

Cisco Channel Partner Program



Transition Guide for Cisco Channel Partners

Cisco Provides a Generous Transition Period of Up to Two Years



Making the Transition

Cisco Systems® understands that partners will need time to prepare for and align with the evolved Channel Partner Program. Cisco is providing a generous transition period of up to two years (Figure 1). This provides ample time for considering the specialization requirements and other opportunities for certification, making decisions about them, and completing the training and other requirements. You will need to select the best options based upon your business goals.

Important Transition Dates

March 14, 2006

Six new base specializations launched: Express Foundation, Express Unified Communications, Advanced Security, Advanced Unified Communications, Advanced Routing and Switching, Advanced Wireless LAN

Several existing specializations retired: IP Communications, IP Communications Express, Routing and Switching, Wireless LAN, and Security/VPN. (See Figure 2)

June 14, 2006

Last day to apply for or renew the specializations retired March 14, 2006.

March 2006 – February 2007

During the first year of the transition, you can achieve new specializations as your retired specializations expire. Certifications will be renewed under the current program during this period.

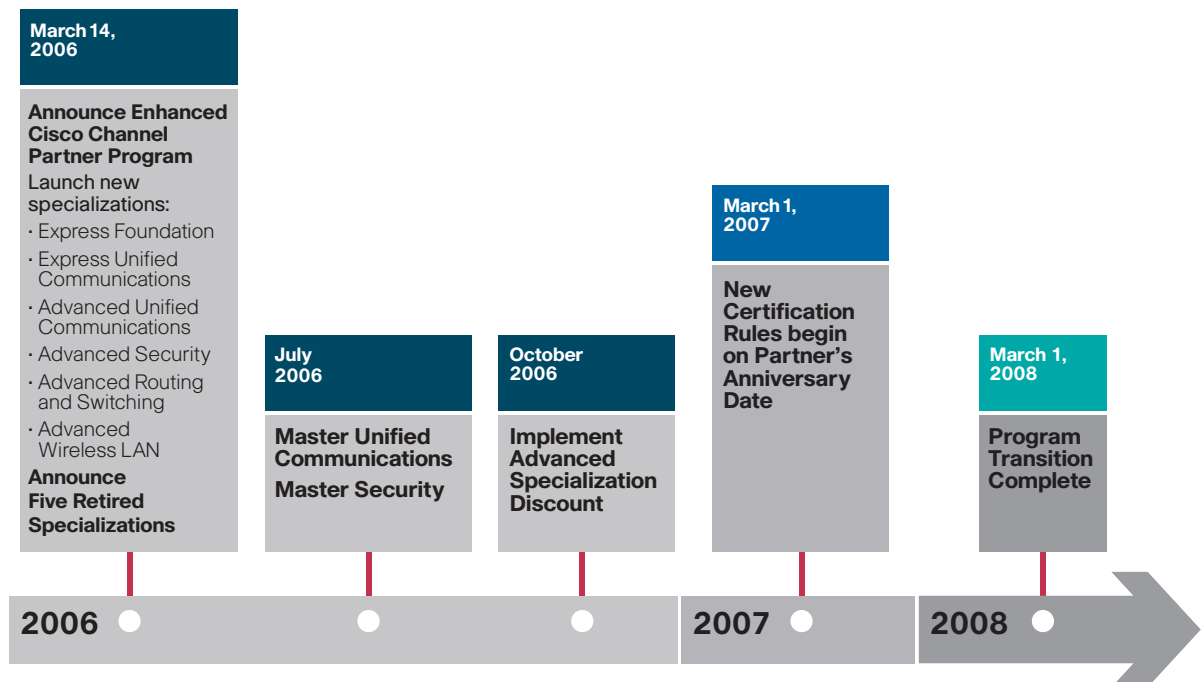
Starting March 1, 2007

New certification requirements will apply upon your next certification anniversary that falls on or after this date.

March 2008

All partners will be certified under the new program.

Figure 1. Transition to New Framework



Transition Process

One of the most important factors in ensuring a successful transition is to evaluate the enhanced program options and invest in capabilities that align with your business goals. Here are a few steps to guide you as you make this transition.

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)
Base =	Specializations are part of the new Certification program rules	
Optional =	Specializations are not included in the new Certification program rules	
Retired =	Retirement announced on date noted good until expiration	

Cisco Offers Partners Sustainable Long-term Competitive Advantages

Cisco is providing a generous transition period of up to two years.

Step 1 - Assess Business Strategy and Skill Needs

Understand your Cisco business volume and mix, strategic growth areas, and your unique and sustainable long-term competitive advantage and value. Then, review your current Cisco certification and specializations and corresponding renewal dates. Based on your business strategy, define the specializations you wish to renew and the new specializations you wish to achieve. Figure 3 provides some of the key areas to focus on regarding specific actions and decisions that you can make. The new program may require you to take additional training in order to expand your capabilities. You will have more options for rewards and differentiation – for example, advanced specialization discounts can be used to maintain or expand your capabilities. Ask your channel account manager (CAM) to assist you with the channel program return on investment model tool to help you understand the financial implications for you and how you can maximize your profitability through the enhanced Cisco Channel Partner Program.

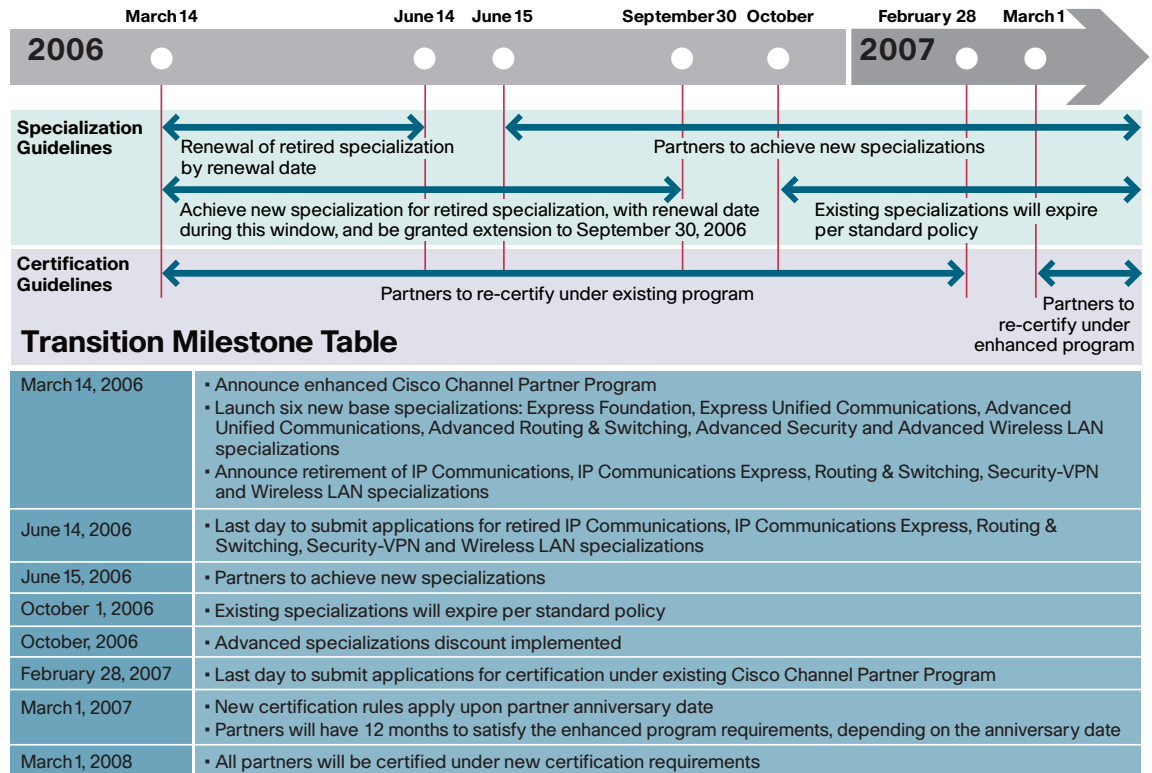
Figure 3. Partner Decisions

Partner Actions	Partner Actions
Understand the industry changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Impact on my business strategy?
Identify growth opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Segments and vertical markets? ▪ Technologies? Applications? ▪ Unique sustainable competitive advantage?
Identify solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Technology breath, depth or both? ▪ Which Services?
Identify required capabilities and gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sales, technical services skills investment?
Align business plan and investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is my Transition Plan? Current Certification/Specialization status, which to pursue? New specialization required for certification?

Step 2 - Assess Business Strategy and Skill Needs

Cisco has established a timeline that includes several milestones associated with the transition to the enhanced Channel Partner Program (Figure 4). This transition period allows you to plan for renewal of retiring specializations or to achieve new specializations.

Figure 4. Transition Milestones



Step 3 - Review Certification and Specialization Transition Guidelines

Review the Certification and Specialization Transition Guidelines to understand when your specializations and certifications will be affected. Your options and deadlines will be based upon the renewal dates for your current specializations and certifications (Figures 5–7).

Figure 5. Specialization Transition Guidelines

Specialization renewal date: March 14, 2006–June 14, 2006
Retired specializations due to expire March 14 through June 14, 2006 <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Submit application to renew retired Specialization by Specialization renewal date (plus 10 days grace period) or by June 14, 2006, whichever is earlier OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Achieve new specialization to replace expiring specialization by September 30, 2006 <i>Receive points for achieving new specializations during the transition period</i>
Specialization renewal date: June 15, 2006–September 30, 2006
Retired specializations due to expire June 15, 2006 through September 29, 2006, will be extended to September 30, 2006 <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Achieve new specialization to replace expiring specialization by September 30, 2006 <i>Receive points for achieving new specializations during the transition period</i>
Specialization renewal date: On or after October 1, 2006
Specializations with renewal date on or after October 1, 2006, will expire per standard policy <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Must achieve new specializations to replace expiring specialization <i>Receive points for achieving new specializations during the transition period</i>

Figure 6. Certification Transition Guidelines

Certification Guidelines
Year 1: March 14, 2006–February 28, 2007 <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Submit application to re-certify under existing program by certification anniversary date (plus 30 days grace period) or February 28, 2007, whichever is earlier Year 2: From March 1, 2007 <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Submit application to re-certify under enhanced program upon certification anniversary falling on or after March 1, 2007

Figure 7. New Application Guidelines from March 14, 2006

Specialization Guidelines
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Submit application to achieve retired specialization by June 14, 2006▪ After June 14, 2006, partner can only apply for new base or optional specializations
Certification Guidelines
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To certify under existing program requirements, submit complete application by February 28, 2007▪ To certify under enhanced program, apply on or after March 1, 2007

Points During Transition

To facilitate the transition, points will be given for new specializations so that you can maintain certifications under the existing points-based model (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Transition Points Table

Existing Specializations		New Specializations	
		Express Foundation	20
IP Communications Express	20	Express Unified Communications	20
Routing & Switching	20	Advanced Routing & Switching	25
Wireless LAN	20	Advanced Wireless LAN	25
VPN/Security	25	Advanced Security	25
IP Communications	40	Advanced Unified Communications	40

Step 4 – Review Partner Transition Examples

Figures 9 and 10 provide examples that demonstrate how the transition guidelines apply to a sample existing partner. Please review these examples. Understand that these are basic examples and every partner situation will be different. This will provide you with the concepts that you need to apply to your situation.

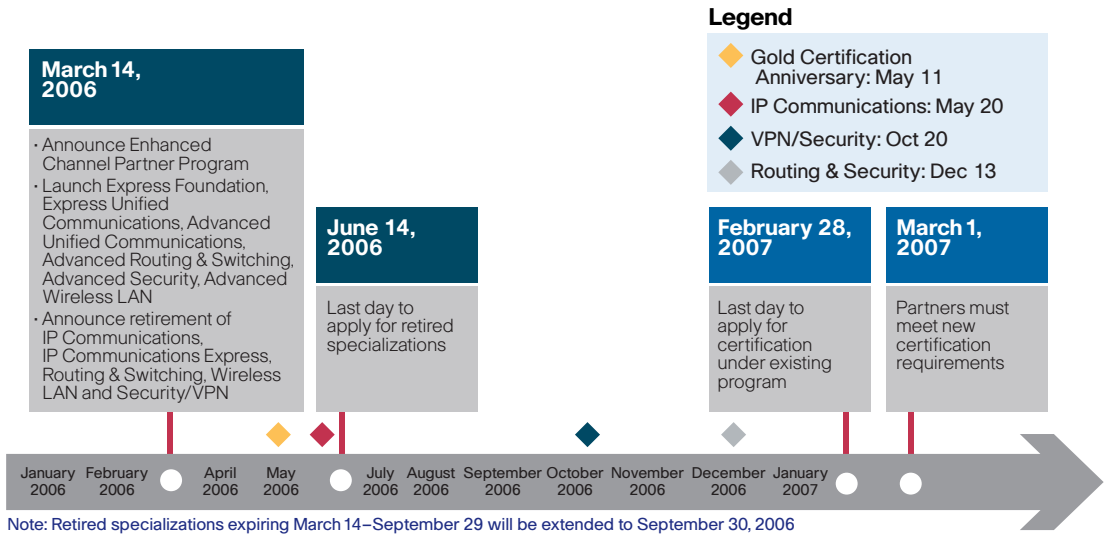
Partner Transition Assumptions and Guidelines

The partner transition guidelines and examples assume that you are replacing expiring specializations with new specializations of like technology (or Express Foundation Specialization) and pursuing recertification at the same level. For example, if your Wireless LAN specialization is expiring, you could take Advanced Wireless for Gold/Silver or Foundation Express for Premier.

Partners can only hold a single specialization in a given technology. For example, a partner cannot hold a Unified Communications specialization with both an Express Unified Communications and an Advanced Unified Communications specialization. If you were to take Advanced Unified Communications before your current IP Communications specialization expires, the older specialization would be removed. This policy does not apply to the Advanced Technology Provider Program specializations.

You can continue to take optional specializations, but these will not count toward certification under the new program. In addition, Advanced Technology Provider Program specializations will not count toward certification under the new program.

Figure 9. Partner Transition Example 1

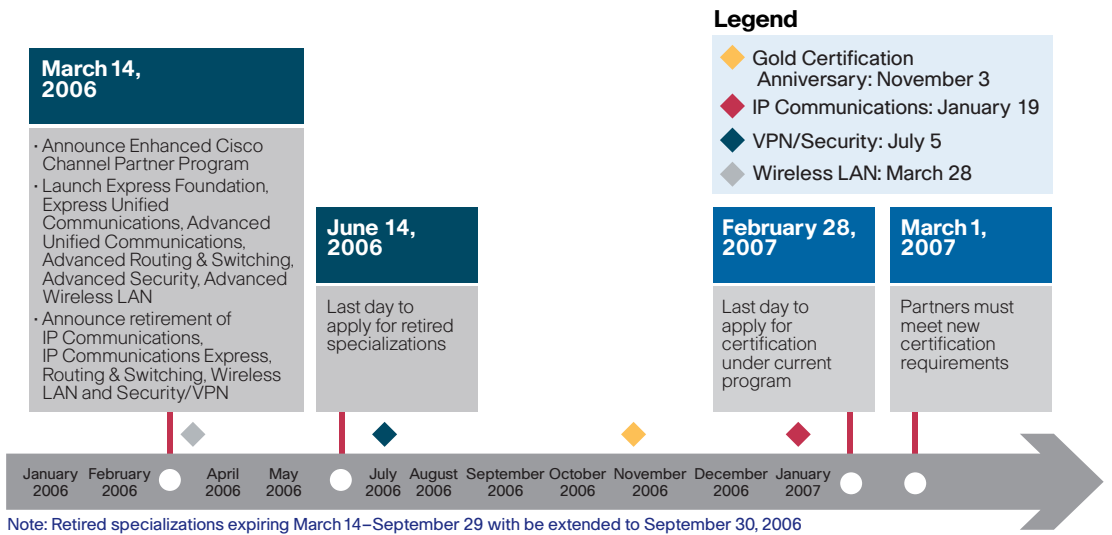


Steps

- Apply for re-certification under the **existing program** by May 11, 2006
- Renew **existing IP Communications** by June 14, 2006, or complete **new Advanced Unified Communications Advanced** by September 30, 2006, with extension granted to existing IP Communications
- Existing **VPN/Security** and **Routing & Security** will expire. Partner to achieve **Advanced Security** by October 20, 2006, and **Advanced Routing & Switching** by December 13, 2006
- Achieve Advanced Wireless LAN** and apply for re-certification under the **enhanced program** by May 11, 2007

Note: For simplification, all grace periods have not been considered

Figure 10. Partner Transition Example 2



Steps

- Renew **existing Wireless LAN** by June 14, 2006, or complete **Advanced Wireless LAN** by September 30, 2006, with extension granted to existing WLAN
- Extend **existing VPN/Security** to September 30, and achieve **Advanced Security** by September 30, 2006
- Apply for re-certification under the **existing program** by November 3, 2006
- Existing IP Communications** will expire. Partner to achieve **new Advanced Unified Communications** by January 19, 2007
- Achieve Advanced Routing & Switching** and apply for re-certification under the **enhanced program** by November 3, 2007

Note: For simplification, all grace periods have not been considered



Step 5 - Guide Your Transition Plan

At this point, you should have an understanding of how to follow the transition path to certify under the new program guidelines and be ready to build your unique transition plan.

Cisco is investing heavily in this enhanced, value-based partner program. Our goal is to enable partners to accelerate growth, gain more opportunities to differentiate their business, and increase profitability.

For More Information

For more information about the enhanced Cisco Channel Partner Program, contact your local channel account manager today, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/enhancedpartnerprogram/>, or contact Partner Help at www.cisco.com/go/partnership.

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