



Cisco Systems Technical Support Services for the Commercial Segment

**Selling Service
Contract Renewals
(Canada)**



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Renewing Cisco Technical Support Services contracts can help you:

- Enhance cash flow and margins
- Penetrate new markets
- Improve your competitive advantage
- Increase customer retention
- Increase customer satisfaction
- Expand your relationship with your customer

Managing Your Customer Base with Service Renewals

The information in this guide can help distributors, resellers, and channel service account managers boost revenues, increase margins, and build long-term customer loyalty by renewing Cisco Systems® Technical Support Services contracts with commercial customers.

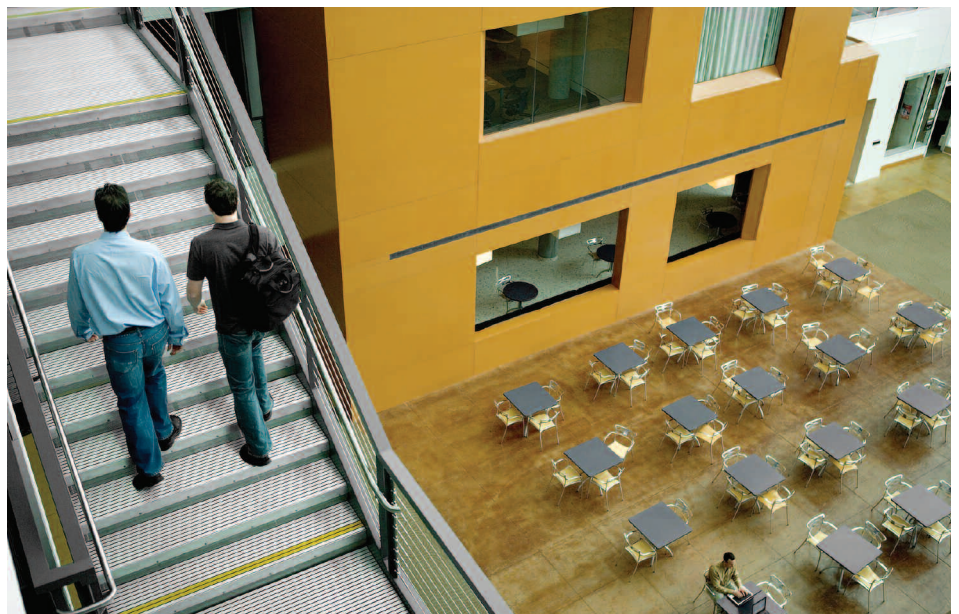
Pursuing service renewals can create more sales opportunities.

The guide focuses on service contract renewals and provides an overview of the services market, Cisco® Technical Support Services, sales best practices, and objection handling tailored to the specific requirements of selling to commercial customers with up to 1000 employees. You will also find marketing resources to help start marketing campaigns quickly so that you can promote the value of services and generate demand.

This sales guide is part of an ongoing Cisco effort to increase your service sales effectiveness by helping you sell Cisco services at the very first sales opportunity, secure additional revenue through targeting uncovered equipment, and better capture opportunities to sell service renewal contracts.

For more information about selling services at the very first sales opportunity, please refer to the “Making the First Sale” series of sales tools, which can be found at: <http://www.cisco.com/ca/go/arm/resources>

For more information about selling services on uncovered equipment, please refer to the “Selling Services on Uncovered Equipment” series of sales tools, which can also be found at: <http://www.cisco.com/ca/go/arm/resources>



Selling Services: Using Solutions Selling to Capture Renewals

As with the First Sale and Uncovered Equipment, selling service Renewals is a process that requires organization and planning, but can provide great rewards. Selling Renewals provides you with the potential to capitalize upon the investment you made at the first sale of service. And, if you have planned and implemented your approach properly, you can secure at least another year's revenue for a far smaller outlay of time and effort than you made during the first sale.

Using the solution selling approach will help you to demonstrate the value the customer has received when the time comes to renew. The process for securing service contract renewals is:

1. Update your customer's business situation and associated service coverage model 90 to 120 days before the contract expiration date.
2. Prepare a quote and proposal for new hardware, software, and services, including financing options.
3. Manage objections and adjust the proposal as required.
4. Close the sale on the new and renewed contracts.

Using a solutions selling approach is key to gaining a thorough understanding of your customer's business, decision-making process, and factors that affect the need for your solution. A solutions selling approach is all about listening to your customers and asking the right kind of questions to learn more about their needs, their objections, and the value that you can provide through your solutions. In this way, you can gain the knowledge you need to propose a solution that not only solves your customers' business challenges, but also sets you apart from the competitive field.

The Cisco "Making the First Sale" guide emphasizes that integrating services into your solutions selling approach at the very first sales opportunity can help ensure that you increase your own opportunities for revenue and margin, enhance customer satisfaction, and provide the customer with greater value.

Selling service renewals creates opportunities to upgrade or extend service coverage, or expand the overall solution by selling new hardware, software, or financing.



The solutions selling approach is just as critical when pursuing renewals. This is your opportunity to revisit your customer's business needs and requirements—to discover new directions and plans or validate existing ones. Few company plans remain stagnant for a long time. With each company's changing needs come new opportunities to upgrade or extend service coverage, or expand the overall solution by selling new hardware, software, or financing. In other words, contract renewal time gives you the chance to build your business base and increase your revenue stream, while developing your role as a strategic part of your customer's team. To do this, you and your customers need to have a shared understanding of the value received from Cisco Technical Support Services and fully explore issues, concerns, and objections that might affect the decision to renew.

Focus on the Business Need

The “Making the First Sale” and “Selling Services on Uncovered Equipment” sales guides provide overviews of some business factors that can influence your customer's need for Cisco Technical Support Services. These factors also affect your customer's need to renew their service contracts.

The “Making the First Sale” guide can be found at:

<http://www.cisco.com/ca/go/arm/resources>

The “Selling Services on Uncovered Equipment” guide can be found at:

<http://www.cisco.com/ca/go/arm/resources>

Customers need their networks up and running

Today, businesses of every size are highly dependent on their networks, and these networks need to stay up and running to enhance productivity, revenue, and business credibility. The cost of downtime can be substantial and can be measured in terms of productivity or revenue loss, damaged reputation, impaired financial performance, and other costs such as overtime and travel expenses. By including service when they invest in Cisco technology, customers can protect their investments and increase the contribution that their networks make to their businesses.

Customers need to increase return on investment (ROI)

Technology evolves at a phenomenal rate. When the solution is maintained and updated on a regular basis, it continues to support the business by operating at its full potential for the duration of its working life.

Customers need to manage total cost of ownership

Planned and budgeted service and maintenance costs are considerably less expensive and less difficult to manage than emergency repairs or impromptu service calls. The cost of a service contract is rapidly outweighed by the costs to the business of any downtime, not only in terms of cash, but also in terms of credibility and lost business.

Customers need to maintain a competitive advantage

Keeping network elements current with the latest features and enhancements aids businesses in quickly and efficiently implementing new applications that can lower costs, improve customer service, reduce delivery times, and expand the business into new markets.

Customers need to maintain business credibility and continuity

Service contracts can help customers ensure availability of company Websites and access to e-mail services critical to day-to-day operations and successful customer and partner relationships.

Cisco Technical Support Services: A Complete Offering

Cisco offers a family of services to meet the needs of different types of commercial customers:

- Cisco SMARTnet® services and SMARTnet Onsite
- Cisco SMB Support Assistant
- Cisco Software Application Support Services
 - Cisco Software Application Support (SAS)
 - Cisco Software Application Support plus Upgrades (SASU)

Cisco SMARTnet Services and SMARTnet Onsite

Providing World-Class Support

Cisco SMARTnet services and SMARTnet Onsite can help commercial customers accelerate their business success and protect their investment in Cisco hardware and Cisco OS Software with support tailored precisely to the needs of their business.

Cisco SMARTnet coverage includes software maintenance (Cisco OS Software updates), advanced replacement (of hardware), technical support (access to the world-class Cisco Technical Assistance Center [(TAC)], and Internet access to an online suite of technology-specific tools to help customers support their networks. With Cisco SMARTnet, customers reduce risk and increase return on investment.

The Cisco SMARTnet Onsite option provides a Cisco field engineer to install replacement parts at a customer site.

For more information on Cisco SMARTnet services and Cisco SMARTnet Onsite, visit: http://www.cisco.com/en/US/partner/products/svcs/ps3034/ps2827/ps2978/serv_home.html

Table 1 shows general tools to help Cisco SMARTnet services customers support their networks.

Table 1. General Tools to Help Cisco SMARTnet Services Customers Support Their Networks

General Tools for Cisco SMARTnet Customers	
Cisco Product Identification Tool	Locate the serial number label on your Cisco product.
Software Advisor	Find software compatible with my hardware and with the features I need. Compare the features in different software releases or research a software release.
Installation and Configuration Guides	Software and hardware installation guides and configuration examples for your specific software and products.
Downloads	Download Cisco software.
Cisco IOS Software Upgrade Planner	Browse to find the information you need to upgrade your Cisco IOS software.
Memory Calculator for Cisco 2600 and 3600 series multiservice platforms and Cisco 3700 Series multiservice access routers	Cisco 2600 and 3600 series multiservice platforms and Cisco 3700 Series multiservice access routers.
Bug Toolkit	Search for software bugs based on version and feature sets.

Table 2 shows security tools to help Cisco SMARTnet services customers support their networks.

Table 2. Security Tools to Help Cisco SMARTnet Services Customers Support Their Networks

Security Tools for Cisco SMARTnet Customers	
Product Alert Tool	Set up a profile to receive e-mail updates about reliability, safety, network security, and end-of-sale issues for the Cisco products you specify.
Security Advisories	Stop an active security attack or prevent an imminent security risk.
Report Product Security Incidents	Report security problems you have with a Cisco product.
Discussion Forums	Share questions, suggestions, and information about networking solutions, products, and technologies in discussion forums, Tech Talks, and Ask the Expert forums.
Output Interpreter	Receive instant troubleshooting analysis and course of action for your router, switch, or PIX® device using collected show command output.
Service Request Tool	Request technical assistance by creating a service request or query an existing service request with the TAC.

Table 3 lists voice tools to help Cisco SMARTnet services customers support their networks.

Table 3. Voice Tools to Help Cisco SMARTnet Services Customers Support Their Networks

Voice Tools for Cisco SMARTnet Customers	
Product Alert Tool	Set up a profile to receive e-mail updates about reliability, safety, network security, and end-of-sale issues for the Cisco products you specify.
Voice Codes Bandwidth Calculator	Select capacity planning for your packet voice network and determine the bandwidth used by different codecs with various voice protocol over different media.
IP Communications Readiness Assessments	Confirm whether your organization has met common network design requirements for a high-availability Cisco IP Communications implementation.
Discussion Forums	Share questions, suggestions, and information about networking solutions, products, and technologies in discussion forums, Tech Talks, and Ask the Expert forums.
Service Request Tool	Request technical assistance by creating a service request or query an existing service request with the TAC.

Cisco SMB Support Assistant

Protecting Network Investments

Cisco SMB Support Assistant is a service option that provides technical support to small and medium-sized businesses using select SMB-class products targeted to organizations of up to 250 employees. Cisco SMB Support Assistant includes access to the SMB Support Portal and Client that includes setup, configuration, and troubleshooting of devices, password recovery, and access to basic health checks and network troubleshooting tools. Cisco SMB Support Assistant provides 8x5 access to the SMB TAC, advanced hardware replacement, and minor software updates.

For more information about Cisco SMB Support Assistant, please visit:

http://www.cisco.com/en/US/partner/products/ps6193/serv_home.html

Cisco Software Application Support Services:

- **Cisco Software Application Support (SAS)**
- **Cisco Software Application Support plus Upgrades (SASU)**

Providing Increased Return on Investment, Strengthening Application Functionality

Cisco Software Application Support (SAS) and Cisco Software Application Support plus Upgrades (SASU) help to keep mission-critical software applications, like network management and voice over IP, current with application updates to strengthen application functionality and to increase the return on investment.

SAS and SASU include minor software updates, minor version releases, comprehensive 24x7 access to technical support, and registered access to a wealth of technical documentation, tools and utilities on Cisco.com.

SASU additionally entitles customers to major application upgrade releases which often include new software features and functions. Customers can keep applications current and implement major upgrades quickly and efficiently to maintain a competitive edge.

For more information about Cisco SAS and SASU, please go to:

http://www.cisco.com/en/US/partner/products/svcs/ps3034/ps2827/ps2993/serv_home.html

Table 4 compares Cisco Technical Support Services features.

Table 4. Comparison of Cisco Technical Support Services Features

Key Features at a Glance						
Product	Technical Assistance Center (TAC) Telephone Hotline	Cisco.com Web Support	Software Upgrades	Hardware Replacement (Without Engineer)	Engineer Onsite	Equipment Covered
SMARTnet	Unlimited	Full Access	OS	Next Business Day 4 hours, 5 or 7 Days a Week; 2 Hours, 7 Days a Week	No	All
SMARTnet Onsite	Unlimited	Full Access	OS	Next Business Day 4 hours, 5 or 7 Days a Week; 2 Hours, 7 Days a Week	Next Business Day 4 hours, 5 or 7 Days a Week; 2 Hours, 7 Days a Week	All
SMB Support Assistant	Within 1 Business Day from SMB TAC	SMB Support Assistant Portal	OS Minor Software Updates	Next Business Day or Same Day Ship Where Available	No	Limited
Software Application Support (SAS)	Unlimited	Full Access	Minor Releases	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Software Application Support Plus Upgrades (SASU)	Unlimited	Full Access	Major Releases	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable



Securing Renewals—Increasing Your Sales Opportunity

Securing the renewal of a service contract and increasing your sales opportunity is dependent upon a number of critical factors:

- Starting early—90 to 120 days in advance
- Understanding the customer’s business needs
- Exploring opportunities to up sell
- Proposing a solution to meet customer requirements

Starting Early—90 to 120 Days In Advance

The most important aspect of successfully managing the renewals process is starting early—at least 90 to 120 days before service contracts are due to expire. Contact your customer to let them know they have a renewal coming up, and then schedule time with them to conduct a business review. The business review is essential to understanding the customer’s business needs and proposing a valid solution.

Customers with a variety of equipment and different types of service contracts will require more complex negotiations to secure renewals. They also represent greater opportunities for upgrades, extensions, and new sales. For these customers, the objective is to secure a face-to-face meeting well before the expiration date. Pursue your customer aggressively for this meeting so you have adequate time to discuss all the issues and propose a valid solution prior to the expiration of the service contract.

Secure face-to-face meetings 90 to 120 days in advance of service contract expiration date.

For customers with very few devices, the renewals sales process will typically revolve around e-mail and telemarketing scripts rather than costly face-to-face meetings. Begin your e-mail or telemarketing efforts 90 days before the service contract expires and continue until at least 30 days after expiration to increase your opportunity to secure renewals with these customers.

Understanding the Customer’s Business Needs

The renewals process is an important opportunity to re-engage with your customer. It is an excellent time to revalidate your customer’s business challenges, networking requirements, and service coverage models. Use the renewals process to learn everything you can about their business and how it has changed since you first secured them as a customer. Better understanding your customer’s situation will help you to retain them as a customer. It will also increase the value you provide them through Cisco solutions.

A key tool to help you is the Cisco Service Contract Center Website (SCC). Once you register service contracts on this Website, you can refer to the site whenever you need to check the essential details of the contract. You will find that the SCC is an excellent support system. To access the tool, go to: <http://www.cisco.com/go/scc>.

Exploring Opportunities to Up Sell

Your discussions with your customers should fully explore whether this is strictly a renewal, or an opportunity to sell additional services. Discuss the changes that have taken place in your customer's business that might affect the way they are using the technology. If they have taken on more staff, you can make a case for increased demand on switches and routers, meaning the existing service level may not be enough. If they have Cisco SMARTnet Next Business Day coverage, for example, the customer might be better off moving to a contract providing four-hour or even a two-hour replacement. If they have added additional, or replaced existing equipment, they may need additional coverage. Look for equipment that does not currently have a service contract to include in the renewal proposal.

Proposing a Solution to Meet Customer Requirements

Once you have a thorough understanding of your customer's business issues, you will be in the best position to propose a complete solution that helps them achieve their business objectives. Your proposal will no doubt include the renewal of any existing service agreements, but the exploration of your customer's evolving situation may also lead you to propose new hardware, software, and new service agreements for any uncovered equipment you have discovered, as well as financing.

Best Practices for Selling Service Contract Renewals

Use a **Solutions Selling Approach**—Entering into the service agreement renewals process is a critical time to continue using a solutions selling approach. This is an opportunity to continue exploring your customer's questions about cost of ownership, the impact of unexpected downtime, their need to show a return on technology investments, and what a reliable network solution means to the long-term success of their business. Figure 1 outlines the main steps in the solutions selling process.

Figure 1. Solutions Selling

Ask Questions to Discover the Right Approach to the Renewals Process



Lock in Revenue Streams Through Co-Termination—This is an excellent strategy for optimizing your revenue streams and reducing your administrative burden. Where customers have purchased different service contracts at different times, you may find yourself contacting them repeatedly with the same messages relating to different pieces of equipment, which is a nuisance for you and for them. Co-termination means arranging for all service contracts to be renewed at the same time.

Sell Multiyear Options

Multiyear contracts (typically three years) give customers the opportunity to take advantage of discount incentives, lock in prices, match service contract to lease terms, and, with financing, improve cash flow. Selling multiyear agreements can also lower your sales administration costs, boost your renewal rates, and increase gross margins and cash flow, with other associated benefits for your return on investment (ROI). In particular, if you sell at the point of first sale, you can secure the budget for the longer-term contract instead of having to resell it every year. You can make a strong case for multiyear options, because they also remove administrative and management burdens for the customer.

The advantages of multiyear contracts include:

- Discount incentives for customers
- Lower sales administration costs
- Higher renewal rates, stronger gross margins
- Improved cash flow for you and your customer

Sell Financing for Commercial Businesses

Offering your commercial customer a financing solution that spreads their capital outlay over a number of years can enable the customer to accelerate or increase the deployment of state-of-the-art network solutions to help enable more productive, collaborative business environments—without having to worry about how they are going to pay for it. Financing is one of the most important tools you have to manage a customer’s budget concerns and promote multiyear contracts.

Cisco Systems Capital® financing solutions provide straightforward, flexible financing options, competitive rates, and fast credit processing (funding in 24 hours or less). This can help your customers acquire the solutions they need to be successful. At the same time, financing solutions from Cisco Systems Capital can help your organization preserve working capital and accelerate deals by timing your finance payments to coincide with payments from customers.

If you are interested in the finance packages that Cisco can offer, find out more at: <http://www.cisco.com/ca/channels/financing/>



Handling Objections

As you roll out your renewals strategy, you might encounter the same objections that were raised at the point of first sale. Refer to the “Making the First Sale” sales guide for more information about handling objections at the point of first sale. You can find this guide at: <http://www.cisco.com/ca/go/arm/resources>

Objection

I didn't budget for it.

Response

Handling this objection involves identifying cost savings, price protection, and most importantly, financing opportunities. Emphasize that while a customer might not have budgeted for a prepaid multiyear contract, making monthly payments to Cisco by financing the contract, while incurring little (if any) financing charges, can make the renewal viable. Resellers can also work with Cisco Systems Capital to buy down the rate by utilizing their multiyear prepaid discount.

Objection

Why do I need to renew my service contract? I have not used it this year.

Response

Point out that your customer has received updates of Cisco operating system software (and application software, if this is relevant), which has kept their Cisco solution current and operating at a high level. Most customers do not realize just how much they have benefited from Cisco OS Software downloads.

Point out that service contracts:

- Supply rapid response to problems that can affect network availability
- Provide investment protection
- Avoid high transactional fees and long waits for delivery of parts
- Ensure software is current

Finally, point out to your customer that once their current service contract expires, a Cisco engineer will have to inspect the equipment before any future service contract can be purchased. There is usually a charge for the inspection, which your customer can avoid if they renew service before the current contract expires.



Objection

I need service, but Cisco SMARTnet is too expensive and provides more than I need.

Response

If your customer does not want to renew Cisco SMARTnet, and meets the criteria for SMB Support Assistant, consider offering SMB Support Assistant. Revalidate the business need for the device and the associated decision to use service previously. Lead with the message that Cisco SMB Support Assistant is a service program designed to meet the needs of businesses like theirs. Emphasize that Cisco SMB Support Assistant delivers service in a package that is tailored to the way their business operates.

Objection

I know the technology now. Why should I pay for another year? My team can look after it.

Response

Point out the value they have already received in terms of support, upgrades, updates, replacement parts, and tools and resources. As an industry leader, Cisco continuously evolves and develops its products. With service protection, your customers have taken full advantage of the Cisco investment in innovation and kept their infrastructures up to speed with leading networking technology.

Discuss the need and benefits of being able to update Cisco OS Software. Ask how the customer plans on handling Cisco OS Software updates. Remind the customer that Cisco OS Software updates are available only on products with service contracts.

Ask the customer if servicing equipment is really the best use of its in-house team. Emphasize that the best solution is to have coverage to help technicians when they need it and free their team to focus on work related to the customer's core business. Also discuss the expertise of the in-house staff. Does IT have the necessary knowledge and experience, especially on new technologies?

Ask the customer questions that focus on the types of information they usually need about Cisco products, the easy access they currently have to this information, and how much time they would spend looking for it without service coverage. Show them that they have saved time and money by using the Cisco.com Website to get quick access to a wealth of information on Cisco products and solutions. It may be helpful to sit down with your customer and together revisit some of the internal Cisco product sites available within Cisco.com, such as the Cisco Products, Technology, and Solutions pages.

If you are positioning Cisco SMB Support Assistant as the best option for your customer, tell them about or show them the Cisco SMB Support Assistant Portal. Emphasise how use of this portal will help your customer to effectively manage contracts and devices, as well as easily implement basic network configuration scenarios and resolve common troubleshooting issues.

Objection

I do not want an on-site contract for parts replacement any more because it is more expensive (for Cisco SMARTnet Onsite renewals).

Response

Ask your customer what would happen if they were to experience a critical network problem after business hours or on the weekend. Point out that with Cisco SMARTnet Onsite support, they have fast responding onsite help, even after hours. Ask if they are comfortable with the risk of having their network down over a weekend, or even for several days, until they can get a resource to the location to help them. This point is particularly compelling for customers in remote locations.

Objection

I have not used phone support (for Cisco SMARTnet).

Response

This objection indicates that the customer has not taken full advantage of their service coverage, or has not monitored their use of it. Point out that with service coverage, your customers have access to a team of Cisco or partner experts who have the knowledge to resolve any problems and get their network back up as quickly as possible through the Technical Assistance Center (TAC). Compare the time it would take the Cisco TAC to resolve a problem with the time the customer might spend trying to resolve the problem on their own. Remind them also that they might have to call the TAC anyway if they cannot resolve the problem themselves, incurring time and materials charges. Conclude by adding up all of these potential costs and risks, and compare them to the annual flat fee they have been paying for phone support.

Objection

I do not need updates for Cisco OS Software (for renewals of Cisco SMARTnet).

Response

Remind them that their business is constantly changing and new applications are being released every day. Abandoning software support may result in new applications not working or working properly, thereby decreasing the competitive advantage they have gained. Reinforce that new versions of Cisco OS Software will add new functionality to their equipment, and will help to boost their return on investment and lengthen the life of their equipment.

Objection

I don't see the value of renewing a SAS or SASU service contract to support our network software applications.

Response

This is a question of return on investment and total cost of ownership over time. Explain that the value of the applications in terms of their contribution to business success will diminish more quickly if they are not kept current. Point out the speed of software evolution, particularly in the area of security, as well as the fact that the warranty does not cover upgrades to the software. Highlight some of the features they have already taken advantage of during the current service cover period.

Point out also that if they would like to upgrade their applications in the future, but do not have valid service coverage, the cost of purchasing these upgrades will be greater than the cost of renewing their service contract. Remind them that future additions to their network may not be compatible with their current applications, resulting in unexpected additional costs.

Objection

There is no more budget for service.

Response

Ask your customer about the business reasons for the investment and show how including service can help to reduce total cost of ownership and build in investment protection. Position technical support services as an essential extension of the technology investment.

Mention that the cost of one service call can be as expensive as the contract itself and that with the service contract, the customer receives a full range of benefits (Next-Business-Day Advanced Hardware Replacement, etc).

Discuss Cisco Systems Capital financing solutions with your customer.

This is also another scenario in which Cisco SMB Support Assistant may be appropriate. Be careful to position it as a new alternative to Cisco SMARTnet support for the commercial market. Discuss the customer's needs and show how Cisco SMB Support Assistant addresses them.

Marketing Support

Marketing campaigns can help you generate new business and/or reinforce the reason for buying services. These resources can also be used to speed the services renewals process. Campaign Builder from Cisco can help you create customizable e-mail blasts, postcards, ads, flyers, and more to build customer awareness, while reducing time to market and overall costs. Campaign Builder is for Cisco Registered, Certified, and Specialized Partners in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Latin America, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

To access Campaign Builder from Cisco, please visit: www.cisco.com/go/campaignbuilder

We have provided examples here to help you get started with your marketing campaigns to sell service for uncovered equipment. More resources can be found in the Campaign Builder tool.



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