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STAR Awards

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Featured Application



Innovation in Customer Portals that Improve the Digital Customer Experience



Unparalleled Partner Relationship Management with the Cisco Partner Experience Platform

Overview

Cisco's goal? To provide an industry leading experience that powers profitable growth and loyalty for our approximately 35,000 strong global partner ecosystem. Partners are a key Cisco strategic asset, but the nature of partnerships is changing. Both partners and distributors are rapidly moving from traditional to hybrid roles and embracing co-selling and managed services to meet customer needs.

As partnerships themselves have grown more complex, partners need to simplify wherever possible. And when partners told us that our tools were siloed and complex—adding costs and administrative overhead to managing their Cisco practice—we listened.

The Cisco Partner Performance and Experience team within the Global Partner and Routes to Market Sales group set out to help our partners navigate the shifts of the digital transformation era. We needed to simplify and connect the partner experience to launch a new, persona-driven Partner Relationship Management platform.

Phase One: Tool "cleanup" to dramatically simplify a 150+ partner-facing tools landscape. Insufficient partner tool governance and portfolio management had created tool and application sprawl. With a clear call to action from our partners, we rallied the cross-functional Cisco teams and tool owners around initial goals for 50% tool reduction and 15% increase in partner productivity. Simplifying the partner-facing tools experience set the stage for Phase Two.

Phase Two: Phased development and launch of a unified partner relationship management platform in parallel with continuing tool reduction. The Cisco Partner Experience Platform provides connected insights powered by artificial intelligence, machine-learning-based analytics, and competitive intellectual property. The connected “house” delivers a seamless, simple experience unlike any other in the industry. With Partner Experience Platform, partners can:



- Plan based on business, performance, and practice trends.
- Manage entitlements and align capabilities.
- Measure performance and adjust plans.
- Understand and collaborate on sales opportunities and leads.
- Optimize bottom-line incentives.
- Control access based on unique needs.

Business Impact

We have achieved impressive results to date, activating over 32,000 users. The enhanced experience enables partners and Cisco internal teams to make faster, more effective decisions to improve productivity and to drive profitable growth. To date, we have:

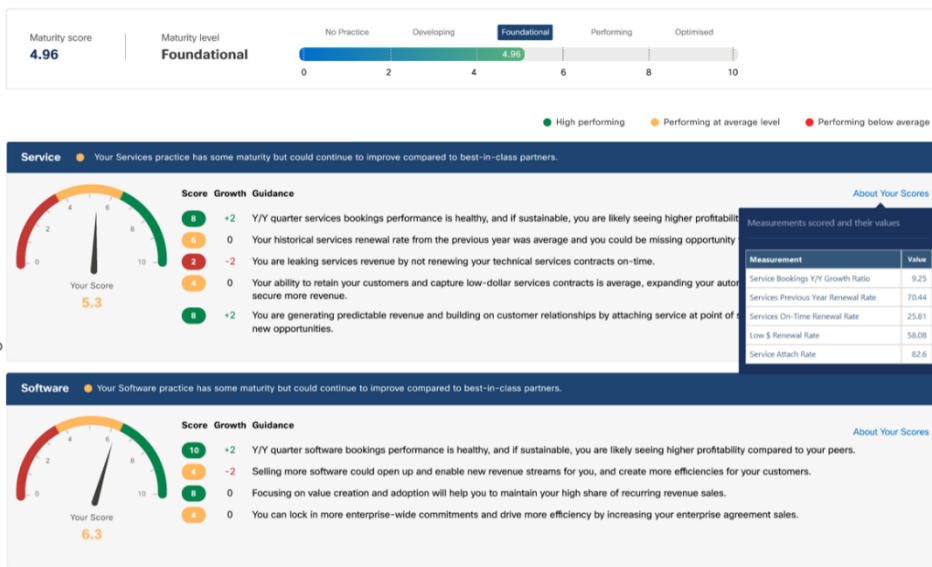
- Slashed 53% of the initial partner-facing tools inventory, with 60% total reduction planned this year.
- Transitioned 11 funds spanning four tools and three manual processes into Partner Experience Platform Funds Manager. Drove \$400K annual OPEX savings with insourced claim processing.

- Improved strategic planning with Integrated Partner Planning. This aligned the entire Cisco team with partners on top business priorities, reducing planning cycles by 20% and reducing the time to on-board new Cisco partner account managers by 50%.

Customer Impact

75% of Partner Experience Platform capabilities can be directly traced to partner input. Partner leaders told us they needed a better way to control who saw what information within their organizations. We responded with innovative access controls that enable them to assign granular access to specific "rooms" - or even areas within them- in the Partner Experience Platform. And usage grew 12 times in the six months following the change. Other key results include:

- Improved lifecycle incentives automation, enabling 31% more partners to start three times more lifecycle engagements in a recent quarter than they did in the six months prior.
- Data-driven, intuitive Practice Maturity models for partners to scale recurring business practices and improve profitability; actionable recommendations and context based on Cisco intellectual property, peer and competitor benchmarking, and growth trends.
- Co-sell partner incentives, marketing, and capabilities, driving co-sell deals at a 4X multiplier with 2.3X more software attached than traditional resale.
- Industry-leading distributor capabilities facilitating alignment for growth with two-tier resellers.



Partners have realized an average of 15% productivity improvements in managing their Cisco practices from:

- Consolidated and holistic partner incentive planning to drive bottom-line profitability and eliminate the need for additional resources to manage incentives and payments.
- Visibility to manage all development and marketing funds in one place, with consistent workflows. This reduced the need for additional administrative resources.

Partners cite several Partner Experience Platform innovations as best practices while offering enthusiastic overall support:

- "Excellent platform, single source of truth for us...no more confusion/noise because the information is accurate and validated we can make decisions faster."*
- "Cisco has stepped up to help [us] get educated on various technologies and disciplines... Not only is the content superb, but it shows Cisco's commitment to the channel because it is all free."*
- "[Practice Maturity] is humbling...my COO now knows where we are compared to peers. It ...starts dialogue and discussions to help us evolve."*

Innovation is something we do, not just for our partners but together with them. By listening to our users, we continue to drive meaningful Partner Experience Platform evolution and strategic adoption. We are co-designing the next paradigm shift together to deliver the industry leading partner relationship management experience.



For more information, visit the
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