

Cisco Enterprise NFV Open Ecosystem

Q What is the Cisco® Enterprise Network Functions Virtualization (NFV) Open Ecosystem?

A It is a program that allows third-party vendors to test their Virtual Network Functions (VNFs) on Cisco NFV platforms to help ensure that they meet basic compatibility requirements.

Q What NFV platforms and virtualization software does this testing cover?

A The Enterprise NFV Open Ecosystem supports three NFV and virtualization software platforms as follows:

- Cisco NFV Infrastructure Software (NFVIS), optimized for branch deployments
- Cisco Cloud Services Platform (CSP) or Secure Agile Exchange (SAE), optimized for perimeter, data center, and colocation deployments
- Cisco NFV Infrastructure (NFVI), the Cisco OpenStack solution targeted to service provider customers

Q Which vendors can participate?

A The ecosystem is open. All vendors, whether they offer a complementary solution or competitive solution, may join the program.

Q Are vendors required to join?

A No, not at all. Cisco isn't going to tell customers that a particular third-party vendor can or cannot be used on Cisco platforms, but customers will have greater confidence in certified third-party vendors.

Q Can Cisco refuse to allow any VNFs to be tested and certified?

A We will not accept any VNFs that we deem malicious, illegal, poorly designed (resource hogs), frivolous (unlikely to provide a business benefit), or vexatious.

Q Why do this? What's in it for Cisco?

A You're either open or you're not. There's no in-between. Customers can realize maximum value from an NFV approach only if they have the flexibility to deploy what they need, whether that comes from Cisco or not.

Q What's in it for the customer?

A It will instill confidence that our NFV platforms offer the choice and flexibility they seek. Further, knowing that a given VNF has passed compatibility testing negates the need for customers to repeat that testing themselves.

Q **Will Cisco promote competitive VNFs?**
A No, that is not a part of this program. Being open doesn't mean actively promoting or encouraging third-party competitive offerings. While competitive vendors may, in their literature, state that they are members of this ecosystem, and that they are compatible with Cisco NFV, this program does not promote or enter into joint marketing activities.

Q **Will Cisco promote noncompetitive VNFs?**
A This will be done on a case-by-case basis. Some vendors will enhance a Cisco solution; others will merely be complementary. As you may imagine, we retain the flexibility to work more closely with specific vendors. This may range from limited joint marketing up to full joint development in the case of strategic partners.

Q **What about customer-authored or open source VNFs?**
A The possible combinations of open source software instantiated as a VNF are limitless. Should a particular configuration gain traction with customers, it would make sense to test and validate it. In the case of a customer-authored VNF, we can make our test specifications available to those customers as needed for purposes of self-testing.

Should a customer want Cisco to test an esoteric open source configuration, or something home-grown, we would recommend engaging Cisco Advanced Services. For information, go to <https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/services/overview.html>.

Q **What is tested?**
A Generally, we test that the VNF can be instantiated and deleted, that management interfaces can be reached, that it will process and pass "user" traffic, that the resource requirements are correctly defined, and that suitable deployment and support documentation is readily available to the customer.

Q **What about performance testing?**
A This is not part of our test scope. It's up to each vendor to do any performance testing customers may demand.

Q **What about testing a given feature?**
A Feature testing is not included the scope of certification. Since each VNF is likely to have nuances, even within a class of VNF devices (such as firewall VNFs, for example), it is difficult to scale up and test in a cost-effective manner. It is therefore up to the individual vendors to ensure that the features of their VNF do what they are supposed to.

Q **Will Cisco Technical Assistance Center (TAC) support third-party VNFs?**
A The Cisco TAC will assist a customer in determining whether an issue is with the Cisco platform, NFVIS, or the VNF. If the problem is determined to be a third-party VNF, TAC will refer the customer to the third-party support channel.

Q **Will vendors' VNFs be on the Cisco price list?**
A No, this is a certification program only. Individual VNFs are sold and supported by their respective vendors.

Q **What is the process to get a vendor/VNF certification started?**
A Interested vendors should contact nfv-ecosystem@cisco.com to get started.

Q **Where can I get more information?**
A Please see www.cisco.com/go/enfv