



Q&A

CISCO IOS SOFTWARE CENTER UPDATE

MAY 5, 2005

This document is intended to answer questions and suggest helpful approaches for explaining to customers the details and benefits of the Cisco IOS Software Center update. This is an ongoing effort, and periodic updates will be issued.

Q. What is the Cisco IOS[®] Software Center update?

A. The Cisco IOS Software Center update changes the Cisco IOS Software Center from an archive into a dynamic portal containing current and widely deployed releases, significantly reducing the number of releases on the portal.

- All current releases and selected end-of-life releases will remain on the Cisco IOS Software Center
- When releases are removed from the [Cisco IOS Software Center](#), migration paths are posted in the [Cisco IOS Software migration table](#). See [Cisco IOS Software Center Update Product Bulletin 2863](#) for details.

Q. Why is the Cisco IOS Software Center being updated?

A. To make it easier for customers to find the right release with the latest functionality and most recent fixes, the Cisco IOS Software Center has been updated, and a large number of releases have been removed from the center.

Q. How is the Cisco IOS Software Center changing?

A. The Cisco IOS Software Center is changing in these ways:

- A large number of releases are being removed from Cisco IOS Software Center.
 - Some current releases are being replaced by rebuilds that contain the latest bug fixes.
 - Some current releases are being retired, not replaced.
 - Some releases are being left in the Cisco IOS Software Center unchanged.
- These changes to streamline the Cisco IOS Software Center will be ongoing.

Q. When will the Cisco IOS Software Center update be complete?

A. The Cisco IOS Software Center updates began in April 2005 and will be ongoing.

Q. What is the scope of the Cisco IOS Software Center update?

A. The Cisco IOS Software Center update only applies to Cisco IOS Software. This does not include the Cisco Catalyst[®] Operating System or application software that interfaces with Cisco IOS Software.

Q. How many Cisco IOS Software releases will be available on the Cisco Software Center?

A. No fixed target number exists, but the number of releases on the [Cisco IOS Software Center](#) will be much fewer than at present.

Q. What Cisco IOS Software releases are affected?

A. See the [Cisco IOS Software migration table](#).

Q. What if a release is affected?

A. Look in the Cisco IOS Software retirement table. A retired release will still run, but you may want to schedule a migration as part of your next technology refresh.

Look in the deferred release section at the bottom of the [Cisco IOS Software upgrade planner](#): Locate your release, click it to display the deferral notice, and read the reason for deferral section carefully before deciding whether to continue running it in your network.

Q. How does the Cisco IOS Software Center update affect me as a Cisco customer?

A. The greatest change is that customers will need to maintain a library (archive) of their software.

In most cases, customers will not need to migrate from their current releases.

Support for all releases, including those removed from the Cisco IOS Software Center, continues unchanged.

Q. Does the Cisco IOS Software Center update change the Cisco IOS Software support policy?

A. No. The Cisco IOS Software support policy for all releases, including releases that are deferred, continues unchanged:

- All releases removed from the [Cisco IOS Software Center](#) have a migration path. See the [Cisco IOS Software migration table](#) for suggested migration paths.
- As before, customers with SMARTnet[®] service contracts will continue to receive support on all releases, including those removed from the Cisco IOS Software Center up to the end-of-life milestone.

Q. What are the criteria for removing a release from the Cisco IOS Software Center?

A. Older and less frequently used releases are being removed along with newer releases that are being rebuilt. All current releases and selected older releases will remain on the Cisco IOS Software Center.

Q. When should I replace a Cisco IOS Software release?

A. You should replace a Cisco IOS Software release when you discover that it has a defect that affects your network or when you need to add functionality.

Field notices, software advisories, and deferral notices provide information about defects that may affect your network. Ideally, you should upgrade periodically to obtain the latest functionality, bug fixes, and security protection.

Q. Where do I find the migration path for a release that has been removed from the Cisco IOS Software Center?

A. Although customers may not need to migrate, they may want to do so over time, for a variety of reasons. See the [Cisco IOS Software migration table](#) for a list of the releases that have been removed from the [Cisco IOS Software Center](#) and the closest supported migration path from those releases.

Please note that the migration path the [Cisco IOS Software migration table](#) suggests may not be the best migration path for you. Each network is unique, and your account team can help you select the best migration path.

Q. Where do I get updated software?

A. From the [Cisco IOS Software Center](#).

Q. How do I get an update to a release that has been removed from the Cisco Software Center?

A. Download a later release from the [Cisco IOS Software Center](#).

Q. What if I need a copy of my old release and it is not on the Cisco IOS Software Center?

A. You can obtain an image that has been removed from the [Cisco IOS Software Center](#) from your archive or from a networking device. However, all Cisco IOS Software you run on your network must be licensed.

Q. If a specific release is not posted on the Cisco IOS Software Center, can I download it?

A. No. Only releases posted on the [Cisco IOS Software Center](#) can be downloaded.

Q. If I have I SMARTnet service, can I open a case with the Cisco Technical Assistance Center (TAC) to request an image that has been removed from the Cisco IOS Software Center?

A. No.

Q. If a release is deferred, does it mean the release has a security problem?

A. Not necessarily. When a release is deferred, the deferral notice will provide the reason for the deferral. Security vulnerability is only one of the reasons that releases are removed from the [Cisco IOS Software Center](#).

Note: Always check the deferral notice for known problems.

Q. Will defects or vulnerabilities in older, unposted releases be fixed?

A. Yes. Through a rebuild of a later release.

Q. Are entire release trains being removed from the Cisco Software Center as well?

A. Yes. Some legacy trains are being removed using the same process used to remove releases.

Q. Does the Cisco IOS Software Center update change the standard end-of-life policy for Cisco IOS Software?

A. No. End of life is applied to a train, not individual releases. The Cisco IOS Software Center update removes older releases within a train. When a Cisco IOS Software release train reaches an end-of-life milestone, then most or all images will be removed from the [Cisco IOS Software Center](#).



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