

# How the Technical Knowledge Library Simplifies Learning for Engineers, Customers, and Partners

One-stop shop with detailed, technical information and training materials for users at various stages of learning.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<b>BUSINESS SITUATION AND CHALLENGE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple, disparate sources for finding technical information and training</li> </ul>
<b>SOLUTION AND BENEFITS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth, solution-oriented content and learning</li> <li>Faster, easier access to relevant information</li> </ul>
<b>BUSINESS IMPACT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central location for over 2400 online offerings</li> </ul>
<b>NEXT STEPS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional virtual trainings</li> <li>Enhanced user interface</li> </ul>

## Business Situation and Challenge

The Technical Knowledge Library (TKL) is a collection of Cisco's intellectual capital, in the form of technical documents, videos, and a variety of other resources. TKL gives exposure to how Cisco engineers deploy and transition capabilities within existing networks in real-world situations.

By aggregating information from cross-functional groups within Cisco, TKL provides Cisco engineers, customers, and partners with a self-serve resource library that they can access online, anytime. TKL is a subscription service available to Cisco customers and partners. Subscribed users gain access through Cisco.com from any device.

Before subscribing to TKL, users relied on a variety of sources for information regarding solutions and technologies. These sources varied from the untrusted Internet to Cisco.com and Cisco's intranet. Many engineers find that using the Internet to search for detailed information often results in unreliable results and time-consuming searches. Information is often provided from a high level or organized by product instead of by solution, and does not provide the in-depth knowledge that engineers and network architects require. By using TKL engineers can quickly search for data that is both relevant and reliable.

## Solution and Benefits

Cisco IT uses TKL to research solutions relating to Cisco's network and overall architectural direction. Authorized IT members self-register with a unique link and their Cisco.com credentials to obtain access. By accessing TKL, users can learn more about specific solutions instead of reading about specific products. Daniel Kim, a network engineer in Cisco IT, says that "it is hard to get in-depth engineering knowledge starting from sites like Google. TKL allows me to enhance my knowledge of a particular technology."

"TKL is the first place I go when looking for information," says James Turner, an IT engineer in Global Infrastructure Services at Cisco, "[TKL] is a valuable tool that brings together information that is otherwise hard to find."

TKL also provides access to learning and self-development information that is not available elsewhere. "I used TKL to download resources on Cisco Express Forwarding," says Kim, "I could not find that information elsewhere

on the web.”

Another advantage is that users can avoid buying expensive training books when they need information from only a few of the chapters. The training resources for certifications such as the CCIE or CCNA can be costly. By downloading these resources from TKL users save money and have quicker access to the materials they need. Convenient access to written training materials allows more users to train on their own time, when it is convenient for them, which makes it enticing for more users to expand their knowledge on certain topics.

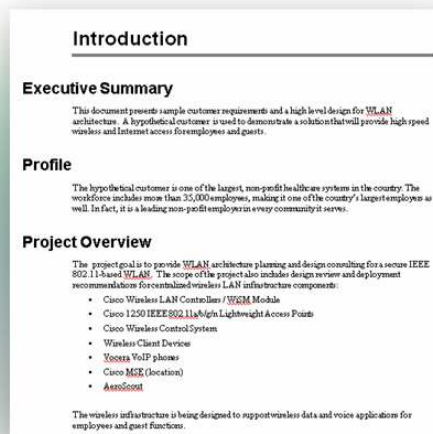
**“[TKL] is a valuable tool that brings together information that is otherwise hard to find.”**

—James Turner, IT Engineer, Global Infrastructure Services, Cisco

Learning materials in TKL are especially valuable to new hires. By accessing the resources available in TKL they can quickly get up to speed in the organization. Kim states that learning to use TKL took about 5 minutes. "There is a short list of instructions to follow, and the user interface is straightforward and simple," he says. The TKL registration information includes an instruction guide and point of contact for additional assistance.

**Figure 1.** Advanced Services give valuable insight into previous deployments

## Advanced Services Best Practices



- Written by Cisco Advanced Services engineers stemming from their on-field and off-field experiences. Not available on Cisco.com
- Leading practices, white papers, case studies, design guides, configuration examples, and more, in digital format

### Business Impact

TKL is a one-stop shop for a variety of learning resources and technical information. Authorized users gain

access to more than 2400 online offerings, which are organized by high-level categories. Content is available in several delivery methods, to accommodate users' different learning styles. Available content types are rich media content such as video, online labs, Cisco Press books, technical tips, and best practices.

**Figure 2.** Content in TKL is organized by overarching categories

The screenshot displays the Cisco Technical Knowledge Library (TKL) interface. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, My TKL, Cisco Resources, Cisco . Resources, Topics, Security Alerts, Usage Stats, and Administrator. A search bar is located on the right. Below the navigation bar, a sidebar on the left lists resource types: Collaboration (5), Data Center (5), Network Infrastructure (5), Security (8), and Wireless (8). The main content area, titled 'All Resources', shows a table of documents. The table has columns for Select, Title, File Size (kB), Publication Date/ Last Approval Date, and Uploaded Date. The table lists various resources, including technical tips, bootcamps, and best practice guidelines.

Select	Title	File Size (kB)	Publication Date/ Last Approval Date	Uploaded Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical Tip: Converting Single Chassis ASR9000 to nV Edge	326.71	02-07-2013	02-08-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	ISSU Overview for Nexus 5000	172766.21	02-07-2013	02-07-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	VPC Best Practice Guidelines for Nexus 7000 and Nexus 5000 Switches	1872.02	02-07-2013	02-07-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	UCS Bootcamp: #8 - Virtual Security Gateway (VSG)	66296.33	02-05-2013	02-06-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	UCS Bootcamp: #7 - VM-FEX	68108.56	02-05-2013	02-06-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	UCS Bootcamp: #9 - Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI)	211827.37	02-05-2013	02-06-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	UCS Bootcamp: #6 - Stateless Computing	163651.68	02-05-2013	02-06-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	UCS Bootcamp: #5 - Fibre Channel	45134.59	02-05-2013	02-06-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	UCS Bootcamp: #4 - EHM/Switching Modes	51512.61	02-05-2013	02-06-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	UCS Bootcamp: #3 - Connection	199709.02	02-05-2013	02-06-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	UCS Bootcamp: #1 - Intro to UCS and Hardware	223518.14	02-05-2013	02-06-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cisco Access Point Performance Index Definition	2804.33	02-04-2013	02-08-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cisco Live 2012 Index	213.45	01-23-2013	01-23-2013
<input type="checkbox"/>	CCDE Self-Study Resources Part 2	108916.35	12-18-2012	12-18-2012
<input type="checkbox"/>	CCDE Self-Study Resources Part 1	124108.97	12-18-2012	12-18-2012

By integrating an intelligent search engine into the TKL library, users can easily sort through the information. Resources are also sorted by top downloaded documents, pulling the most commonly used resources to an easy-to-find location. If users cannot find the information they are looking for, they can request it be added to the library. Users have a strong voice in shaping the content provided in the library.

TKL is a secured service. Hosted on Cisco.com, the login and content files are delivered via HTTPS. To protect Cisco intellectual capital, TKL encrypts the documents and video with ARALOC digital rights management (DRM), preventing any external unauthorized access to the content in TKL as well as within the subscription service.

**Figure 3.** TKL contains a variety of resources, from Best Practices to training courses



## Next Steps

TKL is actively undergoing updates to improve the end user experience. Updates will occur in two main categories: the content available and the platform.

Moving forward there will be an even greater focus on the content that is available. Both the content itself and the method by which it is delivered and sorted will be improved. An upcoming partnership will provide additional test preparation materials for Cisco and ITIL certifications.

Content will be bundled into collections by topic to improve ease of use. These collections of content will make it easier for users to find information on various aspects of a technology, solution, or service offered by Cisco Advanced Services. Collections will include all the information available on a certain topic in one self-contained file. This way, users can download one file and get all the relevant resources for that specific topic, instead of searching by topic for various content types. Collections already available in TKL have proven to be valuable by gathering all the resources available for Cisco certifications in one file. Specific technologies, products, or solutions such as IPv6 or UCS, are examples of future collections.

There will also be updates to the platform itself, improving the user interface. Recent updates include a single sign-on mechanism and mobile device access on Apple iOS and Android devices.

Going forward, new features will be evaluated based on user feedback. Prospective features include additional collaboration functions for a social media type experience such as wikis, blogs, and additional opportunities to

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interact with peers on the platform.

Additionally, improved file sharing will be added to increase the amount and variety of subscriber specific information available. More web analytics will be included, as well as multi-service catalogs. Android and iOS applications will also be improved to enhance the mobile experience and increase the accessibility of TKL.

### For More Information

To read more about TKL, visit <http://www.cisco.com/web/learning/le31/ase/knowledgeservices/index.html#~tkl>

To read additional Cisco IT case studies on a variety of business solutions, visit Cisco on Cisco: Inside Cisco IT [www.cisco.com/go/ciscoit](http://www.cisco.com/go/ciscoit)

### Note

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