



A Self-Service Portal, Service Catalog, and Lifecycle Management Solution for Physical, Virtual, and Cloud Environments

With Cisco® Cloud Portal, IT can deploy a private or hybrid cloud to improve the performance and efficiency of data center operations—increasing agility, reducing provisioning cycle time, lowering costs, and improving user satisfaction.

Product Overview

In most IT departments, the process for data center infrastructure service requests is complex and expensive. Each request, such as a request to host an application, is treated as essentially a new project, even if that same request has been made dozens of times. The resulting process is manual, cumbersome, inconsistent, and slow.

In a well-run organization, IT can complete this overall process within weeks. But virtualization and cloud computing have completely changed

user expectations for faster service delivery. These long cycle times are no longer acceptable and can result in costly delays for new projects and business initiatives.

With the Cisco Cloud Portal software, users have access to a standard catalog of IT resources and on-demand provisioning through a self-service portal. This easier, yet controlled, access adds immeasurably to user satisfaction and business productivity. The cycle time for provisioning infrastructure services can be reduced from weeks to hours or even minutes.

IT also benefits in numerous ways, including through lower operating costs, improved governance and policy-based controls, and more accurate capacity planning. In addition, with complete visibility into the lifecycle of each requested service, IT management can greatly reduce data center sprawl and manage resources more effectively.

Unified Self-Service Portal for Intelligent Automation

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.

Cisco Cloud Portal complements the Cisco Unified Computing System™ (Cisco UCS™) as well as other Cisco products, services, and partner technology solutions. The companion Cisco Cloud Portal Plan and Build Service provides the expertise, tools, and best practices needed to help ensure a successful deployment, as well as training to enable your staff to confidently add and manage new service offerings as you expand your cloud solution. 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.

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 faster self-service access to the IT resources they need with automated provisioning.

Benefits

- Encourage adoption of standardized options with a menu of choices in an online catalog
- Reduce the end-to-end cycle time for requested data center services from weeks to hours or even minutes

- Deploy a private or hybrid cloud with a self-service portal that enables accelerated delivery of services while helping ensure governance and control
- Enable IT staff and users to track and manage the lifecycle of each service, from initial request to decommissioning
- Track consumption of services to support showback or chargeback, if desired
- Improve visibility into demand to help ensure more accurate capacity planning

As shown in Figure 1, Cisco Cloud Portal is an integrated solution made up of multiple software components and modules:

- Cisco Portal Manager
- Cisco Service Catalog
- Cisco Request Center
- Cisco Service Connector

Cisco Portal Manager

As shown in Figure 2, IT departments can quickly and easily provide an intuitive “single pane of glass” view for users, combining data from multiple sources into a highly configurable and flexible self-service portal interface.

- Branded, personalized IT portal pages and portlets: Cisco Cloud Portal can be easily branded with your organization’s logo, colors, and images. It can be personalized with portlets that display the most relevant information for each user (such as request status updates, lease expirations for virtual machines, and storage quota), including data from third-party systems.
- Greater flexibility and visibility for users: Drag-and-drop configurability makes it easy for users to create their own portal views based on their individual preferences, increasing user satisfaction and reducing reliance on IT.

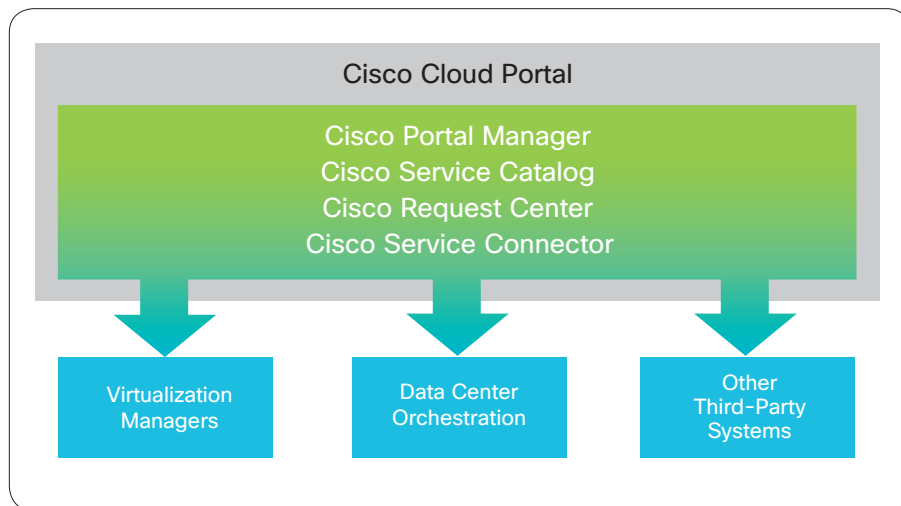


Figure 1 Cisco Cloud Portal Elements



Figure 2 With Cisco Cloud Portal, IT can Provide Users with a Configurable Portal for Self-Service Provisioning of Infrastructure Services

Easier, More Efficient Service Request Management

Cisco Request Center can dramatically reduce the cycle time for the ordering, approval, and provisioning process, while maintaining the policy-based controls and governance required for enterprise-class data center management.

- Role-based access control (RBAC): In a multi-tenant environment, it is imperative that IT have governance and control over what users are allowed to see. With Cisco Cloud Portal, RBAC-enabled portals and portlets enable IT departments to have complete control over who has access to particular content.

Cisco Service Catalog

With Cisco Service Catalog, you can quickly create an actionable service catalog that expedites user requests by providing controlled access to IT resources in an online menu of standardized service options.

- Standardize IT services: Create and publish a menu of standard service offerings including descriptions, service levels, images, pricing, business rules, service request workflows, and other important attributes. This content is also reusable, so you can easily apply common attributes to other infrastructure service requests, including physical resources, virtual machines, and public cloud services.

- Reduce TCO: Even nontechnical IT staff can design services and make changes to the ordering and provisioning processes, dramatically reducing maintenance time. Cisco Service Catalog eliminates expensive, time-consuming custom programming by providing reusable components, point-and-click service design, and tools to publish services in the portal.
- Manage user entitlements: By synchronizing with enterprise directories and single sign-on, you can manage entitlements across different roles, functions, and geographies for users spanning multiple business units. IT administrators can determine, based on roles and functions, who sees particular services in the portal and who can order particular services.

Cisco Request Center for Cloud

After services have been defined and published in Cisco Cloud Portal, Cisco Request Center provides both request management and lifecycle management for infrastructure services.

- Simple ordering, with intelligent forms: By making it easy for users to order services from the catalog, IT can offer a one-stop shop for data center requests. Cisco Request Center includes advanced capabilities that simplify the ordering process, such as prefilled user information on the order form and dynamic pricing options based on user selections.
- Guided configuration for a better user experience: Using a wizard option, you can provide a guided decision tree to help users find and order the standard service package (for example, UNIX application hosting) that best matches their needs. Guided configuration supports a better user experience, while encouraging the adoption of standard architectures and governance for the use of external cloud services.
- Policy-based controls and approvals: During the ordering process, IT can enforce service choices that comply with operating policies, security controls, and cost constraints. The automated approval engine within Cisco Request Center can also help streamline end-to-end service delivery cycle time and eliminate the time-consuming design and review process associated with nonstandard requests.

Lifecycle Management for Physical, Virtual, and Cloud Resources

With Cisco Cloud Portal, IT administrators can track and manage each service throughout its entire lifecycle. This capability provides greater transparency as well as more control, helping IT reduce costs and align capacity with business needs.

- **Accountability and auditability:** Cisco Request Center tracks the context of each request, including who requested it, its business purpose, the lease expiration date, and details about virtual machine, storage, network, and other resources. This information provides IT teams with visibility into the consumption of infrastructure resources, and the capability to publish that information to enable showback or chargeback.
- **Updates and changes to requested services:** Whether a request is for a three-tier hosting environment or a simple cloud instance, IT administrators and users can manage the ongoing maintenance, changes, and updates to the service and its associated resources, such as adding storage, creating a snapshot, or shutting down resources at the end of their lifecycles.

- **Help prevent sprawl:** Cloud instances and virtual machines can represent new governance and compliance challenges because of the ease with which they can be provisioned. Most IT departments have little visibility into what services are being used and for what purpose. Cisco Request Center provides greater visibility and management controls to help eliminate this potential sprawl.

Cisco Service Connector

Cisco Service Connector is a standards-based platform for integrating with other software applications and third-party systems. It is designed to preserve and extend your existing investments in other tools. Cisco Service Connector includes adapters for integrating with virtualization management and automated provisioning systems to support a heterogeneous data center environment. For additional integration adapters and advanced orchestration capabilities, you can upgrade from Cisco Cloud Portal to the Cisco Intelligent Automation for Cloud solution.

You can also license Cisco Workplace Portal to deploy a self-service portal and service catalog for desktop, communications, and other end-user IT services.

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>.



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