solarwinds

# Network Configuration Manager vs. Cisco Prime Infrastructure

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# Overview

This document compares and contrasts SolarWinds® Network Configuration Manager (NCM) with Cisco Prime® Infrastructure.

# SolarWinds Network Configuration Manager Summary

SolarWinds NCM helps reduce the time and effort required to maintain network reliability, as well as manage risk and compliance, by administrating network configuration and change. Network Configuration Manager manages devices and their configurations—such as configuration build, approve, deploy, monitor, and audit—across more network devices using a single console seamlessly integrated with other essential IT management solutions.

Prime Infrastructure is Cisco's network management system. It is positioned as "One Management" for wireless and wired network performance, application visibility, and user experience. It integrates several former point products under a unified management console. Cisco Prime Infrastructure contains similar functionality to SolarWinds Network Performance Monitor (NPM), NetFlow Traffic Analyzer (NTA), and NCM. Organizations that are "pure Cisco" may benefit from the level of integration that exists between Prime Infrastructure and Cisco hardware.

# Critical Differences

| Feature | Cisco Prime Infrastructure | SolarWinds NCM |
|---|---|---|
| Fully Manage Non-Cisco Devices | ✗ No—it can monitor non-Cisco devices, but does not manage configurations. | ✓ SolarWinds NCM provide out-of-the-box support for all major network devices, including Cisco®, Juniper®, HP®, Huawei®, F5® Avaya®, Ruckus® and more. This means you can backup, change, monitor, audit, and manage configurations for more devices on your network. |
| Device Lifecycle Management | ✗ No native device end-of-life (EoL) reporting. | ✓ NCM identifies Cisco devices approaching end-of-life and notifies you, so you can manage the budget and retirement of obsolete devices. |
| Vulnerability Assessment | ✗ No native vulnerability reporting. | ✓ NCM utilizes the NIST CVE repository service and will automatically identify devices with potential vulnerabilities. NCM will even provide the tools to manage the investigation, remediation, or waiver of each vulnerability. |
| Cisco Smart Net ® Integration | ✗ No native access to Cisco Smart Net. | ✓ NCM provides an optional, free connector for Cisco Smart Net services. Using this connector, and your Cisco account credentials, NCM can help you access Smart Net reports based on your network data, so you can better manage support contracts, warranty defects, and more. |

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| **Integrated Performance Monitoring and Configuration Management** | ✗ No ability to correlate Quality of Experience (QoE) issues to configuration changes. | ✓ NCM can be combined with a purchased license for NPM to help identify and fix network problems faster. One example of this integration would be NPM NetPath™ determining that your CRM application is slow due to high egress latency on a router. NCM can also be combined with a purchased license for NTA which would then show that the application requires higher routing priority NCM can help you quickly reconfigure QoS settings on the bottlenecked router. Using NPM with NCM or NTA requires purchasing a separate license for NPM and/or NCM. |
| **Full-Stack IT Integration** | ✗ No integration with IT management tools for servers, storage, databases, or applications. | ✓ NCM has the ability to be combined and work seamlessly with other essential SolarWinds management tools, including network, server, application, and database monitoring, through a single, integrated console to help your entire team work more efficiently across technology silos to identify and resolve IT problems faster. Using NCM with other SolarWinds IT management tools requires purchasing additional product licenses for those tools. |