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Cisco Data Center Networking Software Subscriptions Suites

Data center networking software

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What software subscription options does Cisco offer for data center networking?

Cisco offers three tiers of subscription-based software suites and a set of add-on licenses for Cisco Nexus® 9000 Series Switches:

- DCN Tier Licenses
  - Data Center Networking Essentials Subscription
  - Data Center Networking Advantage Subscription
  - Data Center Networking Premier Subscription
- DCN Add-On Licenses

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What add-on licenses are available with a Data Center Networking Software subscription?

Security, Storage, Day-2 Operations, and Nexus Data Broker (NDB) are available as add-on licenses in the Data Center Networking Software subscriptions.

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What are the benefits of the Data Center Networking subscription licensing?

The Data Center Networking Software Subscription suites bring customer flexibility when migrating to the software-defined, Cisco policy-driven management and control of Cisco ACI. Same subscription license is also supported with our Cisco NX-OS fabrics with DCNM.

Key benefits include:

- **Flexibility:** These subscription offers provide the features necessary to run a Cisco® Nexus 9000 Series switch in either Cisco ACI® mode or Cisco Nexus Operating System (NX-OS) mode. Customers have the flexibility to manage their Nexus 9000 infrastructure in NX-OS mode, and transition to ACI mode when ready, without having to purchase any new licenses. Customers can also run single and multiple data center environments, which allows them to tailor their investment to their specific data center landscape.

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- **Simplicity:** Instead of choosing from multiple, separately priced software features, customers purchase a single Cisco Data Center Networking Software product for their data center networking requirements.

- **Investment protection:** A customer's investment grows in value through innovation, updates, and upgrades. And soon, customers will have the freedom to deploy licenses on both physical and virtual machines. Data Center Networking Software subscription licenses are not tied to specific hardware so they are portable to the next generation of applicable devices.

- **Faster access to innovation:** Company competitiveness is tied to strategic use of innovative technology, and Cisco is increasingly delivering the latest features through subscriptions.

- **Better financial planning:** Subscription licenses support linear, predictable budgeting and tap into OpEx funding.

- **Enhanced agility to respond faster to the market:** Renew and scale whenever you want.

- **Cisco Software Support Service (SWSS) included:** Data Center Networking subscription licenses include SWSS, which provides Cisco Technical Assistance Center (TAC) support, knowledge base access, and software downloads.

Subscription options, capabilities, and use cases

Q **What capabilities are included in the Data Center Networking (DCN) Essentials subscription?**

A This option provides the essential Cisco NX-OS and Cisco ACI capabilities to manage and operate a leading-edge single data center fabric or site. Those include routed fabric capability, monitoring, and management. With this offer, customers can migrate from Cisco NX-OS to Cisco ACI when ready. Table 1 compares the capabilities of DCN Essentials when running NX-OS or ACI.

Table 1. Features included in the Data Center Networking Essentials subscription

DCN Essentials (NX-OS capabilities)	DCN Essentials (ACI capabilities)
Enterprise LAN Open Shortest Path First (OSPF), Border Gateway Protocol (BGP), Intermediate System-to-Intermediate System (IS-IS), Protocol Independent Multicast (PIM), Source-Specific Multicast (SSM), Multicast Source Discovery Protocol (MSDP), Policy-Based Routing (PBR), Generic Routing Encapsulation (GRE), Enhanced Interior Gateway Routing Protocol (EIGRP), Virtual routing and forwarding (VRF), VXLAN, BGP eVPN Control Plane	**MultiPOD** Support for ACI MultiPOD topology
DCNM-LAN Network Manager	**ACI Base capabilities** Intent-based networking fabric management, ecosystem security, virtualization
Network Services Catena, iCAM, Intelligent Traffic Director, Non-Blocking Multicast, Smart Channel	**PTP** Precision Time Protocol

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What capabilities are included in Data Center Networking Advantage subscription?

This offer includes all the features in the DCN Essentials suite plus the advanced Cisco NX-OS and Cisco ACI capabilities, and Multisite Orchestrator (MSO) to manage multiple data centers or sites. Table 2 compares the capabilities of DCN Advantage when running NX-OS or ACI.

Table 2.   Features included in Data Center Networking Advantage subscription

| DCN Advantage (NX-OS capabilities)	DCN Advantage (ACI capabilities)
VPN Fabric	**Multi-Site**
Inter-AS option B, MPLS Layer 3 VPN Pervasive Load Balancing (PLB)	Support for ACI Multi-Site deployments
Tenant Routed Multicast VXLAN EVPN Multi-Site L3 EVPN over segment routing MPLS	**Physical Remote Leaf**

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What capabilities are included in the Data Center Networking Premier Subscription?

This offer includes all of the features in the DCN Advantage Subscription plus Cisco's Day 2 Operations Add On License, and Nexus Dashboard software. This provides operators with confidence that the network meets their business intent, ensuring performance and uptime. Using Cisco advance data telemetry and analytics, operators can reduce Mean Time To Repair (MTTR), reduce outages, and provide increased reliability for data center operations. Figure 3 provides a feature comparison between DCN Essentials, DCN Advantage, and DCN Premier Subscription licenses.

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How do I order Nexus Dashboard?

Nexus Dashboard entitlement is included as part of your Premier and Day2 OPS Add-On license for Nexus Insights. For Multi-site support, Nexus Dashboard entitlement is part of the Advantage license. [Fig. 1]

Figure 1.   Feature comparison

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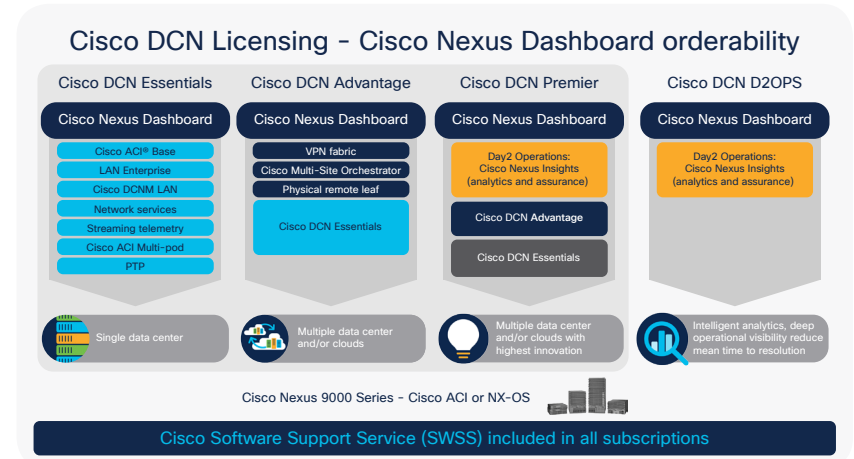
What if a customer already has a DCN Essentials or Advantage subscription, but would like to have the Day-2 Operations solution provided in the DCN Premier Subscription?

Customers can purchase a Day-2 Operations Add On License subscription, which includes device licenses for Network Assurance and Insights (Resources and Advisor).

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What hardware is supported with these Data Center Networking subscription offers?

The Data Center Networking subscription offers support the Cisco Nexus 9000 Series Switches today.

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Purchasing

Q **If a customer wants to purchase Data Center Networking Advantage, does the customer have to buy Data Center Networking Essentials also?**

A No. Data Center Networking Advantage includes the features and functions of Data Center Networking Essentials.

Likewise, Data Center Networking Premier includes the features and functions of Data Center Networking Advantage and Data Center Networking Essentials. See Figure 3 for visualization.

Q **What subscription terms are available?**

A Subscription terms are for three, five and seven years.

Q **We are designing an ACI solution for a customer with subscription licenses for 3 or 5 years. The customer is asking about the possibility to renew subscription for 1 year, after the end of the 3/5 years. I only see information of 3 and 5 years options. Can you please clarify if there is a possibility to extend the subscription license for just 1 year?**

A When the 3Y or 5Y DCN subscriptions come up for renewal then the CCW-R tool is used for renewals. In that will be the option to renew for 1Y, 3Y, 5Y, 7Y.

Q **Is a software subscription license mandatory for the Nexus 9000 Series?**

A No, subscription licenses are recommended only, customers may continue to purchase Nexus 9000 Software as they have in the past, through perpetual licenses. Cisco will increasingly deliver the latest innovations through subscription-based licenses.

Q **What add-on licenses are available with a Data Center Networking Software subscription?**

A Security, Storage, Day-2 Operations, and Nexus Data Broker (NDB) are available as add-on licenses in the Data Center Networking Software subscriptions.

Cisco enterprise agreement

Q **Can customers get a Data Center Networking Subscription through a Cisco Enterprise Agreement?**

A Yes. For more information, visit: https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/products/collateral/software/at-a-glance-c45-741776.html.

Q **What subscription tiers are available in EA for DC Networking?**

A Only Advantage, Premier, Day2Ops, and add-ons for Security, Storage and NDB are included in EA for DC Networking.

Q **What subscription terms are available in EA for DC Networking?**

A 3-year, 5-year and 7-year term options are available in EA for DC Networking.

Q **What are the benefits of purchasing DC Networking in an EA?**

A The Cisco® Enterprise Agreement is ideal for organizations that want financial predictability, want a simplified IT environment, or have a technology growth plan. Its benefits include:

- **Simplifies** and centralizes licensing management with a cross-portfolio, co-terminated agreement covering your entire worldwide organization
- **Scales** to meet changing business needs, with licenses that allow organic growth and provide updates and upgrades
- **Has no** retroactive overage fees, with the industry's only "True Forward" feature
- **Controls** costs by providing investment protection for existing licenses and services as well as budget predictability for growth
- **Provides one** workspace to see all the software subscriptions procured, deployed, and due for renewal
- **Saves** time through co-termination of software subscriptions

Cisco Smart Licenses and Cisco Smart Accounts

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What is a Smart License and why is it relevant?

Cisco Smart Licensing is a flexible licensing model that provides you with an easier, faster, and more consistent way to purchase and manage software across the Cisco portfolio and across your organization. And it's secure – you control what users can access. With Smart Licensing you get:

- **Easy Activation.** Smart Licensing establishes a pool of software licenses that can be used across the entire organization—no more PAKs (Product Activation Keys).
- **Unified Management.** My Cisco Entitlements (MCE) provides a complete view into all of your Cisco products and services in an easy-to-use portal, so you always know what you have and what you are using.
- **License Flexibility.** Your software is not node-locked to your hardware, so you can easily use and transfer licenses as needed.

In order to retrieve your Smart Licenses, you will first need to set up a Smart Account on Cisco Software Central (software.cisco.com).

For a more detailed overview on Cisco Licensing, go to cisco.com/go/licensingguide.

Migration

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How do existing Cisco ONE customers (perpetual and subscription) get the software-based and policy-driven functionality included in the Data Center Networking Essentials or Data Center Networking Advantage subscription offers?

We are making it easier for our existing Cisco ONE customers to acquire and use these Data Center Networking innovations. To raise a specific request, send an email message to: ask-ciscoone-pm@cisco.com.

For customers who had purchased a Cisco ONE Essentials or Cisco ONE Advantage subscription software, no change will be needed as they had already acquired the ACI / NX-OS capabilities through their original subscription.

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If a customer has a perpetual license for Data Center Networking Essentials, Data Center Networking Advantage, NX-OS Essentials, or NX-OS Advantage, do you offer a migration promotion to the subscription offers?

If a customer has any of these perpetual licenses with active SWSS, Cisco will work on an individual basis to help the customer migrate to the subscription offers. To raise a specific request, send an email message to: ask-ciscoone-pm@cisco.com.

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If a customer stops paying for a subscription software license, does the data center network stop working?

No. The Cisco Nexus 9000 switch will continue to work. However, customers need to renew the subscription in order to receive new innovations and software support.

Support

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How is software support provided?

Cisco Software Support Service (SWSS) is included in Data Center Networking subscriptions. Customers receive Cisco TAC support, knowledge base access, and software downloads. No additional software support purchase is required.

For more information on SWSS,
visit: https://www.cisco.com/go/swss

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What hardware support services are available?

Three options are available:

- Cisco Smart Net Total Care® provides 24-hour global support for the base OS and underlying hardware platforms on which the software described in this document is deployed. Learn more at: https://www.cisco.com/go/smartnet

- Cisco Solution Support is a high-value services offering that provides centralized support through our solution experts, whether you have a problem with a Cisco product or one from a solution partner. Learn more at: https://www.cisco.com/go/solutionsupport

- Partner Support Service provides technical support capabilities and insights that partners can select, customize, and deliver cost-effectively to their customers. Learn more at: https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/partners/sell-integrate-consult/sell-services/partner-support.html