



Solution Overview

The Cisco Smart Business Roadmap: Solutions to Address Today's Business Challenges and Move Your Business Toward Optimal Performance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The rate of change and the amount of competition in the business world is escalating. Small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) need to ensure that the technology solutions they buy meet today's business needs and are flexible enough to grow with this rapidly evolving business environment. The Cisco® Smart Business Roadmap provides a structured, planned evolution path to help organizations take advantage of today's business opportunities and maximize the long-term potential of their technology investments. It provides support for real-time interaction through smart, simple, and secure communications solutions that operate over a single integrated network solution. The Cisco Smart Business Roadmap offers a plan for your business that brings together tailored technology solutions, world-class service and support delivered through local specialized partners, and flexible financing options—all designed specifically for SMBs.

With their business objectives prioritized and a technology plan mapped to meet these objectives, SMBs can cost-effectively improve communications, streamline business processes, and provide secure communications to employees, customers, and partners. Companies can implement the Cisco Smart Business Roadmap over time in incremental steps, at the pace that's right for them.

CHALLENGE

The role of technology is changing for today's small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs). As organizations become more global, they're turning to network technology to better connect with partners, suppliers, and customers.

To remain competitive and to thrive, technology and network solutions must match critical business challenges—both today and for the future. Independent research has identified the main business challenges faced by SMBs.

- **Operational Efficiency**—The overall business climate is changing more rapidly than ever. Businesses must react and evolve more quickly and must do more with less. For example, businesses need to make their existing resources more productive and improve the quality of their product and service.
- **Customer Responsiveness**—Customers today are more demanding than ever. They face more choices in what and how they buy, and require a variety of ways of communicating and getting information. Customers are used to shopping and interacting with businesses over the Internet, and they expect instant responses and rapid, personalized service.
- **Cost Containment**—A critical element of profitability, cost containment is becoming more urgent as companies seek to do more with fewer resources. Businesses must continually evolve to keep pace with change and competition; the investments they make today must be able to support them tomorrow, without incurring the costs of extensive, "forklift" upgrades.
- **Security**—A security breach can cost a company not just lost productivity and data, but can also cause irreparable damage to its reputation. Regulatory compliance (for example, HIPAA, Graham-Leach-Bliley Act and Basel II) is also driving the need for customers to document and secure their information technology more effectively.

To keep pace with these challenges and ensure that their business survives and prospers, businesses require a forward-looking technology plan—one that not only addresses current problems, but will also scale easily and effectively as needs change. To implement the solution, they need a partner that can help them plan and control the evolution of their company, closely aligning technology to suit their business needs.



THE CISCO SMART BUSINESS ROADMAP—SOLUTION EVOLUTION

The Cisco® Smart Business Roadmap provides a structured, planned evolution path to help businesses keep pace with change and make informed technology purchases. This roadmap shows how Cisco technology solutions can optimize businesses by effectively addressing current challenges and evolving to take on new challenges.

Working closely with their local Cisco channel partners, businesses can deploy the mix of technologies that best synchronize with their short- and long-term business priorities.

Cisco has identified three major phases of business and technology evolution: foundation, growth, and optimized. Here's an example of how a business might use this roadmap approach.

Foundation

Businesses in the foundation phase are seeking to communicate more effectively with their employees, customers, and suppliers. They need to improve interdepartmental information sharing. They may also be looking to provide employees and customers with easier access to information by posting it to a Website. At this stage, the business is looking for a technology foundation that can allow it to communicate and operate more effectively, provide better service to customers, and keep its information secure. The company may be considering using e-mail or scheduling systems, or providing Web access to customers.

Growth

Businesses in the growth phase have moved beyond establishing core business processes and are focused on becoming even more efficient and cost-effective. They are considering giving workers the ability to work from home or from the road so they can respond to colleagues and customers more quickly. They also want to continue to improve communications with employees, customers, and suppliers, and to provide more immediate information sharing.

Optimized

In the optimized phase, businesses often focus on differentiating themselves by optimizing interaction with customers and suppliers, and between employees. They are considering implementing customer relationship management, sales force automation, and call center applications to improve information sharing across the company and with customers and suppliers. When optimized, the technology has become integrated into the fabric of the business to further enhance communication and responsiveness.

Figure 1. Smart Business Roadmap—Improving Operational Efficiency

	Foundation	Growth	Optimized
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Securely connected business More productive employees Basic services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased collaboration and data availability options Externally connected, competitive services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiated services Ubiquitous access to real-time information Empowered employees Positive customer experience
Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to information Automated business processes Fewer errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced communications New customers Mobile workers Cost-effective upgrades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent customer experience Improved sales force management Improved supply chain
Solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure connectivity Web access Rich e-mail, calendar, and messaging Integrated foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connected branch offices Global Web presence Secure remote access Cisco Business Communications Solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactive Web communication with chat, push to talk Full deployment of Cisco Business Communications Solution Customer Relationship Management and/or Enterprise Resource Planning

THE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

The Cisco Smart Business Roadmap enables SMBs to align a network technology plan with their business priorities. It provides a structured, planned evolution to help businesses proactively keep pace with change. And it gives business and technical decision makers the confidence of knowing that their immediate technology investment will support their long-term goals.

Because each business is unique, its evolution and use of technology will be as well. To guide growing businesses through each phase of their development, the Cisco Smart Business Roadmap provides a choice of several networking solutions. In some cases, business applications will complement the Cisco networking elements to provide a complete business solution.

- The **Cisco Secure Network Foundation** provides a flexible communications platform that serves as the cornerstone to the business evolution and as the foundation for other networking solutions. The Cisco Secure Network Foundation delivers integrated security and maximizes reliability, helping to ensure that data is protected and that applications function as promised.

Wireless and mobility solutions are part of the Cisco Secure Network Foundation. These solutions enhance productivity by making information and applications more readily available to employees in the office, on the road, or at home. With Cisco wireless solutions, companies can set up standalone wireless LANs in buildings, branch offices, kiosks, or wherever they need connectivity. They can transmit data, voice, and video between buildings and provide site-to-site links that cost less than leased lines. Cisco wireless products deliver the same level of security, scalability, and manageability that a business enjoys with a wired LAN.

- The **Cisco Self-Defending Network** protects an organization's communications by identifying, preventing, and adapting to threats from both internal and external sources. With this protection, organizations are better prepared to take advantage of their network resources—improving business processes and cutting costs.
- The **Cisco Business Communications Solution** is the industry's first integrated voice, video, data, and wireless communications system designed and priced for SMBs. Cisco considers voice and data networking to be part of a comprehensive business solution. This innovative systems approach to security, connectivity, and communications enables organizations to grow and optimize their business. The Cisco Business Communications Solution is smart, simple, and secure. It provides an intelligent, resilient, adaptable infrastructure that enables companies to enhance the way they do business and build a competitive edge.

- **Service and support through local partners** provides the technical expertise and customer services needed to successfully deploy and operate the network. No matter what phase an organization is in—preparation, planning, design, implementation, operation, or optimization—Cisco and its certified, localized partners have a specific support strategy that can help accelerate the success of technology deployments and ongoing support.

WHY CISCO

Cisco Systems provides a complete solution that addresses the unique challenges faced by SMBs. Cisco offers a wide array of industry-tailored solutions and applications that are proven and tested to meet specific business needs. Acting as trusted advisors, Cisco and its partners work closely with customers to identify the state of their business and network and provide a solution that most closely aligns with their immediate requirements. The Cisco Smart Business Roadmap also provides a framework to help ensure that the immediate solution scales to optimize the business over time.

The Cisco Smart Business Roadmap provides networking solutions, services and support, and financing—as well as specialized local partners and service providers—to design and deliver the right solution that will evolve with individual business needs. Only Cisco offers a whole solution in which the components work better together to produce improved business results.

Cisco Systems Capital® financing and leasing options provide SMBs worldwide with innovative, flexible leasing and financing programs at competitive rates. SMBs have the flexibility to use revenue derived from enhanced network performance to pay for equipment.

Cisco specialized partners and service providers are experts in the technologies that support the Smart Business Roadmap, providing a high level of localized, in-depth expertise in solutions that can help your company move to the next level. To ensure that your network remains robust and supports critical business operations, service and support options such as Cisco SMB Support Assistant can help you maximize network availability.

Cisco understands that a better way of doing business begins at the business level—not the technology level. Cisco, its channel partners, and service providers work closely with businesses to ensure that their network supports and optimizes the business. Companies can implement a networking technology solution over time in small, incremental steps, at the pace they choose, with lower risk and a lower total cost of ownership. For businesses that are looking for an alternative to purchasing and operating their equipment and services in-house, Cisco has global partnerships with proven service providers to deliver and manage these services. With this flexible roadmap approach, any business can take its first step toward meeting changing business needs today and in the years to come.

ABOUT CISCO

Cisco Systems is the worldwide leader in networking for the Internet. Today, networks are an essential part of business, education, government, and home communications, and Cisco IP-based networking solutions are the foundation of these networks. Cisco hardware, software, and service offerings are used to create Internet solutions that allow individuals, companies, and countries to increase productivity, improve customer satisfaction, and strengthen competitive advantage. The Cisco name has become synonymous with the Internet, as well as with the productivity improvements that Internet business solutions provide. At Cisco, our vision is to change the way people work, live, play, and learn.

Cisco's [innovation](#) continues with industry-leading products in the core areas of [routing](#) and [switching](#), as well as advanced technologies in areas such as home networking, IP Communications, optical solutions, network security, storage networking, and wireless LAN technology.

Today, Cisco remains committed to creating secure networks that are smarter, faster, and more durable, with a generational approach to an evolutionary infrastructure.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about the Cisco Smart Business Roadmap, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/sbr> or contact your Cisco channel partner. For more information on finding a Cisco partner, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/partnerlocator>.



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