

Service Contracts

Bhavna: Hello, everyone. I'm Bhavna Muthangi, from Network Systems at Cisco. Thanks for tuning in to this edition of our online LAN switching update. This session is one in a series of monthly LAN switching podcasts where we talk about business and deployment considerations in focused 5- to 10-minute topics.

Today's session will cover the four types of Cisco service contracts for Catalyst switches and how you can benefit from them.

With me today is Cisco's Senior Director of Commercial Marketing, Sherri Liebo.

Welcome, Sherri!

Sherri: Thanks, Bhavna, glad to be here.

Bhavna: So, Sherri, what's unique about Cisco's approach to service?

Sherri: Cisco uses a Lifecycle Services approach to help you successfully deploy Cisco Catalyst switches and optimize their performance throughout the lifecycle of your network. Cisco and its partners provide a broad portfolio of end-to-end services and support to increase your network's return on investment.

Bhavna: How do Cisco and its partners provide end-to-end services and support for network operations?

Sherri: One important way, Bhavna, is through service contracts.

There are four basic types of service contracts at Cisco. They are:

- Cisco Smart Care
- Smart Foundation
- SMARTnet
- And SMARTnet Onsite services

All of these can help improve productivity and efficiency, as well as extend the life of your Catalyst switches and other network assets.

Bhavna: So let's start with Cisco Smart Care Service. What is it?

Sherri: Smart Care is for small and medium-sized businesses, which have smaller IT staff but mission-critical networks. Cisco certified partners proactively monitor the network, assess its performance, and make remote repairs.

Bhavna: What benefits does Smart Care provide for networks with Cisco Catalyst switches?

Sherri: A Cisco certified partner will assess your network to ensure that all device ports are optimally configured. You can get information about the availability of each switch, aggregated up/downtime, and which switches are the top contributors to downtime.

Bhavna: What happens if there are network availability issues?

Sherri: As part of the Smart Care Service, Cisco certified partners will monitor your network, identify potential problems, and even make any repairs that are needed. If there are any network availability issues, that can be fixed remotely, they will. This makes it much easier on your IT staff.

Bhavna: You mentioned earlier that Cisco Smart Care Service is for small and medium-sized businesses and that these businesses are particularly vulnerable when there's a network outage, since they have smaller IT budgets. What cost-effective options do these businesses have to quickly resolve routine network issues?

Sherri: Well Bhavna, Cisco Smart Foundation Service is an affordable way to help small and medium-sized businesses quickly solve routine network issues.

Smart Foundation provides step-by-step guidance from the Cisco Technical Assistant Center engineers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Bhavna: What if there's hardware or software that needs to be replaced or fixed?

Sherri: Smart Foundation includes next-business-day hardware replacement, as well as operating system bug fixes.

Bhavna: So far we've been talking about service contracts that are for small and medium-sized businesses, or SMBs. Is there a program for enterprise customer networks?

Sherri: Absolutely, Bhavna. Cisco SMARTnet and SMARTnet Onsite services and support offerings cover all products and applications from Cisco, including switches such as the Catalyst 6500, 4500, 3750, and 2900 series. So there are definitely options for the enterprise networks.

Bhavna: What services and support does Cisco SMARTnet provide?

Sherri: You'll have 24/7, global access to the Cisco Technical Assistance Center, access to powerful online network management tools, and next-business-day advance hardware replacement. You can customize your support with even faster hardware replacement options, even as fast as 2 hours.

Bhavna: So it sounds like SMARTnet can help speed up problem resolution. But what about increasing your Catalyst switches' performance and security with better software? Does SMARTnet provide software support?

Sherri: Yes, it definitely does, Bhavna. SMARTnet gives you Cisco operating system software support to extend the life of your Cisco switches with better security, bandwidth management, protocol support, and interoperability. There are ongoing system software updates so that your switches keep up with your business needs.

Bhavna: You mentioned SMARTnet Onsite earlier. What's the difference between SMARTnet Onsite and SMARTnet?

Sherri: Well, in addition to all the benefits of SMARTnet, SMARTnet Onsite has the added assurance of a field engineer to install replacement parts at your location.

Bhavna: Thanks for sharing all this information with us, Sherri. I have a much better understanding of the four types of service contracts available.

Is there a Website that we can visit to learn more about the different kinds of service contracts?

Sherri: Yes, you can find out more about the business benefits and technology behind our service contracts at www.cisco.com/go/services.

Bhavna: Well, that wraps it up for today. If you would like to provide comments about this session or submit ideas for upcoming episodes, please go to www.cisco.com/go/switching, then select Switching Podcasts. You will find a poll on the far right side of the page.

Thanks for listening, everyone. Stay tuned for another session on the latest in switching news.



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