

## Cisco IOS XE and Cisco IOS Software Release 15

- Q.** Is Cisco IOS XE yet another operating system at Cisco?
- A.** Absolutely not! Cisco IOS XE is a representation of the continuing evolution of Cisco IOS Software to support our next-generation platforms. Cisco IOS XE itself has been shipping on the ASR-1000 since 2008 and Cisco IOS XE 3 SG has been shipping on the new Catalyst 4500-E Series since October 2010. It provides an improved software architectural strategy, while maintaining all the benefits and familiar manageability interface of the long IOS legacy.
- Q.** What are the benefits of IOS XE over IOS?
- A.** There are multiple benefits of the transition from IOS to IOS XE that the end-users will enjoy. IOS XE will help lower the Total Cost of Ownership of many Cisco solutions by offering enhanced services integration for enhanced functionality within the network. In addition, it supports multiple CPU cores, control plane and data plane separation, and platform abstraction.
- Q.** Do I need to train my staff or change anything in my management platform?
- A.** No, Cisco IOS XE looks like and is managed the same way as traditional Cisco IOS Software. Only a handful of commands have changed, such as "show processor" and "show memory," which had to be extended to account for the multicore CPUs that Cisco IOS XE now supports. Otherwise, if you know how to manage Cisco IOS Software, you know how to manage Cisco IOS XE.
- Q.** What, if anything, does Cisco IOS XE share with Cisco IOS Software Release 15?
- A.** Cisco IOS XE contains Cisco IOS Release 15 within itself. Cisco IOS Software runs as a process within Cisco IOS XE in what is called the IOS daemon, or IOSd. While many of the infrastructure components have migrated from Cisco IOS itself to Cisco IOS XE—such as High Availability—the features of Cisco IOS Software are exactly the same running within Cisco IOS XE as they would be in a traditional Cisco IOS release. You may determine exactly which Cisco IOS Release 15 image that the IOS daemon is using by issuing a "show version running" on the console or by simply looking at the filename of the image.
- Q.** What is Cisco's long-term commitment to Cisco IOS XE?
- A.** Most next-generation platforms will be migrating to Cisco IOS XE over the coming months and years.
- Q.** Will my current switches and routers be upgraded to Cisco IOS XE?
- A.** No, in an effort to simplify the transition, Cisco IOS XE will only be introduced as new generations of hardware platforms are released. No in-service upgrade of an existing platform will be provided. Similarly, any platform that runs Cisco IOS XE will not support running Cisco IOS.
- Q.** How will features be shared between IOS and IOS XE?
- A.** Since Cisco IOS XE contains Cisco IOS within itself as IOSd, all features created within IOS will also appear in IOS XE and vice versa. Only new integrated services and functionality created outside of IOSd will not be shared with a Cisco IOS release. However, these integrated services may be introduced on a Cisco IOS platform through the use of Integrated Services daughter cards which will be available on a platform by platform basis.

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- Q.** What services will be provided on Cisco IOS XE, and how open will this platform be to integrated third-party services and applications?
  - A.** Services that were traditionally managed by standalone appliances or servers will now be integrated into the Cisco IOS XE environment. Examples today include Cisco Unified Border Element (CUBE) and Session Border Controller (SBC), but this will evolve over time.



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