Cisco Technology Verification Service Q&A

FAQs

GENERAL SERVICE

Q: What is Cisco announcing?
Cisco is launching a new service called the Technology Verification Service (TVS). TVS gives customers the ability to review hardware, software and firmware within a secure Cisco environment.

Q: Why is Cisco offering this service?
This service was developed in response to customer requests and is consistent with Cisco's long-standing commitment to transparency and providing trustworthy technology.

Q: What is new about this service?
TVS will allow customers to access, review, and test source code and other intellectual property will occur within a dedicated, secure facility at a Cisco site.

Q: Does this mean that Cisco is giving or handing over source code to customers?
No. Cisco will not hand over source code to customers or anyone else. Instead, we have created a secure environment where customers may view, inspect and test source code.

Q: Who is eligible to participate in this program?
TVS is open to all Cisco customers. Once approved, participation in the program requires travelling to the secure testing location, paying the service fee, abiding by Cisco's security restrictions, and complying with relevant Export Control Laws.

Q: What technologies or products can be reviewed?
TVS includes all Cisco technologies, within the bounds of applicable Export Control Laws. Where certain technologies from third-party OEMs are received encrypted, we may be unable to provide greater visibility.

Q: Where will the TVS sites be located?
The first TVS site will open at our Research Triangle Park (RTP) facility in North Carolina in early 2016. We then plan to open a TVS site at a Cisco facility in Europe approximately six months later. The timing and location of additional sites will be determined by customer demand.

Q: What are the differences between industry or government certifications and TVS?
TVS is a fee-for-service tailored to address customer demands for a customized review of Cisco's technology. The reviews are conducted at Cisco's TVS site with support from Cisco staff, results are typically not published, and participating in the TVS process typically does not result in Cisco being added to a formal approved product list.

The certifications process, on the other hand, are designed as standardized tests for all vendors, and are typically conducted by third parties in their labs. Moreover, the results are published and vendors, if they pass, are added to a formal approved product list.

CUSTOMER PROCESS

Q: What is the request process?
All requests should be made through your Cisco account team or directly to the TVS team in the Cisco Security and Trust Organization. The TVS team will then contact the customer to discuss next steps.

Q: How do U.S. export license requirements impact TVS?
Export license requirements will be considered when the initial request is made. If a license is needed, the process can take three months or more, and preparation for a visit to the TVS onsite facility would wait until any required export license is secured.

Q: What are the typical lead times from request submittal to TVS site?
Typical lead times can include three months to obtain an U.S. export license and four weeks for Cisco to review and approve the request, schedule the facility, and prepare for the customer's TVS engagement.

Q: How will service requests be prioritized?
Prioritization will be determined by facility and subject matter expert availability, and business impact.

Q: Will Cisco experts be available onsite to support customers?
A TVS technical lead will be onsite for TVS sessions. Subject matter experts from applicable business units are brought in as needed, based on customer requests.

Q: How many people can a customer bring with them into the test facility?
We address customer requests on a case-by-case basis, mindful of the facility size and the number of subject matter experts needed to support the TVS engagement.

Q: Will customers be allowed to bring their own Cisco hardware and/or software images to the TVS facility?
No. TVS is focused on evaluation of "as-delivered" Cisco technology. Customers wanting to examine their existing Cisco technology that may be considered at risk should contact Cisco's Technical Assistance Center (TAC) directly.

Q: Can customers bring their own tools into the room?
Yes. Within the boundaries of applicable laws, including export control requirements, we anticipate that customers will want to bring their own software tools into our secure TVS facilities. However, participants will not be permitted to bring electronic devices into the room or remove any software, printouts or other artifacts from Cisco premises.

Q: Does the service include products that have not been released?
No. The service only includes technologies that have been released.

Q: What does the TVS service cost?
Contact your account team for pricing.

CISCO IP PROTECTION

Q: How are you protecting Cisco's IP?
The ability to access, review, and test source code and other IP will occur within a secure Cisco facility. Moreover, customers will not be permitted to bring electronic devices into the room or remove any software, printouts, or other artifacts from Cisco premises.

Q: How will you ensure that intellectual property is not illegally transferred?
TVS engagements may require export licenses to support the operation of this service and Cisco will strictly abide by applicable Export Control Laws.

PARTICIPANTS AND PRIVACY

Q: Will you disclose who is involved?
We respect the privacy of our customers. As a standard practice, we do not announce customer sales or use of a Cisco service offering without the customer's express written agreement.

Q: Will you exclude any person or organization?
As noted, our service is available to Cisco customers willing to travel to the secure TVS site, pay the fees, abide by security restrictions imposed by Cisco, and comply with applicable Export Control Laws. We anticipate situations where our competitors in some areas of our business will also be our partners or customers in other areas, so requests will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

VULNERABILITY DISCOVERY RAMIFICATIONS

Q: What happens if someone finds a zero-day or other vulnerability?
Customers participating in TVS will be contractually obligated to share the discovery of any vulnerability with Cisco. We approach vulnerabilities according to our established PSIRT policy.