

# Software Smart Licensing and Smart Accounts

FAQS | Partner, Distributor & Customer

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## Smart Accounts

### Smart Accounts Overview

**Q.** What is a Smart Account?

**A.** A Customer Smart Account is an account that can contain Smart Licenses, some traditional (PAK- based) licenses, Enterprise Agreements information, and Smart license-enabled products. There are two types of Smart Accounts: Customer Smart Account and Partner Holding Smart Account. Customer Smart Account enables users to manage their licenses, monitor license usage, and track Cisco license purchases in Smart Software Manager (SSM). A Partner Holding Smart Account enables users to temporarily deposit Smart License orders until the Customer Smart Account is identified.

**Q.** When do I need a Smart Account?

**A.** All Smart license-enabled products must have a Smart Account assigned in CCW Order to submit the order. These Smart Account mandatory products are indicated by a SA icon and 'Smart Account Required' message in red at the line level.

**Q.** What are the differences between Smart devices and non-Smart devices?

**A.** Difference is the types of licenses that get delivered for software features (ex: PAKs vs. Smart Licenses), portal that the licenses are used in (ex: LRP vs. SSM) and the way that the device is configured (ex: traditional configuration vs. Smart Licensing and Smart Call Home). Please note that most traditional licenses can be converted to Smart licenses.

**Q.** What is a Partner Holding Smart Account?

**A.** A Partner Holding Smart Account is an account where users can temporarily hold Smart license-enabled orders that contain Smart License products until the Customer Smart Account is identified. Post-sale, resellers must deposit these orders in an Customer Smart Account before the licenses can be consumed. Licenses cannot be activated in Partner Holding Smart Accounts. All partners and distributors will need to create a Partner Holding Smart Account.

**Q.** What is the difference between a Customer Smart Account and a Partner Holding Account?

**A.** All partners and distributors who resell Cisco products need to create a Partner Holding Smart Account. If a partner is also going to act as a consumer and purchase products for their own company, then they will also need a Customer Smart Account. Both accounts can be set up through a one-time set up process at Cisco Software Central. Licenses can be assigned to either type of Smart Account as part of the ordering process. However, the software licenses will ultimately have to be assigned to the Customer Smart Account to be used by the customer.

**Q.** What is a Virtual Account?

**A.** It is a subset of a Smart Account, which customers and partners can use to internally organize licenses. This organization is designed to be flexible to fit your company's specific needs. A partner may create Partner Holding Virtual Accounts for regions, offers, or partner groups whereas a customer may create Customer Virtual Accounts to reflect their company departments. When a Smart Account is created, a corresponding default Virtual Account is automatically created at the same time. Additional Virtual Accounts for Partner Holding Smart Accounts and Customer Smart Accounts are created in Cisco Software Central.

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**Q.** What is a Nested Virtual Account?

**A.** A Nested Virtual Account is a sub-Virtual Account which is “nested” under an existing Virtual Account. This option allows customers to create multiple levels of Virtual Accounts (up to 10 levels of Virtual Accounts). When creating a new Virtual Account within your Smart Account you can choose if you want to create it at top-level or nested under an existing Virtual Account.

Nested Virtual Accounts allow Smart Account Admins to assign individual Virtual Account Admins. Virtual Account Admins can then create additional Virtual Accounts within their Virtual Account. This means customers and partners will be able to easily create a Virtual Account hierarchy to categorize and organize assets.

**Q.** What is the role of the Cisco Partner in Smart Account management?

**A.** The partner can manage their customer’s Smart Account on behalf of their customer.

Please note that the Customer Smart Account Admin must grant to the partner a role within their Smart Account and/or specific Virtual Account. Typically, the customer would grant to a partner the role of Smart Account User or Virtual Account User, to enable the partner to manage licenses within the entire Smart Account, or a specific Virtual Account. The customer can also grant to a partner a Smart Account Admin or Virtual Account Admin role, if they want the partner to manage users and other Smart Account settings.

**Q.** Where do I view and manage Smart Accounts?

**A.** Once a Smart Account is created and the Smart Account-enabled products are purchased, basic account management for Partner Holding and Customer Smart Accounts is done in Cisco Software Central. The customers can access and manage their licenses assigned to their Smart Account through Smart Software Manager (SSM). Partners and customers can manage their Smart Account and create new Virtual Accounts through Cisco Software Central .

**Q.** What is the difference between Cisco Software Central and Smart Software Manager?

**A.** [Cisco Software Central](#) is the place to go to launch the Smart Account Administration options and Smart software management capabilities. Cisco Software Central is where users can access the Smart Account Administration section to manage their Smart Account attributes, manage Virtual Accounts and manage Smart Account/Virtual Account users. [Smart Software Manager](#) is where users can track and manage their smart software licenses.

**Q.** What are the Best Practices for creating and managing Virtual Accounts within a Customer Smart Account?

**A.** You can create multiple Virtual Accounts within one Smart Account. Virtual Accounts should be used to enable access control for licenses. Virtual Account Users can manage only the licenses in their Virtual Account.

Virtual Account names are visible for partners in the Cisco Commerce (CCW) Smart Account search. Therefore, it is recommended to use Virtual Account names that do not disclose any internal and confidential Customer company information.

**Q.** Will Cisco employees have access to the Customer Smart Account?

**A.** A small number of Cisco support personnel have access to Customer Smart Account to facilitate assisting customers. Other Cisco employees, Account teams, marketing, etc. do not have access unless granted by customers. Customers can grant access to their Customer Smart Account by adding new Users (either to the entire Smart Account or to one of the Virtual Accounts). Both Customer employees and Cisco employees can be added as new Users.

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**Q.** How can a partner manage a Customer Smart Account?

**A.** The customer needs to grant access to the partner to manage either the entire Customer Smart Account or a specific Virtual Account.

**Q.** Can multiple partners have access to the same Customer Smart Account?

**A.** The best practice is that a customer creates multiple Virtual Accounts within their Customer Smart Account. Access to each Virtual Account can be granted to a different partner. Note that access will then be limited to those assets within the authorized account.

**Q.** Can a partner or customer have multiple Customer Smart Accounts?

**A.** Yes, they can. However, we highly recommend having a single Customer Smart Account as that will give customers a comprehensive view of their licenses. Multiple Smart Accounts can also cause confusion for partners trying to determine which Smart Account to associate with a particular order.

## Creating and Managing Smart Accounts

**Q.** Are Smart Accounts available for all types of licenses?

**A.** Smart Accounts are available for Smart Licenses and PAK-based licenses. For Smart licenses, Smart Account assignment is mandatory at the time of order in CCW.

**Q.** Is it possible to use a team email alias to create a Smart Account?

**A.** Yes, it is possible to use a team email alias to create a Smart Account. However, it is not recommended as it limits the audit trail and prevents independent email notifications/alerts.

**Q.** When requesting a Smart Account, who should I designate as the Creator (Approver) role?

**A.** The Creator (Approver) must be someone associated with the company who can represent the company and own the company's license management. The email address of the Creator must match the company's Domain ID, so the email needs to be the person's primary company email and not their personal email. The creator must also have a CCO ID.

**Q.** After the Creator (Approver) has authorized Smart Account activation, are they defaulted to a particular role in the Smart Account?

**A.** The Creator/Approver is designated automatically as a Smart Account Administrator and Smart Account Approver. The intent is to have someone started in this role to manage the Smart Account and to manage Smart licensing.

**Q.** If there are two Creators/Approvers on one Smart Account, can they see each other's additional Accounts?

**A.** One person only can be the Smart Account Creator/Approver who will authorize Smart Account activation. Additional Users can be added to the Smart Account as Approvers, Admins or Users.

**Q.** How do you ensure there are no duplicate Smart Accounts created?

**A.** There is a duplicate check when a Smart Account is created. This ensures the top-level domain ID requested is not already taken and valid. The Smart Account request process will prevent any duplicate accounts from being created and will message the user if a duplicate is requested.

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**Q.** What happens when a customer merges/acquires new Customers?

**A.** In situations of mergers or spin-offs, a customer will be able to request for their Smart Account(s) to be merged or separated as appropriate. We understand the various reasons to legally change the owner of the Cisco license. You can contact support to address licensing issues and needs: open a case via [Support Case Manager \(SCM\)](#).

**Q.** What are the Customer Smart Account Roles?

**A.** There are six roles for Smart Accounts:

- Smart Account Approver: can edit Smart Account properties, view all Users, accept Agreements and view event logs. The Approver has access to Cisco Software Central, but no access to SSM, LRP and EA Workspace, therefore they cannot perform any license management activities.
- Smart Account Administrator: can edit Smart Account properties, add/ edit Users, add/ edit Virtual Accounts, accept Agreements and view event logs. The Smart Account Administrator has access to CSC and can also perform all license management activities in SSM, EA Workspace and LRP for the entire Smart Account.
- Smart Account User: Similar to a Smart Account Administrator, this role allows access to all Virtual Accounts across all tools (CSC, SSM, EA, LRP). A Smart Account User can perform licensing activities, but cannot create new Virtual Accounts or perform user management activities.
- Virtual Account Administrator: Similar to Smart Account Administrator, but limited to assigned Virtual Accounts. This role allows to edit/ add Users to assigned Virtual Accounts, view event logs for assigned Virtual Accounts and view Account Agreements. The Virtual Account Administrator can perform all license management activities in SSM, EA and LRP for the assigned Virtual Accounts.
- Virtual Account User: Similar to a Smart Account User, but is limited to the Virtual Account the user is assigned to: they can perform licensing activities for the selected Virtual Accounts, but they cannot add new users to their assigned Virtual Account.
- Smart Account/Virtual Account Viewer: Can view Smart Account or Virtual Account data but cannot make changes.

Note: for all the roles (except Smart Account Approver) CCW Order View management are incorporated automatically for applicable Partner Holding Smart Accounts. For more detailed information, go to the [Smart Accounts Roles Training](#).

**Q.** Is it possible to change the Approver or Administrator of the Smart Account and allow additional User(s) to see all the licenses and/or agreements?

**A.** Yes, User roles can be changed by a Smart Account Administrator in “Manage Smart Account” in [Cisco Software Central](#). A different User or an additional User can be authorized as the Smart Account Approver or Administrator. Existing User roles can also be changed by a Smart Account Administrator.

**Q.** Can you provide more information regarding Smart Accounts in reference to Cisco Enterprise Agreements (EAs)?

**A.** Smart Accounts are now mandatory for all EA’s we have (Security and Collaboration). This allows for the information to be tracked more thoroughly than it has been in the past. Get more information about Enterprise Agreements [here](#).

**Q.** Can multiple partners have access to a single customer Smart Account?

**A.** Yes, they can. The customer just needs to grant access to the users from the different Partners.

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**Q.** Can I assign Tags to my Virtual Accounts?

**A.** Yes, if you are a Smart Account Administrator, you can create Virtual Account Custom Tags from Cisco Software Central (software.cisco.com). You can now create Custom Tags at the Virtual Account level (e.g. Department, Platform Technology, Country etc.) and list values for each of them. This will help you effectively organize and manage Virtual Accounts (VAs) based on the organizational structure and entitlement policies of your company.

## Limited Use Smart Account for Small Medium Business Customers

**Q.** What is a Limited Use Smart Account?

**A.** It is a Smart Account with simpler and limited functionalities than a standard Customer Smart Account. A Limited Use Smart Account is meant specifically for Small Businesses – customers that don't have a company email domain and are using a public email domain (such as gmail.com, yahoo.com, etc.).

**Q.** Who qualifies to create a Limited Use Smart Account?

**A.** Only customers who do not have a company email domain ID and use a public email domain, such as gmail.com, for their day-to-day business operations qualifies to create a Limited Use Smart Account. If you have a company email domain ID, you cannot create Limited Use Smart Account. You must create the Standard Smart Account.

**Q.** How is Limited Use Smart Account different from Standard Customer Smart Account?

**A.** Limited Use Smart Account has restricted features such as limited number of Users (up to 3 Users) and Virtual Accounts (up to 3 Virtual Accounts), no User Groups or Virtual Account Custom tagging. The customer's Cisco.com profile primary email must be a Public Domain (gmail.com, yahoo.com, etc.)

**Q.** At the time of Limited Use Smart Account activation, the Customer User can immediately set up Smart Licensing and Create a Smart Licensing Token. However, if they need to generate a second Smart Licensing Token, should they go to Smart Software Manager?

**A.** Yes, the first token can be created by the Customer User right after activating the Limited Use Smart Account. This token can be used only once for product registration and its validity is 30 days. The objective is to simplify things for the customer (they can create a Smart Licensing Token immediately once the Smart Account is set up and active).

For any additional tokens, the customer would have to go to Smart Software Manager and generate a token from the Inventory tab (through the standard process). The tokens generated in Smart Software Manager can be used multiple times for product registration and can be valid for any period between 1 and 365 days (however, it is recommended to select a duration of 30 days).

**Q.** If the customer wants someone else (a partner) to set up Smart licensing for the customer, will the customer still be accepting the Smart Licensing Agreement?

**A.** This option (I want someone else to set up Smart licensing) is provided so that the customer can nominate a partner to have access to the customer's Smart Account and generate tokens for product registration. The partner cannot represent an end customer and accept a Cisco contractual agreement like the Smart Licensing Click to Accept. Hence, when the customer sends the invite to the partner, at that time he automatically accepts the Smart Licensing Agreement.

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**Q.** Is it possible to upgrade a Limited Use Smart Account to a Standard Customer Smart Account?

**A.** Yes, the Smart Account Administrator of a Limited Use Smart Account for Small/Medium Business companies can request an upgrade to a Standard Customer Smart Account. The upgrade can be requested in [Cisco Software Central](#) → Manage Smart Account → Account Properties.

To be eligible for the upgrade to a Standard Customer Smart Account, the customer needs to update their Cisco.com profile to include their company email domain. The upgrade to a Standard Customer Smart Account will allow the customer to benefit from the full features and functionalities of the Standard Customer Smart Account.

## Smart Licensing

### Smart Licensing Overview – Smart and Classic Licenses

**Q.** How does Smart Software Licensing work?

**A.** Cisco Smart Software Licensing makes it easier to buy, deploy, track, and renew Cisco's software by removing today's entitlement barriers and providing information about a customer's and partner's software install base. This is a major change to Cisco's software strategy, moving away from a PAK- based model to a new approach that enables flexibility and advanced consumer-based models.

Customers, their chosen partners, and Cisco can view the customer's hardware, software, entitlements, and eventually services, in the Cisco Smart Software Manager. All Smart Software Licensed products upon configuration and activation with a single token will self- register, removing the need for going to a website and registering product after product with Product Activation Keys (PAKs). Instead of using PAKs or license files, Smart Software Licensing establishes a pool of software licenses or entitlements that can be used across the entire customer portfolio in a flexible and automated manner.

Customers may self-manage license deployment throughout their company easily and quickly in the Cisco Smart Software Manager. Flexible contracts allow customers to activate devices and software when necessary and bill for all use, including overage, periodically if desired.

**Q.** What is the process of obtaining licensing from the portal?

**A.** A Smart license is assigned to a CCW order, so after the order is booked, the license will be automatically available in the Customer Smart Account. You can assign the license on the order to a specific Virtual Account or just to the overall Smart Account. The customer can then move the license from the "Default" Virtual Account to the appropriate "Virtual Account".

A PAK-based license can be assigned to a CCW order, and after the order is booked, the PAK will be available in the Customer Smart Account. If the Smart Account is not assigned at the time of order, the Customer will be able to assign the PAKs to their Smart Account in LRP (after order placement).

**Q.** How is Smart Software Licensing different from traditional PAK-based licensing?

Traditional Licensing	Smart Software Licensing
<p>Limited View</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers do not know what they own. Customers would need to access multiple portals/tools to view information about their software assets.</li> </ul>	<p>Complete View</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners and customers have a shared, complete view of the customer’s software assets. License and device usage is easily managed from a single interface.</li> </ul>
<p>PAK Registration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers must manually register each device. A device can be unlocked only with a license key</li> </ul>	<p>Easy Registration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No PAKs are required for unlocking a device. Customers can easily activate devices.</li> </ul>
<p>Device Specific Licensing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licenses are specific to only one device (also referred to as node locking).</li> </ul>	<p>Company Specific Licensing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible licensing feature enables the use of licenses across devices.</li> <li>Licenses can be pooled and applied to applicable devices in any grouping as designated by the Customer or Partner.</li> <li>Customers and Partners can consume licenses beyond the original purchase and reconcile overage usage at a later agreed date to speed execution and reduce the friction in the procurement</li> </ul>

**Q.** What are the benefits of Cisco Smart Software Licensing?

**A.** Smart Software Licensing makes it easier to do business with Cisco. We believe that software should just work. Benefits include:

- Visibility to devices and software purchased and deployed
- Ability to monitor and manage devices, licenses, and usage in real time
- Automatic license activation
- Product simplicity with standard software offers, licensing platform, and policies
- Decreased operational costs

**Q.** What is required to use Smart Software Licensing?

**A.** A new Smart Account is required for Smart Software Licensing. Existing Cisco.com IDs can be linked to the Smart Account. The product will also need to be Smart License-enabled to leverage the Smart licensing features.

**Q.** Which purchasing models does Cisco Smart Software Licensing support?

**A.** Perpetual and term/subscription licenses are available for Smart Software License-enabled products. Some products also support the Managed Service Provider License Agreement (MSLA) via Smart licensing as well. More models will be added over time.

**Q.** What is the difference between perpetual and subscription licensing?

**A.** In the subscription model, the customer pays an annual fee that includes the cost of the license(s) term right to use and the cost of Software Support Service for software support, suite updates, version upgrades and license portability. If the customer decides to cancel the subscription, they lose the right to use the license(s).

In the perpetual model, the customer pays the entire cost of the license(s) perpetual right to use at the time of purchase. The customer must maintain an annual Software Support Service contract in order to get software support, updates, upgrades and license portability rights. If a customer stops paying the Software Support Service contract, they can continue to use the license on that device. However, they would not be eligible for support, updates, upgrades or license portability if they move to a new device in the future.

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**Q.** What tools are involved with Smart Licensing?

**A.**

- [Cisco Software Central](#) (CSC): Create and Manage Smart Accounts
- [Cisco Commerce Workspace](#) (CCW): Order Smart products, view orders assigned to Partner Holding Smart Account, re-assign orders from Partner Holding Smart Accounts to Customer Smart Accounts
- [Cisco Smart Software Manager](#) (CSSM): Manage, activate, and register licenses and product instances in a Customer Smart Account

**Q.** What are the differences between Traditional and Smart Licenses?

**A.**

- Classic licenses/PAKs are received either by mail, eDelivery or placed into a Smart Account and are node-locked to a given device.
- Smart licenses do not require PAKs and are a pooled licensing model.

**Q.** There is a tab in LRP called PAKs/Tokens. What are the tokens in LRP? PAKs are product activation keys but what do tokens represent?

**A.**

- A Token is technically a PAK and can be consumed/fulfilled like a PAK.
- Tokens are enabled for selected product families (only supported for two product families: UBR and SPVTG).
- A Token gets created when a customer wants to remove their licenses from their existing devices (either due to incorrect quantity usage or moving licenses across their network devices) and later use that token via subsequent transactions in LRP.
- Token fulfilment process is exactly the same as PAK fulfilment.

## Ordering Smart Licenses in CCW

**Q.** How do I order Smart license-enabled products?

**A.** Order Smart SKUs in CCW, following the as-is process. In the order, you will need to assign a Smart Account – either a Partner Holding Smart Account or a Customer Smart Account. A Smart Account must be assigned to place the order.

**Q.** How can partner/customer manage orders with both legacy PAK SKUs and new Smart SKUs?

**A.** Smart Licensing SKUs are managed in SSM. It is required to have a Smart Account. Classic PAK licenses have the option to be assigned to a Smart Account, however, they are still managed in the License Registration Portal (LRP). Assigning a classic PAK to a Smart Account allows the user to view all PAKs associated to the Smart Account instead of only the ones mapped to their CCO ID in LRP.

**Q.** As a reseller (2-Tier) partner, what is my role in Smart Account Assignment?

**A.** In most situations, the distributor will assign the order to your Reseller Holding Smart Account, because you have the best relationship with the end customer. From there you will need to log in to CCW, search for the order, and assign the Customer Smart Account so they can receive and consume their licenses.

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**Q.** I would like to know how Cisco intends on dealing with the logistics of Smart Accounts for distributors and 2-Tier partners.

**A.** The distributor can assign the order to their reseller's Holding Account, and then the reseller can re-assign the order to their end customer's Smart Account. If the distributor is working directly with the end customer, they will assign the order directly to the end customer's Smart Account.

**Q.** If a buyer places an order with their Customer Smart Account, do they have to also add the order to the Partner Holding Smart Account?

**A.** No – a Partner Holding Smart Account is only required if the end customer is not known. However, the Partner Holding Smart Account also provides the partner traceability and future visibility into the end customers' Smart Account activity.

**Q.** If you are a partner or a distributor with Smart products in your Partner Holding Smart Account, how do you deliver a Smart license-enabled product to your end customer?

**A.** Resellers must reassign the order to the end customer's Smart Account; this can take place before or after shipping. In the case of distributors selling to 2-Tier partners, distributors can reassign the order from their Partner Holding Smart Account to the 2-Tier Partner Holding Smart Account. The 2-Tier partner is then responsible for reassigning the order to an end Customer Smart Account. The end customer can then access their Smart Account to view their Smart Account-enabled products as well as activate and manage their licenses. It is important to note that the licenses cannot be used until the order has been assigned to an end Customer Smart Account.

**Q.** How long can a license stay in a Partner Holding Smart Account?

**A.** There is no limit to how long the order can stay in a Partner Holding Smart Account. It is in the partner's best interest not to wait long after the customer is identified because the customer will be waiting for their order so they can consume the licenses. You will not be able to change the assignment after the order has been shipped. Note Partner Holding Account assignment doesn't start the subscription timer, however, Customer Smart Account assignment starts the timer when licenses are delivered.

**Q.** Who can view the orders placed in a particular Partner Holding Smart Account?

**A.** All users who have access to the Partner Holding Smart Account can view orders placed in it.

**Q.** What Roles associated with the Partner Holding Smart Account can go into CCW and view the order as well as manage the assignment in the CCW?

**A.** For the following Smart Account Roles, CCW Order View management is incorporated automatically for applicable Partner Holding Smart Accounts:

- Smart Account Administrator
- Smart Account User
- Virtual Account Administrator
- Virtual Account User

**Q.** Who can move the order from a Partner Holding Smart Account to a Customer Smart Account in CCW?

**A.** Any user who has visibility to the Partner Holding Smart Account can assign the order to a Customer Smart Account. However, users need to have order management roles in CSC so that they can view and edit orders. Admin users can access all orders. Users with Virtual Account level order access can see only orders specifically assigned to that Partner Holding Virtual Account.

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**Q.** What does it mean to associate a Partner Holding Smart Account in CCW?

**A.** Associate a Partner Holding Smart Account with the order so that all users tied to the Partner Holding Smart Account can view the order in CCW to serve as a record.

**Q.** Does the customer need a Sales Order Number, for them to retrieve their licenses?

**A.** Due to the simplicity of Smart Accounts and Smart Licensing, they do not need any specific information. Once the licenses have been assigned to a Customer Smart Account, they will be placed in the SSM tool. The customer would just navigate to the SSM and would see all the licenses deposited their Account.

## Managing Smart Licenses in Smart Software Manager (SSM)

**Q.** How are Smart Software Licenses managed?

**A.** Customers may self-manage license deployment throughout their company easily and quickly in Cisco Smart Software Manager. Cisco Smart Software Manager is the cloud-based tool that maintains a record of a customer's or partner's purchased Smart Software licenses. It allows the user to group licenses in Virtual Accounts (pools). The system maintains real-time status of license usage after products are registered and activated. The user is notified by alerts (expiring, expired, insufficient), event logs, and summary emails as to the status of licenses in Virtual Accounts.

**Q.** Where can I renew the licenses that give warnings about expiration?

**A.** Software Licenses are currently renewed in CCW-R.

**Q.** How is licensing information reported back to Cisco?

**A.** Cisco Smart Software Licensing offers several flexible deployment options for gathering software usage data. A Customer may choose to use a single or multiple means of transferring data from different systems. The following options are available:

- An Internet connection directly between the Customer system and the Cisco Cloud system. This is the default option.
- An HTTPS proxy can be used to mediate connectivity between the end system and your Cisco Smart Account. You may choose either to use Cisco's Smart Call Home Transport Gateway free of charge, or you may use your own https proxy system.
- A CSSM On-Prem, an on-premises license manager (data collector). CSSM On-Prem (previously called SSM satellite) is a store and forward license manager that periodically exchanges information with Cisco either by a connected file exchange or air-gapped, manual file exchange.

**Q.** Will the customer require an outbound connection to Cisco to register their devices in their Smart Account?

**A.** The customer will either need an outbound connection or use one of the information transfer technologies such as the Smart Call Home Transport Gateway/HTTPs Proxy or by establishing the Smart Account locally using the Smart Software On-Prem.

**Q.** What should a customer do if they do not want their device to connect back and forth with Cisco?

**A.** If customers do not want their device to communicate back and forth with Cisco, they must use the SSM On-Premise. This solution can eliminate the device's communication directly with Cisco. Customers must have an SSM On-Prem set up on their site. SSM On-Prem then communicates with Cisco periodically (customer configurable) either over a direct HTTPs or via an "air-gapped" HTTPS file exchange. However, if the SSM On-Prem does not communicate with Cisco within a year, the device is automatically de-registered.

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**Q.** What reporting tools are available for Smart licensing? What reporting tools are available to help partners monitor licensing usage in a Smart Account?

**A.** In [Cisco Smart Software Manager](#) you will find a “Reports” section, where you can download reports on Licenses, License Subscriptions and Product Instances. All the reports can be viewed in your browser and/or exported to CSV or to XLS. You can access Smart Software Manager from [Cisco Software Central](#).

## Managing Smart Licenses on Behalf of a Customer

**Q.** If a customer uses multiple partners, can all partners see license utilization for products they did not sell to the Customer? Can the customer limit what is viewable to the partner?

**A.** If two different partners have Administrator access to a Smart Account, they can see all licenses owned by the customer, regardless of who sold them. The customer can limit which partner sees which licenses. To limit the view, customers can create multiple Virtual Accounts and deposit licenses from only one partner in an Account. From there, they can provide the partner access only to the Virtual Account that holds licenses of the partner that sold it to them, thereby limiting the view from the other Virtual Account that holds licenses purchased from a different partner.

**Q.** How can you manage and assign orders for larger customer bases that might have many Software Administrators and how can we guarantee that they have access to these Software Licenses?

**A.** This issue is solved with the use of Virtual Accounts. When placing the order in CCW, the partner will assign the end customer Smart Account to the order and the license will be placed in the end customer’s Smart Account and default Virtual Account. After purchase, the end customer can move the licenses to another Virtual Account. The end customer can create multiple Virtual Accounts based on how they need to organize and divide their assets (licenses). Virtual Accounts can be divided by Department, by Organizational Unit, by Business Unit, by Business line (e.g. Networking, Communications, Security). If the end customer is working with more than one partner, they can create e.g. two Virtual Accounts for two different partners and grant access to each VA to each partner.

If the customer tells the partner which Virtual Account to assign licenses to, the partner can add the Virtual Account to the order on a line item basis and the licenses will be delivered directly to that Virtual Account, removing the need to transfer them from the Default Virtual Account.

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## Managing Licenses as a Service Provider

**Q.** How will Service Providers operate with Smart Accounts?

**A.** Service Providers own the licenses that are essentially ‘rented’ to their end customers for a given amount of time (end customers receive a ‘Right to Use’ the licenses from the Service Provider). Therefore, the licenses need to be deposited in the Service Provider’s Smart Account, since the owner of the assets should also be the owner of the Smart Account in which they are held.

The Service Provider will assign the licenses to their own Customer Smart Account in Cisco Commerce Workspace at the time of order placement. Subsequently, the licenses can be assigned to different Virtual Accounts within the Service Provider Customer Smart Account.

Virtual Accounts should be used to enable access control for licenses. The Service Provider can organize their Virtual Accounts according to the needs of their organization and business model: for example, Virtual Accounts by business line, product family, department, region, another organizational unit, etc.

In order to maintain visibility into Customer asset use, devices may be named with a customer specific prefix for filtering in Cisco Smart Software Manager.

In addition to service provision, a Service Provider can also sell assets to customers in a simple partner resale model. The Service Provider can also offer an outsourced IT solution, i.e. manage licenses owned by the customer in the end customer’s Smart Account.

**Q.** Are Service Providers allowed to move licenses from one end customer to another?

**A.** Through the traditional PAK licensing, a Service Provider would need to go through the re-hosting process which involved relicensing fees to transfer licenses from one end customer to another because the traditional license and product are paired together. Through Smart licensing, Service Providers are essentially renting the licenses that they own to their customers so they can move them around as they please. There is no restriction on the licenses a Service Provider moves between Virtual Accounts within their Smart Account.

**Q.** Are there any benefits for Service Providers when it comes to owning licenses and giving their customers access to use their licenses?

**A.** Service Providers will see less operational costs due to the visibility of their license utilization. As Service Providers move products around, the Smart licenses that are not in use with current products can be transferred to new products. This creates a more efficient way of using licenses.

## Specific License Reservation

**Q.** What if I operate a secure network and cannot run a connected deployment of Smart License- enabled products?

**A.** You can operate your device in License Reservation mode. SLR (Smart License Reservation), either factory-installed or initiated on the Cisco Smart Software Manager portal, allows you to reserve a license and assign it to a specific product until you return that license to your license pool. The product is not connected to Cisco to provide periodic usage reporting.

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**Q.** What is Specific License Reservation?

**A.** Specific License Reservation (SLR) is a feature used in highly secure networks. It provides a method for customers to deploy a Software License on a device (Product Instance) without ongoing product communication with Cisco. The advantage of this approach is that it provides Product Activation Key (PAK) / License file-like functionality while also retaining some of the benefits of Smart licensing. Specific license reservation (SLR) allows for entitlements, perpetual or term, to be reserved on Product Instances if users have an excess of licenses. The user generates a reservation request code on the Product Instance that is entered in Smart Software Manager (SSM). The user then indicates which licenses to “reserve” for that product instance and SSM generates an Authorization code that is entered into the Product Instance.

**Q.** What are the disadvantages of Specific License Reservation?

**A.** Please be aware that License Reservation reduces or nullifies many of the benefits of Smart Licensing including:

- Dynamic movement of license consumption between products, failed or otherwise
- License usage visibility and asset management
- Simplified product registration

SSM On-Prem provides these benefits while not requiring end products to connect to the Internet. SSM On-Prem aggregates license consumption information and forwards to Cisco either directly or in a completely air-gapped method.

## Smart Licensing Using Policy

**Q.** What is Smart Licensing Using Policy?

**A.** The Smart Licensing Using Policy is an evolved version of the Smart Licensing. Starting with IOS- XE 17.3.2 / 17.4.1 all products running these versions of software will only support Smart Licensing Using Policy. PAKs and Specific License Reservation (SLR) keys will persist through the upgrade and remain intact unless explicitly removed.

The Smart Licensing Using Policy simplifies the day-0 operations for customers. The product will not boot in evaluation-mode, per product software, registration is not required, and on-going communication every 30 days with Cisco cloud is not required. However, license use compliance does require software reporting. Reporting is and can be done:

- From Cisco factory. when all new purchases include a Smart Account on an order
- Using Cisco DNA Center on-prem controller
- Smart Software Manager (SSM) on-prem
- Cisco Smart Licensing Utility (CSLU) lite-windows application
- Via APIs / CLIs for any 3rd party system
- Directly to a Smart Account

**Q.** What are the key differences between Smart Licensing and Smart Licensing Using Policy?

Smart Licensing	Smart Licensing Using Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory evaluation mode</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No registration, no evaluation mode</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day0 registration to CSSM or SSM on-prem per device for software compliance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows un-enforced license change, but reporting required</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going license reporting every 30 days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-change reporting policies and customer-specific reporting policies</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLR/PLR for off-line customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports SLR/PLR for brownfield.</li> <li>• No SLR/PLR for greenfield</li> <li>• Disconnected networks supports by default</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Software compliance is a pre-use per product activity requirement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Software compliance is managed on change automation tools provided to assist with SW compliance</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Export Control Flag method for crypto feature enablement is no longer approved for use by Global Export Trade.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design supports Global Export Trade Software use requirements for 100% compliance with US Commerce.</li> </ul>

**Q.** What is Cisco Smart Licensing Utility (CSLU)?

**A.** Cisco Smart Licensing Utility (CSLU) is a Windows application that is used to automate receiving or pulling software use reports from a Cisco product and report the software use to a Smart Account on Cisco Smart Software Manager (CSSM). It is also capable of managing trade-controlled software authorization codes per product as required for one or many products.