracts?

A. Yes, with a possible exception for routing products. Refer back to this document at the beginning of August 2020 for the final business rule on co-terming."

Q. Can customers upgrade to Solution Support after initial product point of sale or during the middle of the contract term of another Cisco service?

A. Customers can upgrade to Solution Support after initial product point of sale or during the middle of the contract term of another Cisco service—as well as at renewal—through standard processes.

Q. If Cisco now requires that Solution Support must be attached to both hardware and its associated software subscription, what will happen when I renew Solution Support, when up until now, it has only been attached to hardware in the deployment?

A. The customer will be required to attach the service to both hardware and its associated software subscriptions on new purchases and upon renewal. When the customer renews their Solution Support attached to hardware, they will also be required to attach Solution Support to the software subscription that was purchased with the hardware.

Partners

Q. As a partner, if I am purchasing Partner Support Service on hardware devices, should I purchase Solution Support on subscriptions associated with that hardware?

A. Cisco branded Solution Support coverage for hardware and software subscriptions is an option if you do not offer a solution-level service as part of your services practice. If you do offer your own brand of support, you can take advantage of embedded Software Support Basic that is included in the subscription, and sell your solution-level service to cover both the software and hardware based on your purchase of PSS on the hardware.

Q. As a partner, why would I position one Cisco Support Service over another to my customers? What if I already offer solution-level and / or software-level support?

A. Cisco does not compete with our partners. You may decide to resell a Cisco service, or deliver the type of service(s) your customer requires yourself.

- You may already offer a solution-level and software-level service that can supplement Software Support Basic, which comes embedded with the software subscription.

- If your services practice focuses on professional services and software-level support but you have not invested in developing a solution-level service that delivers expertise for the many Cisco and Solution Support Alliance Partner products in a customer's deployment, you can opt to resell Cisco Solution Support. In this case, you will have new opportunities to attach this service to software subscriptions that did not exist before.

In any case, between Cisco technology, Cisco or Partner services, and your role as a strategic trusted advisor, our shared customers receive a complete solution to address their IT and business needs.

Q. As a partner, how does selling Solution Support on software help grow my business?

A. As Solution Support expands to cover software subscriptions as noted in this document, you have new monetization opportunities by reselling this high value service. At a broader level, Solution Support can help you:

- Increase recurring revenue streams
- Reduce post-sale issues based on proper service aligned to solution purchase
- Help your customers realize a 44% average reduction in time to complex issues resolution vs. product-level support
- Deepen your trusted advisor status with your customers

This service also eliminates your time and resources needed to:

- Isolate an issue before opening a case
- Manage multiple product support teams during complex issue resolution

More information

Q. Where can I get more information on Solution Support?

A. Visit the following links for information on Solution Support and our expanding coverage of software subscriptions:

- [Solution Support Communities group](#)
- Solution Support on SalesConnect – [Internal sales briefcase](#)
- Solution Support on SalesConnect – [Partner briefcase](#)

For information on Support Services for Collaboration, which includes Solution Support featuring an expanded set of deliverables, visit:

- Support Services for Collaboration Communities group – [Internal](#)
- Support Services for Collaboration on SalesConnect – [Partner](#)