

Cisco Info Center 7.0

Managing network events proactively allows service providers and enterprises to maintain the uptime of information technology (IT) based services. Because the network infrastructure has become instrumental to the delivery of business services, resolving IT faults quickly is essential. The Cisco® Info Center suite helps improve business efficiencies. Cisco Info Center provides real-time monitoring, management, and event de-duplication, and helps enterprises and service providers proactively manage their IT infrastructures to help ensure the continuous uptime of business services and applications.

Whether your organization is a member of the Cisco Powered Network Program, or you need to support a multi-vendor, multi-technology, heterogeneous environment, Cisco Info Center can help ensure the reliability and performance of your underlying infrastructure. Cisco Info Center's breadth of coverage supports more than 1000 unique customer environments including:

- Broadband services
- Security devices, firewalls and intrusion detection
- E-commerce applications
- Service infrastructure
- E-mail services
- Telco voice networks
- Databases
- UNIX and Windows NT systems
- Data centers
- Voice over IP (VoIP)
- IP networks
- Wireless networks and services

OVERVIEW

About Cisco Info Center

Breadth of coverage, rapid deployment, ease of use, high scalability, and performance are some of the reasons large service providers and enterprises place their trust in Cisco Info Center. It collects, consolidates, and correlates events from more than 1000 unique networking environments in real time, and presents this information in a meaningful, intuitive, visual format so administrators can prevent business processes from being negatively affected by network events.

You can monitor the real-time severity of events through color-coded Cisco Info Center Event Lists. In addition, with Cisco Info Center Dashboards, you can customize service views, and manage them with UNIX, Windows NT, and Web-based graphical tools. From mainframes, UNIX systems, and NT systems to circuit and voice switches, IP routers, Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) devices, and management frameworks, Cisco Info Center helps you effectively manage your business infrastructure. Cisco Info Center intelligently reduces alarms, and helps decrease the mean time to resolution of problems with the following key benefits:

- *Quickly resolve problems and improve help-desk operations*—Cisco Info Center enables your operations teams to quickly isolate problems, and automatically communicate them to the help desk. Cisco Info Center integrates fault management and trouble-ticketing

systems, such as Clarify, Peregrine, Remedy, and Siebel with its Cisco Info Center Gateways. It automatically opens trouble tickets for faults, enabling help-desk personnel to proactively manage support operations.

- *Reduce alarms and improve service availability*—Cisco Info Center’s scalability enables many customers to routinely process millions of alarms per day, and through basic correlation and de-duplication, achieve a 10x-100x-reduction rate in the number of alarms staff must manage. In addition, using the advanced analysis and automation functions of Cisco Info Center Impact can help determine the alarms’ effect on affected business services and customers, helping staff to prioritize resolution efforts.

ROI

Return on Investment from Cisco Info Center

Cisco Info Center’s low training costs and ease of use provide immediate return on investment (ROI). Off-the-shelf Cisco Info Center Mediators and Cisco Info Center Service Monitors can be installed quickly—and will immediately begin collecting alarms from a wide variety of data sources. With quick installation and set-up time, Cisco Info Center stores alarms, and performs basic correlation and de-duplication, then sends events to Cisco Info Center and Cisco Info Center Gateways. The Cisco Info Center application provides ROI in three primary areas:

- *Higher user productivity*—Cisco Info Center reduces interruptions in business productivity by improving network, application, and service uptime.
- *Higher service availability*—Cisco Info Center helps companies improve service availability and quality through the real-time analysis of network and business-related information.
- *IT staff productivity*—Cisco Info Center improves IT staff productivity, reduces the cost of day-to-day operations, and allows new initiatives to be implemented more rapidly.

PRODUCT APPLICATIONS

Cisco Info Center Products

The Cisco Info Center family includes the following products:

- *Cisco Info Center Info Server*—The cornerstone of the Cisco Info Center suite, the Info Server is a high-speed, in-memory database, optimized for collecting events and designing filters and views, which provides the core event processing functions for the Cisco Info Center suite.
- *Cisco Info Center Mediators*—Center Cisco Info Center Mediators are lightweight agents that collect fault and availability information from APIs, databases, devices, log files, and other utilities, and push them into the Cisco Info Center Info Server for filtering and viewing. The Cisco Info Center application can collect fault and availability information from more than 1000 alarm source types. Using Generic Mediators, custom rules files, and Universal Mediators—such as SNMP trapd and TL1—Cisco Info Center can collect data from virtually any networked environment based on Cisco products and other vendors’ products.
- *Cisco Info Center Service Monitors*—Cisco Info Center Service Monitors are lightweight applications that regularly test that network applications, Internet services applications, and wireless services are available for use and are within performance thresholds. Cisco offers several types of service monitors:
 - *Internet Service Monitors*—Validate networking protocols are properly operating
 - *System Service Monitors*—Help assure systems and services are available and operating
 - *Application Service Monitors*—Confirm applications are operating as expected
 - *Usage Service Monitors*—Generate “threshold-crossing alerts” (TCAs) when usage is above desired amounts

- *Data Center Monitors*—Analyze mainframe processes for availability and operations
- *Cisco Info Center Gateways*—Bidirectional interfaces that allow Cisco Info Center Info Server data to be shared with other Cisco Info Center Info Servers, RDBMS archives such as Oracle, Sybase, Informix ODBC, or trouble-ticketing applications such as Remedy AR System, Peregrine Service Center, Clarify Clear-Support

GUI FEATURES

Cisco Info Center Dashboards Products

The Cisco Info Center Dashboards Family includes the following products and functions:

- *Cisco Info Center Desktop and Cisco Info Center Webtop*—Cisco Info Center Desktop and Cisco Info Center Webtop make up a suite of graphical operator tools, running on Web browsers, Motif, or Windows NT. Each provides an intuitive interface for customizing filters and service views. The items below describe Cisco Info Center Desktop and Cisco Info Center Webtop components:
 - *Event Lists*—Efficient spreadsheet-like interfaces into Cisco Info Center Info Server event data that show events color-coded according to severity, allowing access to information useful for troubleshooting each event.
 - *Cisco Info Center Event List Console*—Object-based screen interface showing the status of enterprise-wide services using color-coded histograms, representing a summary of event severity within each service.
 - *Cisco Info Center Filter Builder*—Desktop interface, based on Boolean correlation tools, which allows operators to associate collected event data with the availability of business services.
 - *Cisco Info Center View Builder*—Point-and-click desktop utility that allows operators to design personalized views of events and services. It supports the customization of service views and Cisco Info Center Event Lists.

FEATURE HIGHLIGHTS

Cisco Info Center 7.0 Feature Highlights:

- *Improved Scalability*—The Cisco Info Center InfoServer now supports persistence of data using disk-based checkpoints and logs. The 7.0 Cisco Info Center InfoServer provides a richer implementation of a Structured Query Language (SQL) interface for defining and manipulating relational database objects such as tables and views providing full online configuration capabilities. The addition of procedural SQL in the Cisco Info Center InfoServer delivers significantly more power and ability to efficiently process events.
- *Extended SQL syntax & commands*—Cisco Info Center 7.0 supports an extended range of datatypes extending the processing capability of the Cisco Info Center InfoServer functions. Signed and unsigned 32 and 64 bit integers have replaced the single integer field. Real and Boolean types have been added. New case insensitive string comparison operators have been added to the expression format. New keywords “ANY” and “ALL” further extend the power of the sql and procedural language. The new Boolean data type and logical operators NOT AND OR and XOR provide the ability to form expressions that resolve to TRUE or FALSE. The range of functions within the InfoServer sql has been extended to support manipulation of the new fields introduced in 7.0. New string, date/time, integer, real, and Boolean functions significantly enhance the capability of the procedural language.
- *Enhanced event routing capability at probe level*—Probes now have the capability to direct an event to any table within the Cisco Info Center InfoServer. This coupled with the ability to have triggers and run automations on any table allows processing of events to be performed outside of the alerts.status table. This can lead to significantly reduced processing when automations run on the default table.
- *Cisco Info Center Administrator*—Completely new approach to Cisco Info Center administration with the Cisco Info Center Administrator configuration tool. All existing functionality is preserved, but the Administrator adds the interactive capability to make configuration changes to 7.0 Cisco Info Center InfoServers online leveraging the enhanced capabilities provided by the 7.0 database.

The configuration GUI also provides an sql tool supporting the full sql syntax for the new Cisco Info Center InfoServer. The command line sql tool is preserved, modified to support the functionality of the new database.

- *Cisco Info Center Administrator – Visual PA*—Cisco Info Center Administrator provides an optional visual representation of the processes running in the Cisco Info Center 7.0 system known as ‘Visual PA’. This is a graphical front-end to the Cisco Info Center Process Control system. Visual PA provides the administrator with a clear view of the system processes and their status.
- *Configure InfoServers on-the-fly*—New System tables maintained by the Cisco Info Center InfoServer have been introduced. These tables are maintained by the Cisco Info Center InfoServer and contain metadata about InfoServer objects. The system tables can be viewed using the SELECT and DESCRIBE commands to obtain information about the database structure. Nonsystem tables and columns may be added, altered and dropped online from the interactive configuration tool and from the command line tool. The Cisco Info Center InfoServer manages modifications to the system tables that may be required as a result of changes to the user tables.
- *Remote desktop configuration file retrieval*—The capability has been added to allow the retrieval of a configuration file from a remote URL (HTTP or FTP). This significantly simplifies the operation of a distributed Cisco Info Center system. Additionally the desktops have been enhanced to provide access to the “Top N” functionality delivered in v3.6. This allows for a controlled reduction in the information presented to the user, aiding rapid fault diagnosis.
- *Load balancing on Desktop Connections*—Connection balancing has been added to the Dual-Server desktop. This allows the administrator to define a set of Display Servers to which Desktops can be connected. The system will then ensure a balancing of the Desktops against those servers assisting in the maximal usage of the computing capabilities.

SPECIFICATIONS

System Specs

For current Solaris-based network management product hardware requirements, refer to the Sun Cisco Optimized Platform Recommendations Table for hardware and part numbering ordering information.

Version Number: Cisco Info Center 7.0

Minimum Memory Required: Minimum 256MB. Actual dependent on configuration. Typical 1GB

Disk Space Required: Solaris 200 MB, Windows NT/2000 70 MB (Desktop only)

Package Distribution: CD-ROM and FTP download

24-Hour Support: Call Cisco Technical Assistance Center (TAC)

Platform Support

Platform Requirements

Sun Microsystems Sparc-based platforms:

- Solaris 8
- Solaris 9

Microsoft Corp. server platforms:

- Windows 2000 Professional (Desktop only)
- Windows XP (Desktop only)



SUMMARY

The Cisco Info Center suite of products offers an integrated solution for end-to-end fault management and service-level assurance, which allows your business to maintain and improve the quality of network services, retain customers, and sustain a competitive advantage. With an attractive entry point and distributed architecture enabling Cisco Info Center to scale to accommodate any size network, Cisco Info Center is positioned for Fortune 2000 corporations and service providers that want a fully integrated solution for helping to ensure that their network, network-based services, and business are operating at maximum productivity without increasing the cost of day-to-day operations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For information about Cisco Info Center, visit: <http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/sw/netmgtsw/ps996/index.html>.



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