Cisco Cloud Portal Delivers Self-Service Provisioning for Data Center Services

The Cisco® Cloud Portal provides a self-service portal, service catalog, and lifecycle management solution for private cloud or hybrid cloud computing, as well as for other virtual and physical infrastructure services. The result: improved IT agility, reduced costs, greater responsiveness to business needs, and faster time to market for application development.

New Benefits of Cisco Intelligent Automation Solutions

With the acquisition of newScale, Cisco Intelligent Automation solutions now include the industry’s leading self-service IT portal, service catalog, and lifecycle management software. This software helps IT departments offer a unified storefront for provisioning data center services across physical, virtual, and cloud environments.

Now Cisco customers can deploy a web-based portal to provide easy, yet controlled, access to IT resources from a catalog of standardized service options. This capability allows IT departments to:

- Encourage adoption of standardized options with a menu of choices in an online catalog
- Deploy an internal private cloud and govern public cloud use with a self-service portal
- Manage the lifecycle of services and track consumption for pay-per-use tracking
- Improve visibility into demand to help ensure more accurate capacity planning

The Cisco Intelligent Automation for Cloud solution combines newScale’s software with the Cisco Process Orchestrator. This combination of newScale with the orchestration capabilities provided by Cisco Process Orchestrator delivers an automated order-to-provision experience for infrastructure services.

The newScale solution is also available individually as the Cisco Cloud Portal (Figure 1) to facilitate self-service ordering from a unified service portal for computing, networking, storage, and other data center resources. This software complements the Cisco Unified Computing System™ (Cisco UCS™) as well as other Cisco products, services, and partner technology solutions. Cisco is committed to supporting flexibility and customer choice in management through a broad ecosystem of technology partners.

The result for Cisco customers is greater agility, speed, and efficiency through private or hybrid cloud computing and the next-generation data center.
With the Cisco Cloud Portal, You Can Provide Users with a Configurable Self-Service Portal for Provisioning Infrastructure Services

**Unified Self-Service Portal for Intelligent Automation**

The Cisco UCS platform unifies networking, computing, storage access, and virtualization resources in a cohesive system to reduce total cost of ownership (TCO), increase business agility, and improve productivity for the next-generation data center. But how do users request the IT resources they need?

In most IT departments, the process for infrastructure service requests is complex and expensive. When application developers or project managers request a new data center service (for example, to host a new application), each request is treated as essentially a new project, even if that same request is made dozens or hundreds of times. Whether the application is mission critical or not, or whether it is for development, testing, or production, the process is cumbersome, manual, inconsistent, and slow.

In a well-run organization, IT can complete this overall process within weeks. But “weeks” is not good enough. These long cycle times exacerbate the tension between application development and data center teams and result in costly delays for new projects and business initiatives. With providers like Amazon Web Services offering cloud computing within minutes for pennies per hour, business and project leaders ask, “Why does IT take so long and cost so much?”

Cisco Intelligent Automation software now includes a Web-based self-service portal and unified IT storefront that complements the Cisco UCS platform for cloud-based, virtualized, or physical computing environments. Using Cisco Cloud Portal software, whether as part of the Cisco Intelligent Automation for Cloud solution or as a standalone solution, IT administrators can more quickly and effectively manage infrastructure service requests for resources running on Cisco UCS or on multivendor, cross-platform infrastructure. Users have easy, yet controlled, access to the IT resources they need with on-demand provisioning, instead of having to wait days or weeks.

With the Cisco Cloud Portal, enterprise architects can define, catalog, and publish infrastructure offerings for development, testing, and production. The application development group can quickly determine which options are best suited for their business needs, with the capability to search, compare, and order from physical, virtual, or cloud service options (Figure 2). Infrastructure teams can manage approvals as well as help ensure governance...
and compliance. IT departments can promote adoption of standards, eliminate the back-and-forth requirements-gathering process, enforce policy-based controls, and track resource requests to help ensure more accurate capacity planning. In addition, IT management has complete visibility into the lifecycle of each service: from the initial request to decommissioning.

**Figure 2.** Application Development Teams Can Compare Cost, Provisioning Time, and Service Level Trade-Offs of Physical, Virtual, and Cloud Infrastructure Options

### Windows Application Hosting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 - Gold</th>
<th>Tier 2 - Silver</th>
<th>Tier 3 - Bronze</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical</strong></td>
<td><strong>Virtual</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cloud</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure, Reliable</td>
<td>Any Time Access</td>
<td>Ready, Safe, Fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Critical</td>
<td>Business Relevant</td>
<td>Development &amp; Test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Server Size</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Small</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>99.99%</td>
<td>99.99%</td>
<td>98.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Unavailability</td>
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<td>876</td>
<td>173.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to Provision (days)</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 1 Monitoring</td>
<td>Included</td>
<td>Included</td>
<td>Included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage</td>
<td>SAN Access 1TB</td>
<td>NAS 1000 GB</td>
<td>NAS 1000 CE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comparative Pricing**

![Price Comparisons](image)

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**Web-Based Menu of Standardized IT Services and Options**

In many enterprise data centers, every request to host a new application environment is an expensive, essentially new project. Each request may come with its own unique requirements, requiring approvals and exceptions. The sizing and server build procedure is a time-consuming and inefficient series of manual steps, involving back-and-forth clarification and requirements validation.

After standard infrastructure service offerings have been defined and published in the Cisco Cloud Portal, IT can dramatically reduce the cycle time for the ordering, approval, and provisioning of new applications environments while managing the process through predefined policies and standards. The process of requesting services from this catalog of standard offerings is simple and easy for IT consumers, and yet it maintains the policy-based controls and governance required for enterprise-class data center management.

With the Cisco Cloud Portal, the service catalog becomes a Web-based menu and actionable “one-stop-shop” for self-service infrastructure requests. Role-based entitlements provide personalized views of available services in a consumer-friendly portal. Approval workflow and intelligent forms enable self-service configuration and help ensure policy compliance (Figure 3). Guided configuration can recommend choices based on standard architectures, determine which options are needed, and enforce selections that address security or cost considerations. As a result, the request can avoid the long delays that result from architecture reviews and other manual validation steps.
Dynamic Self-Service Forms Can Accelerate the Process for Requesting New Server Environments While Providing Policy-Based Controls to Help Ensure Governance and Compliance

The Cisco Cloud Portal delivers a simple and easy-use interface, with the capability to configure the look-and-feel of the interface to match your organization’s brand, colors, and images. Interactive online forms can be easily designed and configured to capture all the relevant user and business information for each service request. With policy management controls for security and compliance, IT administrators have the flexibility to govern who has access to which computing resources and resource pools. This comprehensive role-based access control (RBAC) ensures that users have visibility into only the resources they are allowed to see.

By enabling application development teams to quickly and easily order the data center services they need through a self-service portal, the IT infrastructure team can:

- Guide the consumers of data center services to the best solution for their requirements
- Eliminate the time-consuming approval and design process for new projects
- Help ensure strict corporate compliance with security policies and operating procedures

Lifecycle Management for Private and Hybrid Cloud Environments

Lifecycle management is the process of managing a service from the initial request through approval, provisioning, ongoing updates, and finally, repurposing or decommissioning. Managing the lifecycle of IT services is a challenge for many organizations, however, and most IT departments have little visibility into what services are still being used and for what purpose.
Cloud instances and virtual machines can represent new governance and compliance challenges because of the ease with which they can be provisioned and the lack of visibility into who requested them, for what reason, and what data may be running on them. Virtual sprawl and even cloud sprawl have become common problems for many IT departments, whether they are tracking instances in their own private cloud environments or working with an external cloud service provider.

With the Cisco Cloud Portal, IT administrators can track and manage each service throughout its entire lifecycle: from provisioning to repurposing or decommissioning. This capability provides the visibility needed for ongoing maintenance (for example, administrators can create a snapshot, add storage, or increase quotas), governance, and billing. It also provides the capability to track ownership and expiration dates for requested service items so that they can be recovered or decommissioned at the appropriate time (for example, at the end of a 30-day lease). Effective management throughout the entire lifecycle process can help eliminate sprawl and reduce risk. In addition, with this management capability in place, IT has more transparency and accountability as well as more control, helping IT reduce costs and increase capacity as needed.

By implementing the Cisco Cloud Portal, IT can help ensure accountability, auditability, and visibility for cloud computing resources as well as other virtual and physical data center services (Figure 4). Now IT can:

- Manage all information associated with each service request, whether it is a three-tier hosting environment or a simple cloud instance
- Make updates or changes to a requested service and repurpose or shut down resources at the end of their lifecycle
- Track consumption for the physical, virtual, and cloud environments deployed to enable a pay-per-use model
- Provide transparency to enable showback or chargeback or to allocate costs based on requested resources

**Figure 4.** With the Cisco Cloud Portal, IT Teams Can Track the Context of Each Requested Environment, Including Who Requested It; the Business Purpose; the Lease Expiration Date; and Details about the Virtual Machine, Storage, Network, and Other Resources
The Cisco Difference

Cisco is the worldwide leader in networking solutions that transform the way that people connect, communicate, and collaborate. With the acquisition of newScale, Cisco Intelligent Automation solutions include the industry's leading self-service IT portal, service catalog, and lifecycle management software. The result for Cisco customers is greater agility, speed, and efficiency, shortening IT cycle times from weeks to minutes, reducing costs by 30 percent or more, and improving user satisfaction with IT.

For More Information

- Information about Cisco's solutions for cloud computing can be found at http://www.cisco.com/go/cloud
- Additional information about the Cisco Cloud Portal can be found at http://www.cisco.com/go/cloudportal