



# Cisco Channel Partner Program

## Audit and Policies Document for the Cisco Silver and Gold Certification Programs

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**Page 1**



## CONTENTS

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>I. Purpose</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II. Certification Audit Support Checklists by Support Agreement Type</b>	<b>5</b>
• Cisco Shared Support Program, Systems Integrator Support (SIS), or Reseller Support Agreement	5
• Cisco Branded Resale or Packaged Services Agreement	7
<b>III. Certification Requirements</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1. Prequalification Information</b>	<b>9</b>
• Personnel	9
• Specialization	9
• Partner Customer Satisfaction: Partner Access onLine (PAL)	10
• Lab Equipment	12
• Support Agreement	12
<b>2. Core Requirements</b>	<b>13</b>
• Customer Service	13
• Pre-Sales Support	13
• Escalation Process	14
• Connectivity Capabilities and Tools	14
• Hiring and Training	14
<b>3. Support Requirements</b>	<b>15</b>
• Cisco Shared Support Program, SIS, or Reseller Support Agreements	15
• Cisco Branded Resale or Packaged Services Agreements	17
<b>IV. Audit Process/Methodology</b>	<b>19</b>
• Audit Scheduling	19
• Roles of Participants	19
• Audit Duration and Itinerary	20
• Audit Closure and Follow-Up	20



<b>Appendices</b>	<b>22</b>
A. Sample Audit Itineraries	22
B. Post-Sales Support Problem Prioritization and Escalation Guidelines	24
C. Call-Tracking System	25
D. Policies Pertaining to Cisco Gold and Silver Certification	27
E. Support Agreement Transition	35
F. Multinational Certification	36
G. Certification and Specialization Terms and Conditions	37

This document defines and establishes the criteria required to receive a Cisco Gold or Silver Certification within the Cisco Channel Partner Program. The criteria may be updated at the discretion of Cisco Systems, Inc., without prior notice to your company. Your company's failure to provide the information required in this document will result in an incomplete application for certification. Cisco will not consider a certification application until all information is provided. This document defines the requirements for the Cisco Silver and Gold Certification and provides guidelines for the audit.

*Only electronic applications are accepted.* The application is available at: <http://www.cisco.com/go/csapp>

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## Section I: Purpose

This document defines the requirements for the Cisco Systems® Silver and Gold Certification within the Channel Partner Program, and provides guidelines for the auditing process. Additionally, it outlines related policies concerning the Cisco® Silver and Gold Certification Programs.

### Definitions

**Partner:** Partner, as used in this document, refers to the organization seeking certification (or re-certification) within the Cisco Channel Partner Program, or an authorized person within that organization. Criteria and metrics herein apply to the partner organization within the country (or country grouping) for which certification is applied. All partners, regardless of their business model, are required to meet the same certification requirements.

**Certified Partner:** Refers to a partner that has qualified for Cisco Gold, Silver, or Premier Certification under the Cisco Channel Partner Program guidelines.

**Direct Partner:** A partner that has a direct product resale agreement with Cisco, including Systems Integrator and SP Resale

**Indirect partner:** A partner that does not have a direct product resale agreement with Cisco Systems.

**Country Group:** Cisco sales theatres in Europe, Emerging Markets, Asia Pacific, Japan, and the United States and Canada have defined groupings that are regarded as a “country” for certification and specialization purposes. This allows partners to pool their resources across countries in order to qualify for certification and specialization. Certification and specialization is granted to partners for each country within a country group. More information on country groups is available at:

[http://www.cisco.com/en/US/partners/pr11/pr8/pr27/partners\\_program\\_country\\_grouping\\_list.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/partners/pr11/pr8/pr27/partners_program_country_grouping_list.html)

**Get-Well Plan:** An action plan defined by the partner to address noncompliance of requirements. Failure to complete get-well plans within predetermined timescales will result in de-certification.

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## Section II: Certification Audit Checklists by Support Agreement Type

### Cisco Shared Support Program, System Integrator Support (SIS), or Reseller Support Agreement

	CORE REQUIREMENTS FOR CISCO SHARED SUPPORT PROGRAM, SIS, OR RESELLER SUPPORT AGREEMENTS	REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION	PAGE
<b>CERTIFICATION APPLICATION</b>	The partner must submit a completed application to: <a href="http://tools.cisco.com/WWChannels/cpapp/home.do">http://tools.cisco.com/WWChannels/cpapp/home.do</a>	–	9
<b>CUSTOMER SATISFACTION</b>	The partner must participate in the customer satisfaction (CSAT) survey and meet the minimum number of responses and target.	PAL tool	10
<b>LAB EQUIPMENT/ DEMO</b>	The partner must have a support lab and must have the necessary equipment to perform a successful demonstration of one specialization.	–	12
<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>	Gold: 24x7 Silver: 8x5 The partner must provide customer-service-based escalation procedures.	–	13
<b>PARTNER PRE-SALES PROCESS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	An auditor will review the partner's ability to provide pre-sales support, including demonstrations, network design, quality assurance, and lessons learned.	At time of audit, the partner must perform a demo for one of their specialized technologies or solutions. The partner must also provide documentation of its pre-sales demo process.	13
<b>CALL BACK</b>	The partner must make contact with the customer within 1 hour of receiving notification of a problem.	–	13
<b>ESCALATION PROCESS</b>	The partner must have a documented and robust process to escalate problems through the partner's management structure and when necessary, to Cisco.	The partner must provide escalation procedures document by uploading it into the Cisco Certification application.	14
<b>CONNECTIVITY CAPABILITIES AND TOOLS</b>	The partner must provide all tools necessary for remote access and dial-in to remote sites for troubleshooting.	Documentation is not required. Tools are verified at the time of audit.	14
<b>HIRING AND TRAINING</b>	The partner must provide training for sales and support engineers on new products, protocols, and features.	Documentation is not required, but if the partner has a documented training outline and plans, these should be provided at the time of audit.	14



CORE REQUIREMENTS FOR CISCO SHARED SUPPORT PROGRAM, SIS, OR RESELLER SUPPORT AGREEMENTS		REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION	PAGE
<b>POST-SALES SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS</b>			
<b>TECHNICAL SUPPORT</b>	Gold: 24x7 Silver: 8x5 Level 1 and 2 support per partner's support agreement.	–	15
<b>ONSITE RESPONSE</b>	Gold: 4-hour Silver: 24-hour	–	15
<b>CALL CENTER</b>	Required	–	16
<b>DUTY MANAGER</b>	Required	–	16
<b>COMPUTER-BASED CALL TRACKING</b>	Required	–	16, 25–26
<b>ESCALATION PROCESS</b>	Required	At the time of audit, partner must provide 4 cases (2 escalated to Cisco and 2 resolved by partner).	16
<b>CALL ALERT</b>	Gold: Automated Silver: Manual	–	17
<b>SPARING STRATEGY</b>	Required	–	17



## Cisco Branded Resale or Packaged Services Agreement

	CORE REQUIREMENTS FOR CISCO BRANDED RESALE OR PACKAGED SERVICES	REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION	PAGE
<b>CERTIFICATION APPLICATION</b>	The partner must submit a completed application to: <a href="http://tools.cisco.com/WWChannels/cpapp/home.do">http://tools.cisco.com/WWChannels/cpapp/home.do</a>		9
<b>CUSTOMER SATISFACTION</b>	The partner must participate in the customer satisfaction (CSAT) survey and meet the minimum number of responses and target.	PAL tool	10
<b>DEMO EQUIPMENT</b>	The partner must have the necessary equipment to perform a successful demonstration of one specialization.	–	12
<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>	Gold: 24x7 Silver: 8x5 The partner must provide customer-service-based escalation procedures.	Documentation is not required.	13
<b>PARTNER PRE-SALES PROCESS AND PERFORMANCE</b>	An auditor will review the partner's ability to provide pre-sales support, including demonstrations, network design, quality assurance, and lessons learned.	At time of audit, the partner must perform a demo for one of their specialized technologies or solutions. The partner must also provide documentation of its pre-sales demo process.	13
<b>CALL BACK</b>	The partner must make contact with the customer within 1 hour of receiving notification of a problem.	–	13
<b>ESCALATION PROCESS</b>	The partner must have a documented and robust process to escalate problems through the partner's management structure and when necessary, to Cisco.	The partner must provide escalation procedures document by uploading it into the Cisco Certification application.	14
<b>CONNECTIVITY CAPABILITIES AND TOOLS</b>	The partner must provide all tools necessary for remote access and dial-in to remote sites for troubleshooting.	The partner must have remote access or a process that will be verified at the time of the audit.	14



	<b>CORE REQUIREMENTS FOR CISCO BRANDED RESALE OR PACKAGED SERVICES</b>	<b>REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>HIRING AND TRAINING</b>	The partner must provide training for sales and support engineers on new products, protocols, and features.	Documentation is not required, but if the partner has a documented training outline and plans, these should be provided at the time of audit.	14
<b>SERVICE ATTACH RATE</b>	40 percent	Direct attach rate is measured by Cisco Service Management System and no documentation is required. If the attach rate is not available, it will be verified at the time of audit. For indirect attach rates, the partner must supply proof of attach rate percentage based on Cisco distributor POS.	17
<b>REVENUE FROM SERVICES</b>	15 percent	At time of audit, the partner shall provide document(s) to show that the requirement has been met.	18



## Section III: Certification Requirements

### 1. Prequalification Information

The prequalification information requirement applies to all partners that are seeking Silver or Gold certification or re-certification. Prior to scheduling an onsite audit, Cisco requires closure of all elements in this section. Failure to comply with any of the pre-audit requirements may lead to partner de-certification without engaging in an onsite audit.

#### Personnel

Following are the requirements for Cisco certified personnel. All certified personnel reported on a partner's certification application are verified by Cisco before an onsite audit is scheduled.

#### Career Certified Individuals

	Required for Gold Certification	Required for Silver Certification
Sales Experts (CSE)	4	2
Associates (CCNA and/or CCDA)	4	2
Professionals (CCNP, CCDP, CCSP, CCVP and/or CCIP)	4	2
Experts (CCIE)	4	2
<b>Minimum Number of Certified Individuals</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>

All certified personnel requirements must be satisfied by a unique full-time regular employee *residing in the country seeking certification* and in good standing with Cisco. The only exception to this is for CCIEs. Partners may employ full-time contracted employees (not to exceed 50 percent of the required number of CCIEs) to fulfill the CCIE certified personnel requirements. Persons who are certified at a higher level and not counted toward any part of the requirements may be used to meet lower-level certified personnel requirements within a given track (network/internetworking or design, for example). To fulfill the sales expert requirement, the extra personnel must pass the sales expert exam.

#### Specialization

Prior to the audit, partners must have achieved enough points through specializations to qualify for the level of certification they are seeking.



## Certification Points

	Gold	Silver
Specialization points	70	40
Extra credit points*	30	20

\*Extra credit points may be earned through specializations or additional certified individuals *once the minimum certified individual requirements are met.*

Individuals filling the role requirements in each specialization may share roles, but a qualified individual may satisfy two roles in no more than two specializations.

For more information on specialization and extra credit point values and requirements, please visit:

**Gold Certification:** <http://www.cisco.com/go/gold>

**Silver Certification:** <http://www.cisco.com/go/silver>

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### Additional Specialization Criteria

As part of the specialization verification process, the partner may be asked to produce documentation beyond the information required on the specialization application. Information may include, but is not limited to, proof of personnel employment, validation of third-party certifications, proof of certain business processes, and proof of proficiency in particular technologies.

### Partner Customer Satisfaction: Partner Access onLine (PAL)

- Partners must actively participate in the Cisco partner CSAT survey. This includes using the Cisco CSAT tool (PAL) on a regular basis to send surveys to customers and assess and act upon customer satisfaction results. Partners are encouraged to use the CSAT tool at least quarterly.
- Cisco uses the CSAT survey results in PAL as the definitive source of customer satisfaction information.
- Partners are required to meet valid response targets based on new or re-certification. A "valid response" directly correlates to a unique individual's reply to the survey sent. A respondent reply is counted once, whether they answer only pre-sales questions, only post-sales questions, or both pre-sales and post-sales questions. Total valid responses from all sources can be from a combination of customer invitations provided by the partner ("Total Valid Responses from Surveys You have Sent") and/or Cisco high-touch sales representatives ("Total Valid Responses from Surveys Sent by Other Sources").

Evidence of results analysis (through a closed process) and reinforcement of best practices for customer satisfaction should be captured by the partner at all times.

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**For new certification audits the following requirements apply:**

- Cisco requires a minimum of 15 total valid responses from all sources in each country or country group where the partner is seeking certification. If the number of valid responses is less than 15, an onsite audit will be delayed until the requirement is achieved.
- New partners must achieve at least 95 percent of the theater CSAT target to qualify for certification.
- The definition of a "new" partner as it relates to the enforcement of the CSAT requirement is a partner that has not been certified at any level within the previous six months.
- Premier partners moving to either Silver or Gold certification must have a minimum of 30 valid responses and meet the theater customer satisfaction target.
- If a partner falls out of compliance with the program requirements and is de-certified within six months of submitting a new certification application, they will be treated as a re-certifying partner and will be responsible for meeting the CSAT requirements.
- Measurement will be based upon results within the preceding 12 months.

**For re-certification audits, the following requirements apply:**

- To ensure a reasonable and statistically significant measurement, Cisco requires a minimum of 30 total valid responses from all sources in each country or country group where the partner is seeking re-certification. Of the 30 minimum valid responses, 15 must be partner-generated with the balance supplied from either partner sources or Cisco sources.
- The partner must achieve the theater CSAT target to qualify for re-certification.
- Measurement is based upon results during the prior 12-month period from the anniversary date.
- Partners may be eligible for extra credit points once minimum requirements have been successfully achieved, outlined at:  
[http://www.cisco.com/warp/public/765/partner\\_programs/certification/extra\\_credit.shtml](http://www.cisco.com/warp/public/765/partner_programs/certification/extra_credit.shtml)
- If the partner meets the 30 required valid responses but the PAL CSAT score fails to meet the theater objective, the partner must provide a get-well plan detailing action and timelines that will ensure that the partner will achieve the CSAT requirement within the subsequent six months.
- Failure to meet the 30 valid responses will be considered lack of participation and is grounds for de-certification. In this case, the partner may not be eligible to participate in a get-well plan (based upon the discretion of the Cisco Certification Manager).
- Failure to achieve the commitments stated within the get-well plan will result in de-certification.



## Lab Equipment (Partners with Cisco Shared Support Program, SIS, or Reseller Support Agreements Only)

- The annual purchase requirement for Cisco Gold and Silver Certified Partners has been removed. Partners are no longer required to spend US\$100,000 (for Gold) and \$40,000 (for Silver) per year for their lab equipment.
- Partners with a Cisco Shared Support Program, SIS, or Reseller Support agreement must have a support lab.
  - The lab equipment must be set up in a network topology, and should be used for proof-of-concept, post-sales support, and training. The lab can also be used for pre-sales demonstrations. Remote access to the lab, or a process for troubleshooting, must be available and will be verified at the time of the audit. The lab is not to be used for demonstration or evaluation on customer premises.
  - Evidence of a process, procedure, or guideline for using the lab must be shown at the time of the audit.
  - Leased equipment may be used in the lab and must be present at the time of the audit.
  - Lab equipment must be sourced either from Cisco directly, or from an authorized Cisco source.
  - The partner shall ensure that its lab is in compliance with the program requirements during the time period between audits.
- Partners with a Cisco Branded Resale Support Agreement are not required to have a support lab.

## Support Agreement

In order to qualify for Silver or Gold certification, direct partners must have a valid resale support agreement with Cisco, including Cisco Branded Resale, Cisco Shared Support Program, or Systems Integrator Support. The support agreement must be accompanied by a valid Cisco product purchasing agreement.

In Europe and Emerging Markets (except LatAm), indirect partners must have either an RSA or be registered in the Cisco Enhanced Packaged Services program. In all other theaters, indirect partners are required to offer Cisco packaged services to customers wishing to purchase service and support. In some theaters, indirect partners may be eligible to participate in the Cisco Shared Support Program, which also satisfies this requirement.

Partners that transition from one type of support contract or agreement to another during the certification term should contact their Channel Certification Manager (CCM) to understand the impact on certification requirements.

For direct partners, lack of a valid support agreement may result in immediate de-certification.

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## 2. Core Requirements

Core requirements apply to all partners seeking Silver or Gold certification or re-certification.

	Gold	Silver
Customer service	24x7	8x5
Call back	1 hour	1 hour
Pre-sales support	Required	Required
Escalation process	Required	Required
Connectivity capabilities and tools	Required	Required
Hiring and training	Required	Required

### Customer Service

- The partner must provide customer service (over Internet-based systems, phone, fax, pager, or e-mail) based on the partner's escalation process.
- The partner's customer service number must be an in-country number (preferably a toll-free number), responded to in the local language. Response language outside business hours can be by non-native speaker, but must be in the end customer's local language.
- This service must be available 7 days per week, 24 hours per day for Cisco Gold Certified Partners or a minimum of 5 days per week, 8 hours per day for Cisco Silver Certified Partners (local customs in the partner's country apply for workdays and work weeks).
- The partner must make contact in the local language with the customer within 1 hour of receiving an e-mail, voicemail, fax, page or Internet-based notification of a problem.

### Pre-Sales Support

The auditor will review the partner's ability to provide pre-sales support, including demonstrations, network design, quality assurance, and lessons learned.

The partner must select and demonstrate at least one of its Cisco awarded specializations to the auditor to display the partner's process to demonstrate product to a potential customer and allow the customer to evaluate the solution.

- Demo facility and equipment quality
- Assurance that the demo equipment is sufficient to effectively demonstrate Cisco solutions
- If the lab equipment is at a different location, adequate access to perform a credible demonstration must be shown
- Ability to successfully demonstrate at least one technology specialization achieved by the partner
- The process to reserve a demo room and specific demo technology

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- Assignment of pre-sales technical staff
- Network design: Process to build a network design for a prospect and perform a design review
- Quality assurance: Process to ensure project success with respect to profitability and customer satisfaction
- Lessons learned: A process to ensure that known design errors are avoided in new designs, for example

### **Escalation Process**

More information on the escalation process requirements for Cisco Shared Support Program, SIS, or Reseller Support agreements can be found on pages 16–17. For Cisco Branded Resale or Packaged Services agreements, more information on escalation requirements can be found on page 19.

### **Connectivity Capabilities and Tools**

The partner will provide all the tools or processes necessary for remote access and dialing into remote sites for troubleshooting. This includes remote access to the lab and/or a call tracking system.

### **Hiring and Training**

- Training for sales and support engineers on new products, protocols, and features
- New hire training requirements, ongoing training, and sharing of best practices
- Hiring and retention of Cisco certified personnel

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### 3. Support Requirements

A partner seeking Silver or Gold certification or re-certification is required to meet all pre-audit, general, and support requirements outlined for the given level of certification.

#### 1. Cisco Shared Support Program, SIS, or Reseller Support Agreements

Partners that have a Cisco Shared Support Program, SIS, or Reseller Support agreement with Cisco must meet all the requirements listed in this section in order to qualify for certification.

##### 1.1 Technical Support (Post-Sales)

All partners are required to provide Level 1 and Level 2 support as outlined in their support agreement. Additionally, the partner is required to have the proper tools and lab environment to troubleshoot configuration, design, environmental, and software problems. (Please refer to your support agreements for Level 1 and Level 2 definitions.)

Validation of the support capabilities will include:

- Is post-sales technical support provided from one or many locations?
- If multiple locations, how many and where are they located? What type(s) of service or sparring is provided at each major location?
- How many employees does the partner dedicate to technical support at each location? What is the typical breakdown of personnel: operators, junior engineers, senior engineers (CCIEs)?
- Partners should describe their technical support structure and staffing strategy.
- Partners should describe how support resources are split between pre- and post-sales roles.

##### 1.2 Onsite Response

Partners are required to provide a description for:

- Geographic coverage
- Best service-level agreement (SLA)
- Dispatch system for onsite service, if separate from call-tracking system
- Any subcontractors

##### Gold Certification

- The partner must be able to provide comprehensive support 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.
- For all Cisco products sold with support, the partner must be able to offer 4-hour onsite response (or better) with service and spare(s) if required, from the time of receiving a call.



### Silver Certification

- The partner must be able to provide comprehensive support 8 hours per day, 5 days per week (local customs in the partner's country apply for standard workdays and work weeks).
- The partner must be able to offer 24-hour onsite response (or better) with service and spare(s) if required, from the time of receiving a call.

### 1.3 Call Center

- The support organization must employ a duty manager.
- For support calls, problem severity and priority are to be established by the end customer.
- If customer is requesting technical support, the call back to the customer must be from a technical support engineer and not a nontechnical resource.
- After-hours support is required (Gold certification only).
- If the partner does not maintain a staffed call center on a 24-hour basis, it must have documented procedures for after-hours and holiday support.
- If the support telephone number for after-hours support is different from the number used during normal hours, the partner must detail how customers are provided the after-hours support number.
- Support engineers are required to have write access to the call-tracking system to log the after-hours calls. All calls should be logged immediately after the initial communication with the customer.

### 1.4 Computer-Based Call-Tracking System

- Partner engineers must be able to communicate with the partner's call-tracking system from all locations, including customer premises, either by an Internet connection or dialup modem connection or a process whereby they work with the call center staff.
- Support engineers are required to have write access to the call tracking system to log the after-hours calls, or a process to provide input into the call-tracking system. All calls should be logged immediately after the initial communication with the customer.
- Details on the call-tracking system can be found in Appendix C.

### 1.5 Escalation Process

- The partner must provide a documented and robust escalation process that escalates problems through the partner management structure and, when necessary, to Cisco.
- The following criteria must be addressed by the partner's escalation procedures:
  - Definition of customer calls by priority
  - Timeframe for each level of escalation by priority
  - Timeframe for escalation to Cisco by priority (if necessary)



- Process for escalation of problems within the partner
- Process for the escalation of problems by the partner to Cisco (if necessary)
- The partner's escalation process must include alerts. For Silver partners, this alert may be manual; for Gold partners, alerts must be automated.
- The partner shall provide four cases (two of which are escalated on to Cisco, and two of which are resolved by the partner) at time of audit.

Cisco has established a recommended set of prioritization standards to ensure that appropriate service levels are provided to customers. For a guideline, please refer to Appendix B.

### 1.6 Sparing Strategy

- The partner is required to have a sparing strategy that is consistent with response and coverage times for partner's certification level. The strategy should also include support for new products for which the partner does not yet have any spares.
- The partner's sparing process must be in line with SLA obligations.

## 2. Cisco Branded Resale or Packaged Services Agreements

In order to qualify for certification under Cisco Branded Resale or Packaged Services requirements, the partner must not have any other valid partner support agreement with Cisco (Cisco Shared Support Program or SIS, for example). If the partner has both Cisco Shared Support Program and Cisco Branded Resale contracts, the requirements outlined in Section 1 apply.

### 2.1 Escalation Process

- The partner must provide a documented and robust escalation process that escalates problems through the partner management structure and, when applicable, to Cisco.
- The following criteria must be addressed by the partner's escalation procedures:
  - Definition of customer calls by priority
  - Process for escalation of problems within the partner
  - Process for the escalation of problems by the partner to Cisco (if applicable)
- Partner shall provide three cases to demonstrate their escalation process at time of audit.

### 2.2 Service Attach Rate

- Cisco Branded Resale and Packaged Services partners are required to have a minimum service attach rate of 40 percent during the prior four Cisco quarters. For new partners that have never been Silver or Gold certified, if the 40 percent attach rate is met **within** the past 12 months, it is considered acceptable.

This metric is defined as the service attach rate between Cisco and partner as measured by number of devices covered by service (according to the Cisco service

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management system) compared to number of devices shipped to the partner from Cisco in the prior four quarters.

- RMAs and spares are not included in this measurement.
- For partners that do not have a direct purchasing agreement with Cisco, the partner will be asked to demonstrate that they have achieved a 40-percent service attach rate during the prior four quarters. The attach rate for indirect partners may be evaluated based on Cisco distributor point of sales reports, when available.
- In Europe and some emerging countries, partners that do not have a direct purchasing agreement with Cisco must be registered within the Cisco Enhanced Packaged Services Program and achieve the Level 1 service performance metrics during the prior four quarters.
- Direct service attach rate (U.S. only) performance data can be found using the PAL tool within the metrics area at: [http://www.cisco.com/cgi-bin/front.x/partner\\_portal/pp\\_ctrl/pp\\_home.html](http://www.cisco.com/cgi-bin/front.x/partner_portal/pp_ctrl/pp_home.html)

### 2.3 Revenue from Services

- Partner must generate at least 15 percent of revenue from all service revenues (including Cisco branded services) against the total revenue from networking products during the prior two quarters.
- Partner shall provide documented evidence that they have met or exceeded this requirement.
- Measurement must be specific to the division engaged in providing networking product, services, or solutions in the country applying for certification.
- Information provided falls under the NDA signed by the Cisco third-party auditors, and will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

### 2.4 Support Lab

- Partners with a Cisco Branded Resale support agreement are **not** required to have a post-sales lab.



## Section IV: Audit Process/Methodology

### Audit Scheduling

An onsite audit will not be scheduled until the partner has submitted a complete online application and the Cisco CCM has verified that pre-qualification requirements have been met (see Section II).

As part of the pre-audit requirements, the partner must submit, in English, the escalation procedures using the Certification and Specialization Application (<http://tools.cisco.com/WWChannels/cpapp/home.do>). An onsite audit may not be scheduled until this information is received and verified by Cisco.

A representative from a Cisco third-party audit agency will schedule the onsite audit and may request additional documentation or information prior or during the audit. Typically, the onsite audit will take place within 21 days of validation that all pre-qualification requirements have been met.

### Roles of Audit Participants

#### Role of the Partner

Prior to the audit, the partner is expected to review all of the Silver or Gold certification program requirements, submit a complete online application with the pre-audit documents, and provide the required documents on the day of the audit.

During the audit, the partner will present a 10-minute general overview of the partner company, covering:

- A business model, service and support model, and organizational overview.
- If applicable, the business model overview should include provision of any partner-added services built around Cisco products, such as managed network services, installation support services, or basic and advanced consulting services.
- Partner should discuss the business and support relationship with Cisco. Suggested participants for this period of the audit would be the person responsible for managing the support relationship with Cisco, and the main contact for Cisco certification.

#### Role of the Auditor

Cisco uses an independent third-party audit agency to conduct audits. The auditor manages the onsite audit process. The auditor may review supplied documentation prior to the audit, then verifies whether the partner complies with all Silver or Gold program requirements, compiles the audit report describing the extent of compliance with each requirement, and submits the report and supporting documents to the Cisco CCM, who will determine whether the partner meets these requirements. All information or documentation provided to the auditor falls under NDA signed by Cisco's third-party auditors, and will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.



### **Role of the Cisco Channel Account Manager (CAM)**

Prior to the audit, it is the CAM's responsibility to ensure the partner fully understands the Silver or Gold certification program requirements and to assist the partner in completing the online application. During the audit, it is the responsibility of the CAM to address any business issues.

### **Role of the Cisco Systems Engineer (SE)**

Prior to the audit, the Cisco SE assists the Cisco CAM and the partner in preparing for the audit. SEs may interface with the CCM, the Cisco partner support representative, and other entities as appropriate. In EMEA, the channel SE reviews the partner's lab investment and provides a written certificate as part of the audit pre-requirements. During the audit, it is the responsibility of the SE to assist the auditor in all technical issues.

### **Role of the Cisco Partner Support Representative**

Prior to the audit, the Cisco Partner Support representative will work with the CAM or SE, services sales manager (GSM), and partner to validate the partner's TAC usage statistics, lab equipment (based on list provided by partner), escalation procedures, and service attach rates. In cases where a partner support representative is present at the onsite audit, their role is to assist the auditor in validation of the lab equipment, call handling and case escalation, and after-hours support procedures. After the audit, this person may assist the SE or the CCM in resolving any outstanding post-sales audit issues.

### **Role of the Cisco Channel Certification Manager (CCM)**

The CCM is responsible for maintaining program integrity; as such, the decision to award or revoke certification rests with the CCM. All grace periods described within the policy document are at the discretion of the CCM.

### **Audit Duration and Itinerary**

Partners should plan on six hours for a Silver or Gold certification audit to be completed. (See Appendix A for sample audit itinerary details.)

### **Audit Closure and Follow-Up**

At the audit closing session, the auditor will present a synopsis of the partner's audit opportunities for improvement and will highlight any open action items. For open action items, the partner will be given an opportunity to provide written evidence of closure to the auditor within five business days after completion of audit.

If unable to close out open action items within five business days, the partner should provide a corrective action plan to the Cisco CCM. The action plan must be fully implemented within an agreed-upon time period, not to exceed the stated get-well period. At the end of the time period, a visit by the auditor, Cisco partner support representative, or local Cisco SE may be required in order to verify closure of an action item. The certification decision will not be made until the corrective action plan is satisfactorily completed.

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During and after the audit, neither the auditor nor the Cisco CAM can make commitments regarding the certification decision. The CCM will review the audit report and communicate results back to the partner within 20 business days. Results will be sent via e-mail to the primary certification contact within the partner organization.

It is possible that the findings of the audit are such that certification or re-certification cannot be achieved within the stated get-well period. In this case, the CCM may deny certification or downgrade certification to the next appropriate level.

If a partner fails to deliver an action plan within the agreed time frame, the partner may also be downgraded to the next appropriate certification level.



## Appendices

### Appendix A: Sample Audit Itineraries

#### Sample Silver/Gold Audit Itinerary for Cisco Shared Support Program, SIS, or Reseller Support Agreements

- Introductions and audit goals (auditor)
- Overview of audit methodology (auditor)
- Partner overview presentation (refer to Section IV, Audit Process/Methodology, Role of the Partner for more information)
- Cisco relationship
- Pre-sales (refer to Section III, Certification Requirements, Core Requirements for more information)
- Demonstration of at least one attained technology specialization
- Training
- Validation of lab equipment (refer to Section III, Certification Requirements, Lab Equipment for more information)
- Customer satisfaction (refer to Section III, Certification Requirements, Partner Customer Satisfaction – PAL for more information)
- Sparing strategy
- Post-sales
  - Review of call-tracking system and Cisco cases
  - Customer service
  - Escalation process
  - Onsite response
- Connectivity capabilities and tools
- Review of audit findings, if applicable (auditor)



## Sample Silver/Gold Audit Itinerary for Cisco Branded Resale or Packaged Services Support Agreements

- Introductions and audit goals (auditor)
- Overview of audit methodology (auditor)
- Partner overview (refer to Section IV, Audit Process/Methodology, Role of the Partner for more information)
- Cisco relationship
- Pre-sales (refer to Section III, Certification Requirements, Core Requirements for more information)
- Demonstration of at least one attained technology specialization
- Training
- Customer satisfaction (refer to Section III, Certification Requirements, Partner Customer Satisfaction – PAL for more information)
- Revenue from services
- Service attach rate
- Post-sales
  - Review of Cisco cases
  - Customer service
  - Escalation process
- Connectivity capabilities and tools
- Review of audit findings, if applicable (auditor)

### Documents Required for Day of Audit for all Support Agreement Types (Cisco Shared Support Program, SIS, Reseller Support, Cisco Branded Resale, and Packaged Services)

- Organizational chart
- Blank SLA
- Case history
  - For Cisco Shared Support Program or SIS, provide four cases (two that were escalated to Cisco, and two that were resolved by the partner)
  - For Cisco Branded Resale or Packaged Services, provide three cases to demonstrate escalation process

In order to make the audit more efficient and effective, the partner must provide the auditor with documentation by CD-ROM or soft copy.

Each audit will vary slightly, based on the business model of the individual partner.



## Appendix B: Post-Sales Support Problem Prioritization and Escalation Guidelines

To ensure that post-sales customer problems are reported in a standard format, Cisco has established the following problem priority definitions. In the event that a partner escalates a customer problem to Cisco TAC, these definitions will assist Cisco in allocating the appropriate resources to resolve the problem. The partner must assign a priority to all problems submitted to Cisco.

### Problem Priority Definitions

**Priority 1:** An existing network is down or there is a critical impact to the end customer's business operation. Cisco, partner, and end customer will commit full-time resources to resolve the situation.

**Priority 2:** Operation of an existing network is severely degraded, or significant aspects of the end customer's business operation are being negatively impacted by unacceptable network performance. All parties obligated under the support agreement and end customer will commit full-time resources during standard business hours to resolve the situation.

**Priority 3:** Operational performance of the network is impaired while most business operations remain functional. All parties obligated under the support agreement and end customer will commit resources during standard business hours to restore service to satisfactory levels.

**Priority 4:** Information or assistance is required on Cisco product capabilities, installation, or configuration. There is little or no impact to the end customer's business operation. All parties obligated under the support agreement and end customer will provide resources during standard business hours to provide information or assistance as requested.

Cisco encourages the partner to reference this guide when partner-initiated escalation is required. If the partner does not feel that adequate forward progress or the quality of Cisco service is satisfactory, Cisco encourages the partner to escalate the problem ownership to the appropriate level of Cisco management by asking for the duty manager.

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## Appendix C: Call-Tracking System

### Required Functions – Summary

Required Function	Gold	Silver
<p>Has a computer-based tracking system.</p> <p>Several popular call tracking systems are commercially available. Some partners may have internal call tracking systems; in some cases, these are tailored by company IT professionals to meet and exceed Cisco audit specification requirements.</p>	✓	✓
<p>Automatically allocates case identifier (case number).</p> <p>Systems must have the capability to automatically allocate the case number; this ensures sequential and orderly tracking of case history and associated case information.</p>	✓	✓
<p>Contains fields to track the caller information (name, company, phone number, e-mail ID, pager, contract ID, etc.).</p> <p>Call tracking systems must have well-defined fields to incorporate relevant case information.</p>	✓	✓
<p>Contains a field for a brief case description/headline.</p> <p>This field is used by the partners to define salient points related to the case.</p>	✓	✓
<p>Has the ability to log case notes with a date/timestamp and to track all support activities, even those initiated internally. Logs call information, RMA shipments, and onsite activities.</p> <p>Ability to capture, trend, and track all support activities, including problem definitions and engineering updates to the case, whether corrective or informational. This also involves generating meaningful metrics that monitor case quality.</p>	✓	✓
<p>Records date/timestamp (unmodifiable) when the case is opened and closed.</p> <p>The call-tracking system must accurately capture the date and exact time of case activity.</p>	✓	✓



<p>Generates automatic escalation alerts on current priority and length of time case has been open; these escalations can take the form of e-mail, SMS messages, or pager alerts (Cisco Gold Certified Partners only).</p> <p>For Gold certification, escalation alerts must be system-generated and accompanied by an e-mail, SMS, or pager message to parties identified in the escalation procedures. Alerts must be generated in accordance with the partner's documented escalation procedures and must be functioning for priority 1 and 2 type cases as a minimum requirement.</p>	✓	
<p>Any alerts defined by the partner's escalation process are recorded in the system, but can be processed manually (Cisco Silver Certified Partners only).</p> <p>For Silver certification, alerts can be manually initiated, and must be accompanied by an e-mail, SMS, or pager message, or telephone call to the parties identified in the escalation procedures.</p>		✓
<p>Logs case updates as unmodifiable entries.</p>	✓	✓
<p>Timestamps for significant events are not modifiable (e.g. change of priority, change of status, change of owner).</p>	✓	✓
<p>Records Cisco TAC case numbers (separate field is preferred, but notes field is acceptable).</p> <p>When cases are escalated to the Cisco TAC, the partner's call-tracking system must have the ability to record the Cisco TAC case ID number; this is mostly accomplished by generating a separate field within the call tracking system; sometimes, however, this information may be populated within the case notes.</p>	✓	✓

**Suggested:**

- An alert should continue to be displayed until the case is closed or the case priority is downgraded to Priority 3 (or equivalent) or lower
- Records date and timestamp when escalation alerts are activated
- Records date and timestamp and system user when changes in the alert priority status occur



## Appendix D: Policies Pertaining to Cisco Gold and Silver Certification

### Re-Certification

Purpose: Policy regarding annual re-certification.

Silver and Gold certifications are valid for 12 months. Partners are expected to remain in compliance with the certification requirements throughout the certification period. Partner compliance will be validated through an annual re-certification audit.

- Certified partners must submit an online application for re-certification by their certification anniversary date each year.
- Partners that have not submitted a complete application by 30 days after their certification anniversary date may be de-certified.
- In order to maintain certification, the re-certification audit must be conducted no later than 60 days after the partner's certification anniversary date.
- If a partner's re-certification is delayed for any reason, including a corrective action plan to address a deficiency, the partner's certification anniversary date will not be adjusted. The partner will still be due for re-certification on their next anniversary date.

### Onsite Audit Waiver

Purpose: Policy to waive the onsite audit requirement for re-certification of partners that have demonstrated outstanding performance within the Cisco certification program.

In order to qualify, partners must have demonstrated exemplary performance during their prior year's audit, resulting in no "get-well" plans, and must also have remained in compliance with the overall certification program, including the program's personnel, specialization, and customer satisfaction requirements during the past year. They must also meet all criteria outlined in Section II.1 of the Certification Audit and Policies Document, plus relevant attach rate and service revenue metrics. Any changes to the program requirements, partner's support agreement, or business operations may disqualify partners from an onsite audit waiver. Eligibility for the audit waiver is based upon the discretion of the Cisco Channel Certification Manager. Partners that are awarded an audit waiver in a given year must participate in an onsite audit the following year.

### Get-Well Plans

Purpose: Provides partner with an extended time period to ensure compliance with an outstanding requirement for re-certification.

During the course of a get-well plan, the partner will maintain the current certification level, provided that all other certification requirements are met. Failure to meet the requirements in a get-well plan may result in loss of certification and corresponding discount. Eligibility for a get-well plan is at the discretion of the Cisco Channel Certification Manager. Consecutive get-well plans are not allowed.

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### **Certification Downgrade**

Purpose: Policy regarding partner downgrade for noncompliance to program requirements.

Cisco may de-certify or downgrade a partner if the partner fails to comply with Gold or Silver requirements during the certification term, due to but not limited to the following:

- Failure to meet certified individual requirements
- Failure to meet specialization requirements
- Failure to meet customer service requirements

### **Mergers and Acquisitions**

Purpose: Policy related to certification of a business entity formed by a merger or acquisition when the companies do not share the same certification level.

In order for the new entity to be recognized at the higher level of certification, an onsite audit may be required to verify that the combined company meets all requirements for that certification. The requirement for an onsite audit will be determined based on the level of integration and potential disruption in the pre- and/or post-sales functions of the two businesses. This integration has to conform to the requirements as laid out in the affiliate policy section of this document.

The new, combined entity is to inform Cisco on the integration of the entities. For companies that will remain separate legal entities, please see the affiliate policy below.

### **Affiliate Policy**

Purpose: Cisco's policy with respect to certification (and specialization) applications from corporate groups, where the resources and staff fulfilling the certification requirements are controlled or employed by more than one legal entity.

In order to meet the Cisco certification requirements, Cisco requires that the resources and staff relevant to the certification work as an integrated business unit to fulfill the end user's pre- and post-sales support needs.

For that reason, generally, certification is granted for a single company. To be considered toward certification qualification, certified individuals must be *full-time or full-time equivalent* employees of the company based within the country for which certification is applied and identified as such in Cisco's training database.

Where the resources and staff relevant to the certification are controlled or employed by different companies within the same corporate group, Cisco will grant certification only if the applicant can demonstrate that those staff and resources operate as an integrated business unit in terms of the support services supplied to Cisco end customers.

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Applicant must demonstrate the following:

1. In respect of each affiliate, applicant must show:

- (a) The affiliate is controlled, directly or indirectly, by the applicant
- (b) Both the applicant and the affiliate are controlled, directly or indirectly, by the ultimate parent company
- (c) The affiliate controls, directly or indirectly, the applicant

Control for these purposes may be assumed where there is, directly or indirectly, 51 percent share ownership or where local accounting rules allow the applicant and the affiliate to file consolidated statutory accounts as part of a corporate group.

2. The relevant resources and staff must act operationally as an integrated business unit.

There must be:

- Common support and management structures
- Common escalation procedures
- A shared intranet, with visibility to customer status across the affiliates
- Call tracking systems that intercommunicate
- A centralized approach allowing post-sales engineers to access information about all installations and support all customers, even when planned, designed, or implemented by another affiliate
- The staff must be full-time or full-time equivalent employees of the affiliate or applicant and working within the country for which certification is applied for

## CCIE Policies

### Hiring and Terminating

Purpose: Policy regarding loss of a CCIE and hiring a CCIE from another Cisco certified or specialized partner.

### Losing Partner

If the loss of a CCIE takes a certified partner below the number of CCIEs required for certification, partner is to notify Cisco of its non-compliance within 30 days. Upon receipt of such notice, partner may qualify for an extension of six months to replace the CCIE in order to avoid de-certification. A partner that voluntarily terminates the employment of a CCIE may not qualify for the time extension. During the extension period, the partner will retain its certification as long as all other certification requirements are met.

If a partner does not notify Cisco of its non-compliance with the CCIE requirement within 30 days and Cisco identifies the deficiency, the partner may be given an extension of 60 days to replace the CCIE in order to avoid de-certification. This extension period will begin upon Cisco's notification to the partner of non-compliance.

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### **Gaining Partner**

If a partner hires a CCIE who was previously employed by another Cisco certified or specialized partner, Cisco will not count this individual toward certification or specialization for the hiring partner for a period of 12 months from the date of hire. This rule does not apply if a Cisco certified or specialized partner terminated the CCIE. In this case, Cisco will require documentation from the partner that terminated the CCIE.

### **Contracting**

Purpose: Policy regarding contracting CCIEs required for certification.

In general, CCIEs required for certification must be legally employed by the applying partner in the country where the partner is seeking certification. A maximum of 50 percent of the required number of CCIEs can be hired under contract provided that the following criteria are met:

- CCIE must have exclusive, full-time contract with partner in country seeking certification and must dedicate 100 percent of his or her time to that partner's business
- Contract must be good for at least 12 months from the audit date

### **Outsourcing**

Purpose: Policy for outsourcing part of partner's support service (as required for Silver or Gold certification) to a third party. This policy covers: call center operation, technical support, and onsite service.

### **Call Center Operation**

The partner may outsource initial call-taking activities to a third party as long as the following requirements are met:

- The partner must demonstrate how they evaluate the skills and capabilities of the outsourced party in determining suitability to provide such services, including the mechanism employed to monitor ongoing performance.
- The outsourced activities must be formalized in a contract between the partner and the outsourced company. This contract must be made available to the audit team for review during the audit and must include a SLA consistent with the support requirements for the partner's level of certification.
- The outsourced party must receive phone calls in the local language through the partner's published service telephone number for the country.
- The outsourced party must have full access to the partner's call-tracking system to allow for immediate logging of customer calls.
- The outsourced party must ensure callback by a partner engineer within one hour.
- The outsourced party must be able to contact partner engineers or management and transfer customer phone calls to the partner as appropriate.
- Subsequent call tracking and management, troubleshooting, case updates, escalation and alerts, and case closure are the full responsibility of the partner.
- No technical support is to be outsourced as part of the call center.



### After-Hours Call Center Support

After-hours call center operation can be outsourced to a third party, such as a paging service, if the following criteria are met:

- The third party must have procedures to guarantee that customers will receive technical support as stipulated in their service contract. These procedures should consist of an escalation process where, if the designated on-call engineer does not respond within a specified timeframe, a second attempt is made. If there is still no response, a manager is notified.
- Procedures must be documented on how the partner will be notified, during normal business hours, of all calls received during the previous after-hours or holiday period.
- No technical support is to be outsourced as part of the call center.

### Technical Support Operation

Technical support operation must remain in-house with the partner and cannot be outsourced to a third party.

### Onsite Hardware Replacement Services

The partner may outsource onsite hardware replacement provided that the following requirements are met:

- The partner must demonstrate how they evaluate the skills and capabilities of the outsourced party in determining suitability to provide such services, including the mechanism employed to monitor ongoing performance.
- The outsourced activities must be formalized in a contract between the partner and the outsourced company. This contract must be made available for review during the audit.
- Details about the training and skill level of the engineers of the outsourced party to support Cisco products must be provided.

### **Consolidated Support Centers**

A partner that operates in more than one country may elect to consolidate support operations in one or more regional centers. The Consolidated Support Center (CSC) may be used to take, handle, resolve, or escalate customer support cases, in conjunction with the partner's local support organization. The CSC will be validated by an audit every two years.

The CSC must meet the following criteria:

- Operate on a 24x7 schedule, either as a single entity or through a "follow-the-sun" coverage model.
- Follow operations and service delivery methodologies based upon an accepted industry standard such as the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) framework.
- Have a consistent process for handling and passing cases between local and central operations.
- CSC and all countries using it must share the same IT infrastructure and tools.

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- Participating countries must have visibility through tools to real-time information on the status of cases.
- The partner can have more than one CSC providing support to customers in a given country, but must identify all centers providing support, scope of responsibility and documented process for providing seamless support.

The CSC(s) must provide support specified for certification level of the remote country, including:

- Telephone support with local phone number and support of national language(s).
- Call-back and onsite response.
- Single, integrated call-tracking system with transparent escalation process (system must meet all Gold certification requirements),
- All resources providing technical support, in the local support organization and in the CSC, must have full access to the call tracking system.

### CCIEs

A partner using the CSC model may meet the CCIE requirement for Silver or Gold certification in the following manner:

- Have up to half of the required CCIEs located in the designated CSC(s). These engineers must be distinct from those nominated for in-country certification for the CSC country or any other countries. The remainder of required CCIEs, including any used to satisfy specialization roles, must be located in the country applying for certification.
- If a partner has multiple CSCs, CCIEs can only be allocated from the designated CSC(s) that provide remote support for the country applying for certification.
- If a remote country is not using a CSC, all CCIEs required for certification must be in country.

### Lab Equipment for Cisco Shared Support Program and SIS Partners

Equipment necessary to satisfy the demonstration and post-sales lab requirements for certification and specialization can be located in the CSC if the following criteria are met:

- Engineers in the remote country must have full access to equipment located in the CSC (on a 24-hour basis for Gold certified countries). Partner will be required to demonstrate this during the onsite audit.
- If a remote country is not using a designated CSC, all required equipment must be located in-country.
- If a partner uses a centralized lab (in a CSC) for achieving certification or specialization in remote countries, the CSC lab will be audited on an annual basis.

### Audit Requirements – Remote Country Using CSC

If a country operation seeking certification is using a CSC in another country, the following audit requirements apply (in addition to the standard audit itinerary):

- Partner must provide adequate documentation of the support processes between the CSC and country seeking certification, including but not limited to, seamless passing of cases between the two organizations.

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- Demonstrate that the CSC CCIEs providing support to the remote country and the management of both the CSC and support organization of the remote country are incorporated in the escalation process. This should be demonstrated in the 10 sample cases.
- Demonstrate that support personnel in the CSC and country seeking certification have full access to call-tracking system in order to enter and update cases.
- Provide evidence of execution of CSC recommendations at end-customer's installation.

#### Audit Requirements – CSC

A separate audit of the CSC will be conducted to ensure that support between the countries and central operation is performed in accordance with SLAs, and that policies and procedures are understood and correctly executed on both.

#### Suggested participants:

- Partner's Cisco Alliance Manager and a Technical Manager responsible for all service and support of Cisco technology.
- Cisco account manager and Cisco SE responsible for partner relationship across geographic region, or local SE in country where partner CSC is located.
- The partner theater support or local technical lead, able to demonstrate the tools and case handling.

#### Prerequisites (to be collected prior to the audit):

- Case handling and escalation process documentation, in English
- TAC reports
- Description of integrated call tracking system, in English
- Auditor will select two cases (not older than 12 months) per supported country
- Lab equipment use process

#### Itinerary:

- Introductions and audit goals (auditor)
- Overview of audit methodology (auditor)
- Partner support model and strategy overview presentation, including regional and/or technology coverage, organization structure, SLAs, metrics (partner)
- Call-handling process from end customer to CSC to Cisco (review the call-tracking system, show cases for remote countries using CSC)
- Lab equipment and demo capabilities
- Review of audit findings (if applicable)

#### During the CSC audit, the partner must:

- Provide an overview of qualified engineers.

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- Outline lab equipment strategy and sparing strategy, including relationship to specializations in remote countries.
- Demonstrate a single, integrated call-tracking system, including tracking of elapsed time from case receipt to closure (all requirements for tracking and escalation should be satisfied).
- Demonstrate that the CSC CCIEs supporting remote countries and the management of both the CSC and support organization of the remote country are incorporated in the escalation process. This should be demonstrated in the sample cases for remote countries using the CSC.
- Demonstrate that support personnel in the CSC and country seeking certification have full access to the call-tracking system in order to enter and update cases.
- Demonstrate the central lab's remote-access capabilities and access across the different countries.



## Appendix E: Support Agreement Transition

Certification requirements will be based upon the partner's support agreement at the time of certification application.

### **Cisco Shared Support Program to Cisco Branded Resale/Packaged Services**

(Effective once partner's Cisco Shared Support Program has been terminated): No change related to performance metrics. Partner will be audited under Cisco Branded Resale requirements at next certification renewal.

**SIS/RSA to Cisco Branded Resale/Packaged Services** (Effective once a partner's SIS agreement has been terminated): Cisco TAC performance will no longer be required to maintain certification. Partner will be audited under Cisco Branded Resale requirements at next certification renewal.

**Loss of Cisco Branded Resale Agreement:** If a direct partner's Cisco Branded Resale agreement has been terminated (and no other agreement is in place), the partner will be downgraded to Premier certification, assuming that all other requirements for premier certification are met.



## Appendix F: Multinational Certification

Multinational certification builds upon the Channel Certification Program to recognize partners that have expertise in selling, deploying, and supporting Cisco integrated solutions across multiple countries in a given Cisco theater. Cisco theaters are as follows: United States and Canada, European Markets, Emerging Markets, Asia Pacific, and Japan. For multinational certification, the Emerging Markets theater is divided into two subtheaters: Latin America and Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa (East).

Multinational partners must meet the combined personnel requirements for all certified countries within the theater, but may take advantage of a consolidated support model as outlined in the Consolidated Support Centers section of this document.

A partner that achieves the required number of Silver and Gold certifications within the theater will be recognized as a Multinational Certified Partner for that theater. To qualify, a partner must have a multinational resale agreement for the subject theater.

More information is available at:

<http://www.cisco.com/web/partners/program/certifications/global/index.html>

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**Page 36**



## Appendix G: Certification and Specialization Terms and Conditions

### Version 01.18.06

These Terms and Conditions (the "Terms") are binding between Cisco Systems, Inc. ("Cisco") and the company you listed in the applicable Certification and/or Specialization Application ("Company"). These Terms set forth the requirements for obtaining and maintaining the applicable certification (Gold, Silver, Premier) or specialization offered under the Cisco® Channel Partner Program and supplement the most current Indirect Channel Partner Agreement in effect between Cisco Systems® and Company ("ICPA").

#### I. General Terms

**1. Receiving Benefits.** Company's receipt of the benefits associated with a particular certification or specialization, including but not limited to additional discount, constitutes Company's continuing representation that it is in compliance with all specialization and certification requirements of the specialization or certification level for which Company has received benefits. In the event Company receives specialization or certification benefits for which it is not entitled by reason of its failure to maintain particular specialization or certification requirements, and/or disclosing false or misleading information, Cisco reserves the right to revoke specialization or certification and require Company to repay any financial benefits received directly or indirectly from Cisco as a specialization or certification benefit, including but not limited to an additional discount.

**2. Changes to Program Requirements.** Cisco may change certification and specialization requirements as it deems appropriate and shall notify Company of any such changes, which notice may be through posting on the Cisco Channel Partner Program Website. Such changes may adversely impact Company's ability to qualify for specialization or certification. Any such changes to the specialization requirements will not affect Company's corresponding specialization for the remainder of the current 12-month specialization term. In addition, any such changes to the certification requirements will not affect Company's corresponding certification for the remainder of the current 12-month certification term. Cisco will also provide Company with a minimum of 90 days notice prior to the effective date of any such changes.

**3. Non-Compliance.** If, while Company is specialized or certified, Cisco becomes aware that Company is no longer in compliance with the applicable specialization or certification requirements, Cisco reserves the right to revoke the Company's specialization or certification. Company will notify Cisco of its non-compliance promptly, but in no event more than thirty (30) days after Company first becomes aware of its non-compliance. Upon receipt of such notice, Company may qualify for an extension of time in which to renew its compliance with the applicable specialization or certification requirements. Company's failure to provide such notice may disqualify Company from receiving such an extension. If no extension is granted or if Company fails to comply

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Page 37



with the certification or specialization requirements by the end of the extension period, Cisco reserves the right to revoke the applicable specialization or certification immediately. Cisco may monitor Company's compliance with the applicable specialization or certification requirements of a previously granted specialization or certification at any time. If Cisco believes Company may no longer be in compliance with these requirements, Cisco reserves the right to conduct an onsite audit of Company's qualifications at any time by providing fifteen (15) days prior written notice.

## II. Attaining and Maintaining Certification

**1. Certification and Audit Requirement.** For each level of certification, Company must meet the applicable requirements listed at <http://www.cisco.com/go/channelprograms> ("Certification Requirements").

Company acknowledges that each certification requires an audit by Cisco to assess Company's compliance with the certification requirements for the particular certification. Onsite audits may be performed by Cisco personnel or independent third-party contractors retained by Cisco ("Auditor"). The Auditor will not be a competitor of Company and Cisco or the Auditor will enter Cisco's standard Mutual Non-Disclosure Agreement with Company at Company's request.

II.1.1. Audits for Silver and Gold certifications require Cisco or its Auditor to visit Company's site.

II.1.2. Audits for Premier certifications are typically conducted without Cisco or the Auditor visiting Company's site. However, Cisco reserves the right to require an onsite audit before awarding a Premier certification.

**2. Audit Schedule.** Company will be audited at least once in the course of every calendar year. If Company is already certified, Cisco will attempt to schedule re-certification audit of Company as close as possible to the anniversary date of Company's initial certification date.

**3. Audit Compliance.** Company agrees to comply with reasonable informational requests made by the Auditors, by providing accurate responses to questions from the Auditors and furnishing appropriate documents, including but not limited to verification of employment status for the Company employees that Company has identified as possessing individual Cisco Career Certifications (e.g., CCIE®, CCNA®, CCDP®).

**4. Certification Decision.** Cisco shall decide at its sole discretion whether or not to certify Company. No statements by the Auditor or its personnel will be binding upon Cisco.



**5. Award and Renewal of Certification.** Cisco shall base its Certification decision on Company's ability to meet all the certification requirements in effect on the date Company submits a valid application for certification or renewal. Company must renew its certification annually based on the current certification requirements in effect at that time.

### III. Attaining and Maintaining Specialization

**1. Specialization and Audit Requirements.** For each specialization, Company must meet the applicable requirements listed at <http://www.cisco.com/go/specialization> ("Specializations Requirements").

Company acknowledges that each specialization requires an audit by Cisco to assess Company's compliance with the specialization requirements for the particular specialization. Audits will typically require individuals to pass pre-defined exams. However, Cisco reserves the right at its sole option to require onsite audits by Cisco personnel or the independent third-party Auditor.

**2. Audit Schedule.** After the initial specialization audit, Company will be audited annually, on or before the anniversary of the date that the specialization was first granted.

**3. Audit Compliance.** Company agrees to comply with reasonable informational requests made by Cisco, the Auditors, or testing agencies providing accurate responses to questions from the Auditors and furnishing appropriate documents, including but not limited to verification of employment status for employees of the Company that Company has identified as possessing individual Cisco Career Certifications (e.g., CCIE, CCNA, CCDP).

**4. Award and Renewal of Specialization.** Specialization designations are awarded for a period of one year; any point values for a specialization may be changed annually. Company receives point values for each specialization it qualifies current at the time of awarding the specialization badge; although specializations may be retired from time to time, Company receives then-current point values for one year for each specialization for which it qualifies. Every 12 months, Company must apply to renew each specialization. Cisco's initial and renewal decisions for each specialization will be based on the Company's ability to meet the applicable specialization requirements in effect on the date that Company submits a valid application for specialization or renewal. Companies qualifying for updated versions of existing specialization designations they hold will only receive point credit for the updated specialization.



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