

## Cisco Info Center 3.5

Q. What is new in Cisco Info Center 3.5?

A. Cisco Info Center 3.5 offers many new features. Most of the new features are targeted at increasing product performance and increasing network operations productivity. New features include the following:

- Adds higher-performance features with new desktop server architecture and higher-performance gateways
- Offers improved ease of administering Info Server fail-over architecture
- Offers improved automated fail-back capabilities, enabling Info Mediators, Info Gateways, and Info Desktops to fail back to the primary Info Server when it becomes active, and synchronize Info Server tools, user accounts, and automations among primary and fail-over Info Servers
- Provides Cisco Info Center administrators with more control over network operations center (NOC) operator desktop configurations, allowing them to “lock down” portions of the Info Desktop to prevent unauthorized changes
- Provides a Central Configuration tool that allows for centralized Info Mediator rules file administration, but can also centrally restart distributed Info Mediators, causing them to reread modified configuration files
- Simplifies configuration of Info Mediators distributed throughout the network
- Includes a roll-up of all Cisco Info Center patches issued since December 2001
- Ships scripts which, out-of-the-box, build sample Cisco Info Center WebTop maps and views based on actual events in the customer’s event database

Q. Is Cisco Info Center an OEM of Micromuse Netcool technology?

A. Yes. Cisco Info Center is an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) product based on Micromuse’s Netcool technology, Version 3.5. It includes automations and customization specific to Cisco device and Operations Support System (OSS) solutions.

Q. Does Cisco Info Center help me consolidate important alarms and events from other vendors?

A. Yes. Cisco Info Center facilitates the integration of other vendor equipment via readily available Info Mediators (or probes) developed by OEM provider Micromuse. These mediators are all operational in both Cisco Info Center and Netcool Omnibus. They can plug into Cisco Info Center for consolidation. Mediators perform the role of event normalization, thus allowing other vendor events and alarms to be displayed through the same screens as those used to collect Cisco alarms

and events. Cisco resells the entire library of Info Mediators on a single CD. These mediators are supported by Cisco with a back-end support by Micromuse. A list of probes is available at:

<http://www.micromuse.com>.

Q. Does Cisco Info Center store all alarms and events in persistent storage?

A. Cisco Info Center can store alarms and events in persistent storage (either a flat file or relational database) via the use of a unidirectional Info Gateway. But the Cisco Info Server itself is an in-memory-resident database streamlined to provide fast and efficient filtering and automation. The purpose of this in-memory database is to de-duplicate events, filter noise from the network, and provide focus on what requires attention—not to provide a historical log of what has happened.

Unimportant alarms and alarms that have been fixed are not ones of interest to the Cisco Info Server, and should be deleted via the Cisco Info Center customizable automation engine.

For logging purposes, all alarms can be stored in persistence using Info Gateways.

Q. Is Cisco Info Center the same as Micromuse Netcool or Omnibus?

A. Cisco Info Center is a Cisco product, which is an OEM Joint Development Program (JDP) product from Micromuse. The focus of Cisco Info Center is on service-level monitoring and assurance. Cisco Info Center includes enhancements of the Cisco Info Server component, as well as Cisco developed and tested correlation rules and tools to make it an out-of-the-box productivity tool with Cisco support. Future enhancements that are made to the overall solution will take advantage of internally developed products as well as technology or products from other partners.

Q. Does Cisco Info Center include performance reporting and monitoring applications?

A. Cisco Info Center is an alarm and event management engine. It provides customer network management (CNM) support through Java applets that can be used to provide end subscribers with an up-to-date view of alarms and events that affect their services and underlying network resources.

Cisco Services Management Applications infrastructure includes partnerships with other third-party vendors. These management applications can be integrated into Cisco Info Center as extensions of its management tool set, if desired.

Q. Does Cisco Info Center allow me to integrate with other external systems?

A. Cisco Info Center is not just an aggregator of event information from multiple sources; it also provides links to other applications and support systems. Information from within Cisco Info Center can be shared with other help-desk systems via a Info Gateway.

Information can also be passed to external UNIX scripts and applications; this completely configurable environment allows you to link any management applications into this event-management environment to provide real-time proactive troubleshooting and problem solving in the network. One common area of applications that customers link into the maps and menus includes element-management systems for various network elements. Future releases of Cisco Info Center will have a northbound interface based on Cisco CNS to publish and subscribe to shared data to and from other management products. Cisco Info Center is packaged with some integrated diagnostic tools.

Q. Which platforms support Cisco Info Center?

A. Cisco Info Center is a distributed client-server system targeted for Sun systems running Solaris. The primary server, gateways, and desktops are supported on Solaris 2.7 and 2.8. The Info Mediators, which run on the underlying element management systems, may have to run on different versions of Solaris, depending on the element management system, or on different platforms completely.

Q. Which platforms are supported in Cisco Info Center?

A. Cisco Info Center is supported only on Solaris. However, other platforms may be ordered, but the Cisco value-add will need to be manually ported.

Q. Can the Cisco Info Center be used to trigger activation of e-mail and pagers?

A. Yes. Cisco Info Center contains a sophisticated event-triggered system. Based on observed events and alarms in the real-time database, actions can be triggered. These actions include internal alarm and event management actions (for example, modify an existing event or delete an alarm based on a simple correlation rule) and execution of external scripts (for example, send e-mail to an operator if a high-priority unacknowledged event condition is observed). Any authorized operator can configure triggers and events through a simple graphical user interface (GUI). This configuration tool is part of Cisco Info Server, and no special components are required.

Q. What is the best way to order or receive a quote for Cisco Info Center?

A. Contact your local Cisco account manager and tell the manager that you are interested in Cisco Info Center, one of the Cisco Service Management Applications (SMA) offered by Cisco.



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