

# **Cisco** Channel Partner Program



## **Overview for Cisco Channel Partners**

## Discover the Enhanced Cisco Channel Partner Program



### **Enabling Partner Growth, Differentiation and Profitability**

The industry is changing, customer needs are changing, and the way Cisco Systems® and our partners drive growth and differentiate ourselves is changing. Customers are demanding integrated technology skills breadth and depth, and a full lifecycle services approach to their network and business strategy. An industry evolution is underway, in which intelligence is migrating to the network and the network is becoming the integrated, intelligent platform where communications, applications, and IT services all work together as a system. This is creating unprecedented growth opportunities for Cisco® and you, our partner.

To meet customer needs and help you capture this dynamic growth opportunity, the industry-leading Cisco Channel Partner Program has evolved to help you accelerate growth, differentiate your business, and increase your profitability.

The enhanced program enables you to extend your capabilities to be a provider of broad, integrated networking solutions, highly specialized solutions, or both—and rewards you for doing so. The Cisco Lifecycle Services approach has been integrated to help you successfully deploy, operate, and optimize Cisco solutions to strengthen your customer relationships and enhance profitability.

One thing that hasn't changed is Cisco's commitment to reward partners for their loyalty to Cisco and value-add to customers—through enhanced economic incentives, new ways to capitalize on the Cisco brand, preference with the Cisco sales organization, co-marketing opportunities and funding, and a variety of service enablement programs.

Cisco is leading, evolving, and investing heavily in our Channel Partner Program. Partners that evolve and lead with us have unprecedented opportunities to grow with us. Only with Cisco's Channel Partner Program and unique solutions portfolio can you maximize your growth, differentiation, and profitability.

## The Cisco Channel Partner Program Evolution

The Cisco Channel Partner Program will continue to offer certifications, specializations, and incentives. You will be able to build on your existing investments while developing key customer-driven capabilities.

### Expanding Skill Breadth

Your investment in developing broader, integrated technology skills will enable you to deliver the integrated networking solutions customers are demanding and enable you to broaden your role and open new markets.

### Increasing Skill Depth

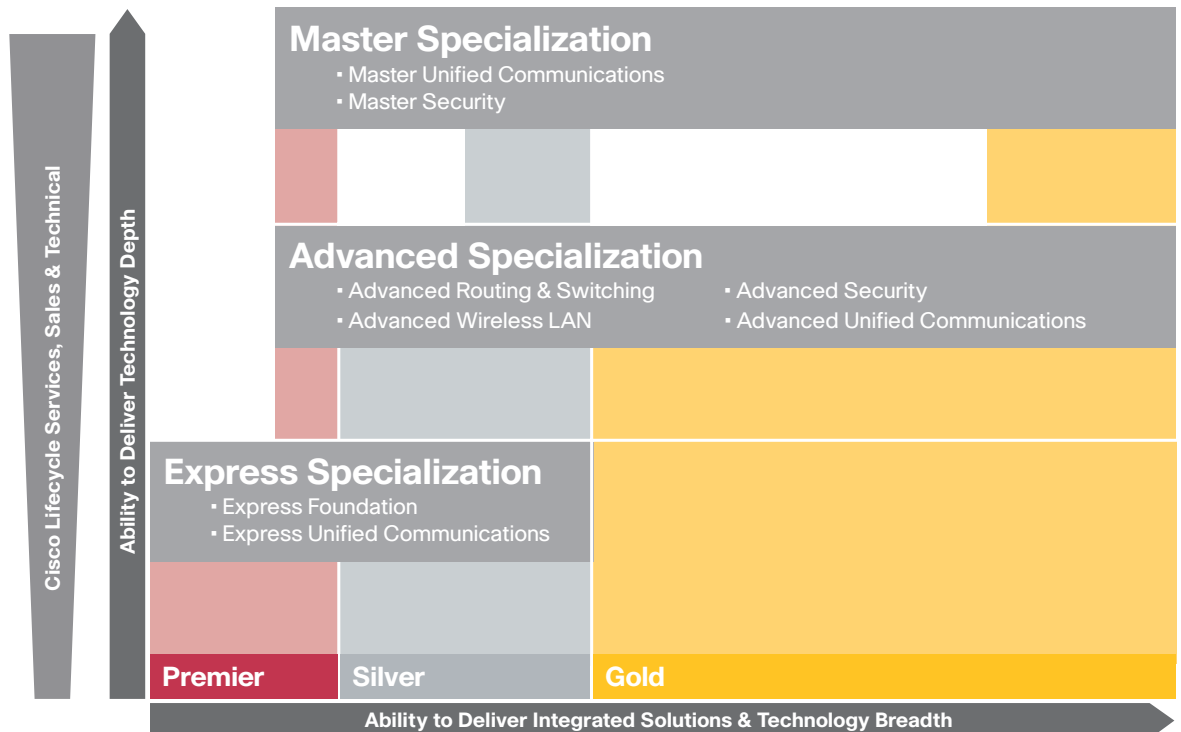
Your focus on developing deeper technology skills will enable you to further differentiate your business by offering complex advanced technology solutions, vertical solutions, and applications.

### Enabling the Cisco Lifecycle Services Approach

Incorporating the Cisco Lifecycle Services approach will help you to define the activities you need to successfully deploy and operate Cisco solutions, to optimize technology performance, and to reduce your deployment risk. As a result, you can strengthen your customer relationships and enhance profitability by implementing or integrating these proven, repeatable processes into your services business.

## Program Structure

Figure 1. Certification and Specialization Framework



## Certifications

The program continues with Premier, Silver, and Gold Certification levels. Certification level directly reflects a your technology skills breadth across key technologies, to ensure your ability to deliver integrated solutions. Certification is no longer utilizing a points-based model.

**Premier Certification** requires the Express Foundation Specialization.

**Silver Certification** requires the Express Foundation Specialization, plus either of the two following options:

- Any two advanced specializations
- Express Unified Communications Specialization plus one advanced specialization, excluding the Advanced Unified Communications Specialization

**Gold Certification** requires all four of the following: Advanced Routing & Switching, Advanced Security, Advanced Unified Communications, and Advanced Wireless LAN Specializations.

## Specializations

Three levels of specialization have been established to directly reflect your depth of sales, technical, and services expertise in a particular technology. There will be six base specializations for you to choose from that will count toward your achievement of certification. The six base specializations are listed below in the Express and Advanced Specialization levels.

**Express Specialization:** Two Express Specializations are available to you. The Cisco Express Foundation Specialization provides integrated training on routing and switching, wireless LAN, and security technologies. This training is required for all Premier and Silver Certified Partners. The Express Unified Communications Specialization is also available qualifying you in the area of converged data/voice/video networking.

**Advanced Specialization:** Partners can achieve Advanced Specialization in unified communications, security, wireless LAN, and routing and switching technologies. Your certification level determines how many specializations are required.

**Master Specialization:** Partners with a highly qualified practice in a given technology can achieve Master Specialization, regardless of certification level. This enables you to deliver more complex business solutions, and the new Master Specialization branding provides more opportunities for differentiation.

Figure 2. Specializations Overview

Base (6) Specialization	Optional (4) Specialization	Retired (7) Specialization
Advanced Unified Communications	CRM-Express Solution	IP Communications Express (March 14, 2006)
Advanced Routing & Switching	Global Commerce	IP Communications (March 14, 2006)
Advanced Security	Security VPN/Firewall Express	Routing & Switching (March 14, 2006)
Advanced Wireless LAN	Storage Networking	VPN Security (March 14, 2006)
Express Foundation		Wireless LAN (March 14, 2006)
Express Unified Communications		Teleworker Solution (December 20, 2005)
		Converged Business Solution (December 20, 2005)
<b>Base =</b>	Specializations are part of the new Certification program rules	
<b>Optional =</b>	Specializations are not included in the new Certification program rules	
<b>Retired =</b>	Retirement announced on date noted good until expiration	

Figure 2 shows the base and optional specializations in the enhanced Channel Partner Program as well as the retired specializations.

## Integrated Cisco Lifecycle Services

New integrated Cisco Lifecycle Services training offers you an understanding, by technology, of identified repeatable, proven processes for selling, delivering, and supporting Cisco solutions. Applying the Cisco Lifecycle Services approach will help you improve your deployment success, customer satisfaction, and productivity, providing you with more opportunities to strengthen customer relationships and improve profitability. All Cisco Lifecycle Services training for Express and Advanced specializations, along with Steps to Success tools, are free of charge.

## Program Requirements

### Training Requirement

Our technical training offerings have been enhanced and simplified. New sales and Cisco Lifecycle Services training courses are now available free of charge to enhance your sales effectiveness and your application of Cisco Lifecycle Services practices. More than 40 percent of all courses are offered through e-learning, which improves your productivity and makes it easier to do business with Cisco.

### Individual Certification Requirement

The individual certification requirements will now be determined by specialization roles, except for the CCIE® requirements for Silver and Gold Certification, which remain the same. To help strengthen your sales and technical skills and reduce risk related to turnover of your trained employees, we are introducing role dedication. Each base specialization role must be satisfied by a unique individual. Individuals satisfying roles in Express Foundation can also be utilized to fill one role in one other base specialization. For optional specializations, we will continue to allow one person to satisfy up to two roles in each of two specializations. The specialization role dedication may require that more of your staff take the training, which should broaden the expertise across your organization and help improve your customer satisfaction. Overall, the minimum number of individuals required for Silver and Gold Certification has been reduced.

Table 1.  
Role requirements for  
each specialization

Program Requirements	Account Manager	Project Manager	Systems Engineer	Field Engineer	Total Individuals
Advanced Unified Communications	CSE (2)	PM (1)	CCDA (1)	CCVP (1)	5
Advanced Wireless LAN	CSE (1)		CCDA (1)	CCNA (1)	3
Advanced Security	CSE (1)		CCDA (1)	CCSP (1)	3
Advanced Routing & Switching	CSE (1)		CCDA (1)	CCNP as FE1 (1) CCIE as FE2 (1)	4
Express Unified Communications	CSE (1)		CCDA (1)	CCNA (1)	3
Express Foundation	CSE (1)		CCDA (1)	CCNA (1)	3

“One thing hasn’t changed is Cisco’s commitment to reward you for your loyalty.”

#### **Lab Requirement**

To reduce your out-of-pocket costs, there is no longer a lab purchase requirement except for specific Unified Communications specializations. You will still need to have demonstration capabilities. Cisco Shared Support Program and Systems Integrator Support partners will require a support lab.

#### **Customer Satisfaction Requirement**

Customer satisfaction is a cornerstone of our program; these requirements remain the same. Partners that have achieved outstanding customer satisfaction will be rewarded with Customer Satisfaction Excellence recognition in the Cisco Partner Locator. Also, enhanced survey tools will more accurately and easily measure customer satisfaction levels to make it easier to do business with Cisco.

#### **Rewarding Partner Loyalty and Value-Add**

One thing that hasn’t changed is Cisco’s commitment to reward you for your loyalty to Cisco Systems and value-add to customers—through enhanced economic incentives, new ways to capitalize on the Cisco brand, Cisco promotion of a your value, co-marketing opportunities, and a variety of service enablement programs. In addition to equipping you with products, services, training, and support, becoming a Cisco Certified Partner or Specialized Partner strengthens your relationship with Cisco and its sales organization. This positions you to take advantage of more sales opportunities than ever before.

We understand how crucial economic incentives are to your profitability. We will continue to reward you with programs for investing in certification, driving advanced technologies (Value Incentive Program), developing new business (Opportunity Incentive Program), selling solutions (Solutions Incentive Program), and migrating the installed base (Technology Migration Program [TMP] and Trade-In Accelerator Promotion [TAP]).

To reward the value partners provide by developing deeper advanced technology capabilities, we are offering all certified partners Advanced Specialization discounts for Unified Communications, Security, and Wireless LAN specializations. Tiered Value Incentive Program (VIP) rewards for the three new specialization levels will also be offered.

## Program Changes and Additions

Table 2. Summary of the primary changes and additions to the Cisco Channel Partner Program.

	New	Benefit
Certifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on required specializations and no points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear definition of differentiation</li> </ul>
Specializations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three Levels: Express, Advanced, and Master Specializations</li> <li>Six Base Specializations, Four Optional Specializations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Differentiation opportunity</li> <li>New Master Specialization Branding</li> </ul>
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical: Enhanced and simplified</li> <li>40% of training free of charge</li> <li>Fewer hours for Express Unified Communications Specialization</li> <li>Majority of Technology Specialists roles align to one course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced, simpler</li> <li>More e-learning available</li> <li>Increase sales effectiveness</li> </ul>
Individual Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role dedication based on unique individuals within specializations</li> <li>Fewer certified individuals required for Silver and Gold Certification</li> <li>Express Foundation Specialization role utilized in one other Advanced Specialization roles</li> <li>CCIE requirement maintained</li> <li>More individuals may need to complete training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better resource alignment</li> <li>Technical and Sales depth strengthened</li> <li>Improved customer satisfactions</li> </ul>
Lab & Demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No annual lab purchase required (except Unified Communications Specializations)</li> <li>Support lab required for Cisco Shared Support Program and Systems Integrator Support partners only</li> <li>Demonstration capability required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost savings</li> </ul>
Customer Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Top partners achieving customer satisfaction excellence identified in Partner Locator</li> <li>Enhanced survey tools</li> <li>Customer satisfaction requirements unchanged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Differentiation based upon customer satisfaction</li> <li>Ease of doing business</li> </ul>
Cisco Lifecycle Services Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive training &amp; tools</li> <li>Comprehensive Cisco Lifecycle Services training free of charge</li> <li>Steps to Success tools and process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance or compliment service offerings</li> <li>Deployment success and higher customer satisfaction</li> </ul>
Economic Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Advanced Specialization discounts</li> <li>Tiered VIP rewards based on new specialization levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities for profitability</li> </ul>

### Providing Return on Investment

The return on the investment in being a Cisco Certified Partner can be tremendous. Cisco is investing heavily in the Channel Partner Program, with training, tools, and incentives to help prepare you to take advantage of growing market opportunities and to make it easier to do business with us. As partners, you need to invest in training to evolve your capabilities to continue to create value. To lower your costs, we have eliminated the annual lab purchase requirement and reduced the required number of certified individuals for Silver and Gold Certified Partners. With streamlined tools, online learning, and repeatable Cisco Lifecycle Services processes, your cost to maintain certification will be reduced over time and their productivity will increase. The combination of lowering cost of doing business, enhanced economic incentives, and driving new business will enhance your growth, profitability, and return on investment over time.

## Enabling Partner Growth and Differentiation



Drive growth and differentiate your business as a provider of integrated networking solutions and/or highly specialized solutions

### **Integrated technology breadth**

- Broaden your role and open new markets as an integrated infrastructure provider
- Take advantage of Cisco's unique solutions portfolio and Intelligent Information Network (IIN) strategic vision

### **Advanced technology depth**

- Differentiate into specialized solutions, vertical markets, and applications
- Gain recognition for your deeply specialized value-add, with three specialization levels that offer opportunities to differentiate your business
- Compete on a level playing field for equal expertise

### **Cisco Lifecycle Services approach**

- Drive profitability through repeatable processes for selling, delivering services, and enhancing your services portfolio
- Reduce risk in deploying and supporting Cisco solutions
- Strengthen customer relationships
- Improve productivity and customer satisfaction

### **Cisco brand and solutions**

- Capitalize on Cisco's leading brand recognition
- Take advantage of Cisco Channel Partner Program branding

## Enabling Partner Profitability

Drive profitability and take advantage of your partnership with Cisco through incentives and rewards

### Economic incentives

- Rewards for investing in certification.
- Rewards for driving advanced technologies (Value Incentive Program), developing new business (Opportunity Incentive Program), selling solutions (Solutions Incentive Program) and migrating the installed base (Technology Migration Program [TMP] and Trade-In Accelerator Promotion [TAP]).
- Discounts for Advanced Unified Communications, Advanced Security, and Advanced Wireless LAN Specializations now available to all partners.
- We are adding tiered Value Incentive Program rewards for each specialization level—Express, Advanced, and Master.

### Sales and Marketing Programs

- Strengthen your relationship with the Cisco sales organization and market your unique value proposition to create greater sales opportunities through:
  - Recognition of partner status on Partner Locator for Cisco sales organizations and customers
  - Free sales training to enhance sales effectiveness
  - Preferred product access (varies by geography)
  - Cisco promotion of partner value to customers
  - Partner co-marketing programs, like Cisco Campaign Builder, for reduced costs and quicker time to market
  - Joint marketing funds for pre-approved direct marketing activities

## Service Enablement

- Cisco Lifecycle Services e-learning: Five modules, each approximately five hours in length, and free of charge
- Cisco Lifecycle Services training for partner executives includes introductory business-focused module free of charge
- Cisco Partner Services Enablement Tool: For partners with Advanced Specializations, this tool provides access to leading service best practices, self-assessments, and recommendations (available Q3CY2006).
- Cisco Steps to Success Web portal: Provides you with in-depth content methodologies, tools, and templates for Cisco Lifecycle Services. ([www.cisco.com/go/stepstosuccess](http://www.cisco.com/go/stepstosuccess))
- Eligibility for support programs:
  - Partner-branded Cisco Shared Support Program eligibility: Gold and Silver Certified Partners that were previously supported under Systems Integrator Support (varies by geographic region)
  - Partner Voice Support Offering (PVSO) eligibility: Partners with a Master Unified Communications Specialization (varies by geographic region)
  - Preferred routing within Cisco Technical Assistance Center (TAC)
  - Added capabilities within TAC Service Request Tool: Severity 2 cases can now be submitted online



“Cisco is investing heavily in our enhanced, value-based partner program.”

### **Competitive Edge**

Only with Cisco's industry-leading Channel Partner Program, unique solutions portfolio, and Intelligent Information Network (IIN) strategic vision can you maximize your growth, differentiation, and profitability.

### **Making the Transition**

Cisco understands that you will need to prepare for and align with the enhanced partner program. We are providing a generous transition period of up to two years. This provides time to consider the different specialization options and opportunities available to you, as well as completing the training and other requirements.

### **Important Transition Dates**

- On March 14, 2006, six new base specializations were introduced.
- In addition, several existing specializations were retired, including IP Communications, IP Communications Express, Routing & Switching, Wireless LAN, and Security/VPN. You can apply for new specialization or renew these retired specializations through June 15, 2006.
- During the first year of the transition, March 2006 through March 2007, you can achieve new specializations as your specializations expire. Certifications will be renewed under the current program during this period.
- In October 2006, the new Advanced Specialization discounts will be implemented, allowing six months for you to qualify.
- Starting on March 1, 2007, new certification requirements will apply upon your next certification anniversary that falls on or after this date.
- By March 2008, all partners will be certified under the new program.

### **Transition Process**

Cisco channel account manager will work closely with you to access your business goals and strategy in conjunction with your current certification and specialization status, and guide you through the transition.

### **Getting Started**

Cisco is investing heavily in our enhanced, value-based partner program. Our goal is to enable you to accelerate your growth, give you more opportunities to differentiate your business, and increase profitability.

More information and tools are available on the Cisco Partner Central Website at:

[www.cisco.com/go/enhancedpartnerprogram/](http://www.cisco.com/go/enhancedpartnerprogram/)

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