Customized knowledge transfer services ensure success of major data center deployment

The U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) administers the Social Security program, a social insurance program that provides retirement, disability, and survivors’ benefits. SSA is responsible for paying more than $800 billion each year in monthly benefits to more than 60 million recipients. The agency is also responsible for maintaining the lifetime earnings records of more than 165 million workers. SSA delivers services through a global network of more than 1400 offices, including regional offices, field offices, hearing offices, Social Security card centers, teleservice centers, and processing centers. The agency has more than 63,000 permanent employees.

When it was time to implement the new National and Secondary Support Centers that would use the Cisco Nexus® platform, the agency turned to Cisco and customized knowledge transfer services to expand the expertise of its engineers, most of whom are already highly skilled, CCIE® level experts in Cisco® technology.

“Cisco provided its top engineers who worked with my team to teach them the Nexus platform. Thanks to the knowledge transfer, everyone achieved expert Nexus status. The relationship between our team and Cisco engineers is a continuous exchange: my team is engaged in learning more from Cisco, but they’re also willing to challenge and question when needed.”

— Larry Schwab, Director of Network Engineering, Office of Hardware Engineering, U.S. Social Security Administration
Planning and design support complements targeted knowledge transfer to speed data center deployment.

New data center delivers 99.99 percent reliability from the start.

SSA’s new National Support Center (NSC) was completed ahead of schedule and under budget. It is already delivering superior availability, ensuring continued uptime of the applications that support the millions who rely on Social Security.

SSA is now in the process of upgrading its back-up data center, called the Secondary Support Center (SSC), using the same process relied on to deploy the NSC. The new connected data center design ensures maximum redundancy and reduces the hardware footprint for a greener data center, two key SSA goals.

Cisco demonstrated its understanding of our requirements; from design through deployment, we knew we would benefit from a platform that will meet our current and future needs. When it was time to go live at NSC, everything worked exactly as expected. I don’t think I could imagine a more successful experience turning up a data center, and a large part of that was due to the relationship, cooperation, and experience we have with Cisco.

— Larry Schwab, Director of Network Engineering, Office of Hardware Engineering, U.S. Social Security Administration
A strong partnership builds a powerful foundation

One integrated team is positioned for continued collaboration in the future.

The relationship between SSA and Cisco is unique. It is built on a commitment to collaboration and a common goal: ensuring that SSA has the cutting-edge technology needed to deliver the benefits on which more than 65 million customers depend.

“Everyone who works with us knows that when you enter our door, you become one of us, and you’re here to ensure that we can deliver the best possible service to the people who rely on Social Security. Cisco has the right technology. We depend on bandwidth, speed, reliability, and robustness across our network. More importantly, we have a real partnership with Cisco that goes beyond the product: Cisco helps us plan, engineer, design, test, and ensure we have the training we need for any deployment. When we collaborate in this way, we achieve our goals more quickly because we’re all coming from the same place.”

— Larry Schwab, Director of Network Engineering, Office of Hardware Engineering, U.S. Social Security Administration

Prior to any deployment, Cisco enables SSA to:

- PLAN
- ENGINEER
- DESIGN
- TEST
- TRAIN

Learn more

To learn more, see the FedTech magazine article “SSA’s New Data Center a Networking Masterpiece.”