The bridge to possible

Cisco Smart Licensing and Smart Account

Frequently Asked Questions for Partners

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Overview

Q. How is Cisco changing its approach to software licensing?

A. Cisco is moving away from node locked PAK licenses to Smart Licensing, a license pooling model. Cisco products are adopting Smart Licensing which are managed in Smart Accounts enabling pooling of licenses between compatible devices.

Q. What is Smart Licensing?

A. Smart Licensing is a flexible software licensing model that simplifies the way you activate and manage licenses across your organization. The Smart Licensing model makes it easier for you to procure, deploy and manage your Cisco software licenses. To use Smart Licensing, you must first set up a Smart Account.

Q. How is Smart Licensing different from traditional PAK-based licensing?

A. The following table highlights the differences between traditional PAK-based licenses and SmartLicenses.

Traditional Licenses	Smart Licenses
Limited view You do not know what you own. You may need to access multiple portals/tools to view information about your software assets.	**Complete view** You have a complete view of your software assets. License and device usage is easily managed from a single interface.
PAK registration You must manually register each device. A device can only be unlocked with a license key.	**Easy registration** No PAKs are required for unlocking a device. You can easily activate devices.
Device-specific licensing Licenses are specific to only one device (also referred to as node locking).	**Company-specific licensing** Our flexible licensing feature enables use of licenses across devices. Licenses can be pooled and applied to applicable devices in any grouping as designated by your company. You can consume licenses beyond the original purchase and reconcile overage usage at a later agreed date to speed execution and reduce the friction in the procurement cycles

Q. What is a Smart Account?

A. A Smart Account is a central repository where you can view, store, and manage licenses across the entire organization. Comprehensively, you can get access to your software licenses, hardware and subscriptions through your Smart Account. Smart Accounts are required to access and manage Smart License-enabled products. Creating a Smart Account is easy and takes less than five minutes. Learn how to search for or create a Smart Account for your organization based on your company's domain.

Q. What are the benefits of a Smart Account?

A. Smart Accounts offer a simple-to-use, centralized, and organized solution to user, device and license management. With a Smart Account, you get full visibility and insight into all of your Cisco software assets deposited into the Smart Account (including PAK licenses and Enterprise Agreements). When Smart Accounts are used with Smart Licenses, the benefits include:

- **Real-time visibility** – You can view all of your software licenses, entitlements, and users across
- the organization.
- **Centralized management** – A single location gives authorized users the ability to see all license entitlements and move licenses freely through the network as needed.
- **Cost-effectiveness** – Drive down the cost of license management with reduced overhead, better utilization management, and more efficient planning.
- **Organization** – Virtual accounts provide the flexibility to organize licenses by department, product, geography, or other designation—whatever makes the most sense for your company

Q. What role do partners play in Cisco's Smart Licensing and Smart Accounts?

A. Cisco is moving to a Smart Licensing model to make the license registration process faster and more flexible. Your role in this initiative is twofold. First, educate your customers about Smart Accounts and let them know it is important to create an account to consume their licenses. Once set up, partners have the option of managing their customers' Smart Account with the customer's consent. Second, create a Partner Holding Account so you can store orders if needed.

Q. How do Smart Accounts benefit partners?

A. Cisco Smart Accounts help partners build stronger customer relationships. With a customer's consent, partners can view and manage Smart Accounts on their customer's behalf. This valuable insight provides upsell and value-added service opportunities and puts the partner in a position of trusted advisor.

Q. What is a Partner Holding Account?

A. A Partner Holding Account is used to temporarily deposit orders until the end customer Smart Account is identified. All partners should have a Partner Holding Account. When ordering, you may not know the end customer or their Smart Account name upfront, and instead can temporarily assign the order to a Partner Holding Account. Once the customer is identified post-order, you can transfer the order to customer's Smart Account. Licenses cannot be consumed or activated in the Partner Holding Account. You can learn more about the best practices for Partner Holding accounts here.

In 2-Tier, Distributors can assign their Holding Account or their Partner's Holding Account. This largely depends upon who will assign Smart Account or has direct visibility to customer and theirSmart Account.

Q. How can a partner use Holding Account?

A. Assigning the Holding Account means that members of the Holding Account can sign for notifications, so they know when the order is fulfilled. They can then work with customer to deploy license or resolve any questions. Further, Holding Account members can access the order via CCW under Order --> Smart Account Orders.

Q. What is a Virtual Account?

A. Virtual Accounts are a subset of a Smart Account, which customers and partners can use to internally organize licenses. They can be organized by region, technology, group (Finance, Ops, Manufacturing, etc.), cost/ profit centers, or by any other means. Nested Virtual Accounts provide flexibility in organizing Licenses such Region– US > Finance > Sacramento. Nested Virtual Accounts can be considered akin to file folders on your computer. For example Partner Mary handles Intel and all of their Cisco needs, so maybe a VA for Intel / Mary.

Q. Why do I need Virtual Accounts?

A. Partners may want Virtual Accounts, within their Partner Holding Account, to separate or categorize the orders they distribute to their customers. Customers may create Virtual Accounts, within their Smart Account, to reflect their company's departments, geographies or technologies. This allows customers to allocate access to specific licenses while maintaining an overall view of the organizational usage. There is no limit to the number of Virtual Accounts you create.

Managing Smart Accounts

Q. When does a Customer need a Smart Account?

A. All Cisco customers need a Smart Account. Smart License-enabled products must have a Smart Account assigned in a CCW Order before the order can be placed. Products that require a Smart Account are indicated by an 'SA' icon and 'Smart Account Required' message in red at the line level. Without a Smart Account, customers cannot use the Smart Licenses purchased.

Q. How can I determine if my customer has already set up a Smart Account?

A. You can determine whether a Customer Smart Account exists by using the search functionality in CCW, or by using the "Request Access to Existing Smart Account" link in Cisco Software Central. When you search for a Smart Account, you need to enter the customer domain (i.e. cisco.com) in the Account Domain Identifier field. After submitting, you will see a list of existing Smart Accounts. If nothing appears, and you have used the correct domain identifier, then the Customer likely does not have a Smart Account.

Q. How can I request a Smart Account?

A. Finding an existing or creating a new Smart Account is fast and easy. Log into Cisco Software Central with your cisco.com ID and search for or initiate a request for a Smart Account by clicking 'Create Account' under the 'Smart Licensing' section for customers. Creating a Smart Account takes less than five minutes. You can also initiate a request for a Smart Account when ordering in CCW. Here's how.

Q. Can I request a Smart Account for my customers?

A. You can [request a Smart Account for your customers](#) by clicking 'Request a Smart Account' under the 'Administration' tile. You must provide the contact details of the person who can represent the company to manage Cisco assets. The primary business email address of the contact must match the domain requested. Also, the contact must have a cisco.com ID. Example, if the primary business email address of the contact is name@cisco.com, the domain requested needs to be cisco.com.

Additionally, this can be done when ordering. Instead of assigning a Smart Account, a Partner can request a Smart Account on behalf of an End Customer by inputting the End Customer contact. Also during ordering, the Partner can delegate this action to the End Customer contact. The End Customer contact will receive an email where they can assign their Smart Account or create one if they do not have one.

Q. What is the role of the Cisco Partner in the Smart Account Management?

A. With your [customers consent](#), you can manage a Customer's Smart Account on their behalf. To do so, the Customer Smart Account admin must grant you a role within their Smart Account and/or specific Virtual Account. Typically, a customer will grant a partner the role of Smart Account user or Virtual Account user, to enable the partner to manage licenses within the entire Smart Account, or a specific Virtual Account. The customer can also grant a partner a Smart Account admin or Virtual Account admin role, if they want the partner to manage users and other Smart Account settings.

Q. When do I need a Customer Smart Account versus a Partner Holding Account?

A. All partners and distributors need to create a Partner Holding Account. If a partner is also going to act as a consumer and purchase products for their own company, then they will also need a Customer Smart Account. Both accounts can be setup through a one-time setup process in Cisco Software Central.

Partner Holding Accounts

Q. How can I create a Partner Holding Account?

A. You can create a Partner Holding Account during the ordering process in CCW or at software.cisco.com by clicking 'Request account' under the 'Smart Licensing' section for partners.

Q. Can I have multiple Partner Holding Accounts?

A. We recommend you have one Partner Holding Account and create Virtual Accounts within your Partner Holding Account to cater to regional or other needs. In some instances, it may be necessary to create additional Partner Holding Accounts regionally depending on the breadth of coverage and how you conduct business.

Ordering and Administration

Q. Can I deposit both Smart Licenses and Classic Licenses in a customer's Smart Account?

A. Yes, you can deposit both Smart Licenses and Classic Licenses into a customer's active Smart Account. For Smart Licenses, when the order is fulfilled, these licenses will be automatically activated and available in the customer's Smart Account. For Classic Licenses, when the order is fulfilled, these licenses will be available in the License Registration Portal (LRP).

Q. My Customer does not have a Smart Account, can I still place an order?

A. You can still place the order without providing the Customer's Smart Account at point of sale. You can deposit a specific line item in your Partner Holding Account at the point of sale and then later deposit the item in the Customer's Smart Account once it is created. Partners can also request a Smart Account when ordering by inputting the End Customer contact. For any "New" Smart Accounts, please advise the customer to activate the Smart Account.

Q. How do I assign a Customer Smart Account or Partner Holding Account when placing a new order?

A. You can find a walk-through of the steps to assign a Smart Account [here](#).

Q. How does a Partner assign an order from their Partner Holding Account to a Customer Smart Account?

A. For Smart Account mandatory orders, you will receive an email notifying you that an order needs to be moved from your Partner Holding Account. You can find a walk-through of the steps needed to assign an order to a customer's Smart Account [here](#).

Q. Where can I find guidance on how to structure a Smart Account or Partner Holding Account?

A. Use the best practices on how to structure your [Smart Account](#) or [Partner Holding](#) account.

Q. What is the consequence of a customer not having a Smart Account?

A. If a customer does not have a Smart Account, their Smart License purchase will sit in the Partner's Holding Account until the partner can assign it to the end customer's active Smart Account. The customer will not be able to see, or use, the Smart Licenses they purchased until the partner deposits the Smart Licenses into the customer's active Smart Account.
Note: This is especially important for all term/ subscription licenses, as the subscription starts once the order line is shipped, regardless of the Smart Account assignment. But the provisioning will happen only after the End Customer Smart Account is provided.

Q. What are the costs involved in creating a Smart Account or Partner Holding Account?

A. There is no cost involved in creating a Smart Account or Partner Holding Account. It is free.

Q. What is Cisco's commitment with regard to Privacy and Data Protection within Smart Accounts?

A. We are committed to being transparent about how your data is collected, transferred and protected across our offerings. Privacy data sheets describe the processing of personal data, or personally identifiable information, by specific solutions. To learn more about the processing of personal data (or personal identifiable information) by Smart Licensing and Smart Accounts [click here](#).