

# Cisco Unified Contact Center Enterprise: a comparison between Cisco Finesse and Cisco Agent Desktop

## Introduction

This white paper is intended for current Cisco Agent Desktop customers who are considering migrating to Cisco Finesse. You will find valuable information in this white paper to help you understand the differences in features and functionality between Cisco Finesse and Agent Desktop.

Cisco Finesse is a next-generation agent and supervisor desktop solution designed to meet the growing needs of agents, supervisors, and the administrators and developers who support them. It offers numerous benefits, including:

- A 100 percent browser-based agent and supervisor desktop: Cisco Finesse runs in a browser, which means you install it, and agents simply point their browser to the Cisco Finesse server. There is no client executable to install and maintain, which reduces Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)
- A container architecture built for client-side integration: Cisco Finesse is more than an agent state and call-control application. It is an OpenSocial gadget container, built to include third-party applications in a single agent desktop experience. Rather than switching between applications, agents have easy access to all applications and tools from a single window, increasing their efficiency
- An easy-to-use API: The Cisco Finesse API is a modern, open-standards-based, web API, exposed through Representational State Transfer (REST). Each function available in the Cisco Finesse User Interface (UI) has a corresponding REST API that allows all types of integrations for developers to use. The level of customization that is possible with Cisco Finesse is a lot greater than what is possible with Agent Desktop

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## Feature differences between Cisco Finesse and Agent Desktop

Some key features in Agent Desktop are not available in Cisco Finesse. These features include:

- Agent-to-agent chat
- Some workflow events and actions
- Integrated recording controls
- Silent monitoring for mobile agents

## Functional differences between Cisco Finesse and Agent Desktop

You will also want to understand the differences in functionality between Cisco Finesse and Agent Desktop. Note: Reference to a specific Cisco Finesse feature applies to both the Cisco Finesse UI and the API. Developers who write Cisco Finesse applications using the API will experience the same functionality outlined further in this paper.

### Dynamic team updates

When agents or supervisors are added or removed from a team, the team lists are dynamically updated in Agent Desktop. With Cisco Finesse, supervisors need to log in again or refresh their browser to see the change. Additionally, Cisco Finesse allows a supervisor to see an agent who has been removed from the team in the team list and perform supervisor actions on that agent. Unlike the Cisco Unified Intelligence Center gadget, which shows real time updates, the Team Performance gadget requires the supervisor to log in again to see the updates.

### Workflow groups compared with team configuration

With Agent Desktop, administrators create workflow groups and assign agents to these groups. The workflow groups could consist of agents from different teams. Not every agent from a team needs to be part of the workflow group. Settings, such as phone books and reason codes, are configured per workflow groups. This configuration is performed inside Cisco Desktop Administrator.

Rather than having workflow groups, Cisco Finesse reads the list of agents and teams from Cisco Unified Contact Center Enterprise. Configurations, such as phone books and reason codes, are applied directly to each team.

### Setting Wrap-Up data

With Agent Desktop, agents can set wrap-up data only after the call. With Cisco Finesse, agents can set a wrap-up code at any point during the call or during Wrap-Up state.

## Setting Wrap-Up data during silent monitor calls

With Agent Desktop, supervisors cannot set wrap-up data during a silent monitor call. With Cisco Finesse, supervisors can set wrap-up data during a silent monitor call.

## Silent monitoring

Cisco Finesse and Agent Desktop use Cisco Unified Communications Manager silent monitoring. In addition, Agent Desktop offers desktop and Switched Port Analyzer (SPAN) silent monitoring. With Unified Communications Manager monitoring, the customer and agent audio streams are mixed using an IP phone model that supports the built-in bridge feature. When a phone call is placed to the supervisor's phone, the supervisor will hear the customer and agent conversation through the phone.

Unified Communications Manager monitoring is different from desktop and SPAN monitoring in the following ways:

- Agents need a Cisco IP phone that includes a built-in-bridge
- Supervisors will hear the monitored call through their phone instead of through their PC sound card

## Silent monitoring and mobile agents

Cisco Mobile Agent architecture allows agents to use any phone. One implication of this architecture is that Unified Communications Manager monitoring is not supported. Because of this, Agent Desktop uses SPAN monitoring to monitor mobile agents. Since Cisco Finesse does not support SPAN monitoring, there is no way to monitor mobile agents with Cisco Finesse.

## Valid usernames

Agent Desktop supports a wide range of characters for usernames. Cisco Finesse Desktop agent usernames are restricted to 7-bit printable ASCII characters (any of the 94 characters with the numeric values from 33 to 126). They do not support double quotes (""). Agent IDs are case-sensitive and can contain letters, numbers, hyphens ( - ), underscores ( \_ ), and periods ( . ). Agent IDs cannot begin or end with a period or contain two periods in a row.

In addition, the following list of reserved, case-insensitive user names are not allowed in Cisco Finesse:

- Admin
- Finesse
- Xmpprootowner
- presencelistener
- cuicnodewatchuser
- cuicpresenceuser

## Administration on the secondary node

Cisco Finesse allows administration on the primary node and read-only access to the Cisco Finesse Administration application on the secondary node. If the primary server is down, the Cisco Finesse configuration cannot be adjusted.

## Cisco Finesse administration requires a functioning CTI connection

Cisco Finesse retrieves the list of teams from Unified Contact Center Enterprise in the Team Resources gadget. The Team Resources gadget is how reason codes, wrap-up codes, phone books, and workflows are assigned to teams. If the Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) connection between the Cisco Finesse server and Unified Contact Center Enterprise is not functioning, the list of teams cannot be retrieved. In such cases, it will not be possible to configure team-specific settings.

## Phone books

Agent Desktop provides agents access to the following phone number lists:

- A personal phone book, created and maintained by the agent (and enabled and disabled by the system administrator)
- Up to 256 phone books (includes global and workflow group phone books); each phone book supports a maximum of 3000 directory entries
- Up to 10,000 directory entries that include global, workflow group, or personal phone book entries

Cisco Finesse provides the following phone books, supporting up to 1500 contacts across all phone books:

- 10 global phone books
- 50 team phone books
- An individual phone book that includes a maximum of 1500 contacts

### Single sign-on

Cisco Finesse Desktop, available as part of Contact Center Enterprise 11.5, provides single sign-on capability, which simplifies login and password management for agents and supervisors by allowing just one login for the Cisco Finesse desktop and associated gadgets.

### Toaster notifications

Cisco Finesse Desktop, available as part of Contact Center Enterprise 11.5, provides the Toaster Notification feature. These notifications are pop-ups that appear when the Cisco Finesse web interface is not active or is in a minimized state. The agent receives a desktop call notification on an incoming call.

## Real-Time reporting

### Agent desktop

Agent Desktop provides the following real-time displays:

- Agent Automatic Call Distributor (ACD) state log display
- Agent call log display: Available in historical reports, this display shows a record of calls made and received over the past seven days, by day
- Agent statistics display shows performance statistics for the current day, starting at midnight; it is automatically updated every 30 seconds
- Contact service queue statistics display

The real-time reports available to Cisco Finesse users are dependent on the underlying platform.

For Packaged Contact Center Enterprise, LiveData reports are available as gadgets inside Cisco Finesse. These LiveData gadgets provide real-time agent and agent skill-group data. For more details on the data available in the reports or how to deploy them in

Cisco Finesse, review the documentation here:

[https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/td/docs/voice\\_ip\\_comm/cust\\_contact/contact\\_center/pcce/pcce\\_10\\_5\\_1/installation/guide/PCCE\\_BK\\_I0886FCE\\_00\\_install-guide-release-105/PCCE\\_BK\\_I0886FCE\\_00\\_install-guide-release-105\\_chapter\\_010001.html#CFIN\\_RF\\_L820C45E\\_00](https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/td/docs/voice_ip_comm/cust_contact/contact_center/pcce/pcce_10_5_1/installation/guide/PCCE_BK_I0886FCE_00_install-guide-release-105/PCCE_BK_I0886FCE_00_install-guide-release-105_chapter_010001.html#CFIN_RF_L820C45E_00).

[https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/td/docs/voice\\_ip\\_comm/cust\\_contact/contact\\_center/pcce/pcce\\_10\\_5\\_1/installation/guide/PCCE\\_BK\\_I0886FCE\\_00\\_install-guide-release-105/PCCE\\_BK\\_I0886FCE\\_00\\_install-guide-release-105\\_chapter\\_010000.html](https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/td/docs/voice_ip_comm/cust_contact/contact_center/pcce/pcce_10_5_1/installation/guide/PCCE_BK_I0886FCE_00_install-guide-release-105/PCCE_BK_I0886FCE_00_install-guide-release-105_chapter_010000.html)

For Unified Contact Center Enterprise and Hosted Collaboration Service, LiveData gadget reports are not available in the 10.5 versions. The alternative approach is to create Cisco Unified Intelligence Center permalink-based gadgets for Cisco Finesse. This capability is covered in the “Historical Reporting” section of this document.

In Finesse 11.6 release, Agent call logs and agent state logs are available to be viewed as LiveData reports (Agent Call History and Agent State History gadgets).

### Supervisor desktop

Cisco Supervisor Desktop provides the following real-time displays:

- Team skill statistics
- Skill summary statistics
- Skill agent state
- Team agent statistics
- Team agent state
- Agent versus team statistics
- Agent call log
- Agent ACD state log
- Enterprise data
- Call history

Cisco Finesse provides real-time agent state and queue data through the Team Performance and Queue Statistics gadgets.

In Finesse 11.6 release, Agent call logs and agent state logs are available to be viewed as LiveData reports (Agent Call History and Agent State History gadgets).

## Historical reporting

Cisco Finesse doesn't include any native historical reports. This is because Unified Intelligence Center provides a rich set of functionality for creating highly customized reports. These reports can be taken advantage of in Cisco Finesse.

The high-level steps to add a Unified Intelligence Center historical report into Cisco Finesse are as follows:

1. Create the report in Unified Intelligence Center.
2. Create a permalink for the report using Unified Intelligence Center.
3. Copy and paste the permalink URL into a template gadget.
4. Add the gadget to the Cisco Finesse layout just as you would any other gadget.

For more detailed instructions and a link to the template gadget, consult the "Cisco Unified Intelligence Center Sample Gadget" on the Cisco DevNet Developer Samples webpage: <https://developer.cisco.com/site/finesse/docs/#sample-gadgets>.

## Important considerations before upgrading to Cisco Finesse

Keep the following considerations in mind when deciding between Cisco Agent Desktop and Cisco Finesse:

### **Cisco Finesse requires premium licensing**

Agent Desktop is available as a Standard, Enhanced, or Premium seat license with Unified Contact Center Enterprise. With the 10.5 release and earlier, Cisco Finesse is available as a Premium seat only. Existing Standard or Enhanced customers need to upgrade to Premium seat licensing to be properly licensed to use Cisco Finesse.

### **Cisco Finesse runs on its own virtual machine with clients in the browser**

One important difference between Agent Desktop and Cisco Finesse is that the Cisco Finesse clients run in a browser. Aside from a supported browser, you do not need to install any client software on your agent and supervisor desktops. This is a huge business value of the Cisco Finesse solution.

Another difference between the platforms is that the Agent Desktop server runs embedded on the Contact Center Enterprise peripheral gateway, whereas Cisco Finesse runs on its own virtual machine.

### **Cisco Finesse requires more Client-to-Server bandwidth than agent desktop**

With Agent Desktop, the client UI is part of the application that is installed on the agent desktop. Because Cisco Finesse is a browser-based desktop, the UI needs to be streamed from the Cisco Finesse server to the Cisco Finesse client. This requires more bandwidth. You may access a bandwidth calculator in the Unified Contact Center Enterprise Design Guide to help you provision the network correctly for your Cisco Finesse deployment: <https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/support/customer-collaboration/unified-contact-center-enterprise/products-implementation-design-guides-list.html>.

### **Migration utilities are not available**

Because Agent Desktop and Cisco Finesse configurations are very different, no migration utilities are available. You will need to re-create your agent configuration in Cisco Finesse, including reason codes, wrap-up codes, and workflows. Cisco Finesse does not use the reason codes that are configured in the Contact Center Enterprise Agent Desk settings.

However, you may import phone books using Comma-Separated Values (CSV) files into Cisco Finesse. You can export your Agent Desktop phones to CSV and then import them to Cisco Finesse. Because the format of the Agent Desktop and Cisco Finesse CSV files are the same, you can export from Agent Desktop and directly import into Cisco Finesse without modifying the CSV file. See page 4 for the differences in phone book capacities for Cisco Finesse and Agent Desktop.

## Agent Desktop and Cisco Finesse operate simultaneously (Mixed-mode support)

It is possible to run both Agent Desktop and Cisco Finesse services at the same time. This feature is targeted for existing customers who want to run a trial of Cisco Finesse for a subset of agents while the bulk agents continue to use Agent Desktop.

Details for this feature are in the [Unified Contact Center Enterprise Design Guide](#). Here are the high-level considerations:

- All agents and supervisors for a team must use the same desktop, either Agent Desktop or Cisco Finesse
- Each agent team can use only one type of desktop at a time. For example, if an agent is using Cisco Finesse, the Agent Desktop application must not be started on the agent's PC, and if the agent is using Agent Desktop, Cisco Finesse must not be started
- Cisco Finesse and Agent Desktop both require two all-events client connections to the CTI server. Existing Agent Desktop customers will need to ensure that they have two spare CTI server all-events connections available to deploy Cisco Finesse, in addition to the two all-events connections used by Agent Desktop

For customers who are already in production with Agent Desktop, it is a best practice to run a small pilot of Cisco Finesse and ensure success on a limited scale before migrating the entire agent pool. You can switch back to Agent Desktop if desired

### Note:

- For new Contact Center Enterprise 11.0 customers, only Cisco Finesse Desktop is supported
- For new and upgrade customers of Contact Center Enterprise 11.5 and higher, only Cisco Finesse Desktop is supported

## Installing and administering Cisco Finesse

The Cisco Finesse Install and Upgrade Guide and the Cisco Finesse Administration Guide provide step-by-step instructions on how to:

- Install or upgrade to Cisco Finesse
- Configure Cisco Finesse
- Add additional gadgets to the Cisco Finesse gadget layout
- Prepare Cisco Finesse for agent and supervisor activity

Access these guides here:

<https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/support/customer-collaboration/finesse/products-installation-guides-list.html>

<https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/support/customer-collaboration/finesse/products-user-guide-list.html>

### Support for different versions of contact center enterprise

In an Agent Desktop deployment, there is a one-to-one correspondence between the Agent Desktop server version and the version of Contact Center Enterprise. For example, Agent Desktop 9.0 is the only version of Agent Desktop that is supported with Contact Center Enterprise 9.0.

Cisco Finesse is typically more flexible with this compatibility. For example, Cisco Finesse 11.5 is supported with Contact Center Enterprise 11.5, Contact Center Enterprise 11, and Contact Center Enterprise 10.5.

## Switching back to Agent Desktop

You can switch back to Agent Desktop, if desired. Simply have the agents log out of Cisco Finesse and then log back in to Agent Desktop.



## User documents

The Cisco Finesse Agent and Supervisor Desktop User Guide can be found here: <https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/support/customer-collaboration/finesse/products-user-guide-list.html>.

## Custom development

An important feature of Cisco Finesse is the ability to use the Cisco Finesse API to deliver custom functionality. To learn more about developing applications for Cisco Finesse, visit the Cisco Finesse DevNet Technical Center: <https://developer.cisco.com/site/finesse/>.

This site includes a wealth of valuable information, including access to:

- The Cisco Finesse developer guide
- Sample code
- Support forms
- Tips

To obtain support for custom development, either the deployment partner or customer must have a developer support services contract.

Details about the DevNet support services contract can be found here:

<https://developer.cisco.com/site/devnet/overview/>.

You may also access the Developer Network Marketplace, your source for highly secure, validated enterprise-class apps, products, solutions, and services: <https://marketplace.cisco.com/>.