



Cisco Networking halved TCO by centralizing teams on one Atlassian cloud platform

54%

Reduction in annual tooling costs

40%

Operating expenses reinvested in the business in three years

40x

Faster program management with Rovo

See how Cisco Networking is saving millions while exponentially accelerating work by unifying teams on Atlassian's AI-enabled System of Work.



CISCO

“As we’ve started to build a System of Work with Atlassian, tooling spend is down 54% annually, and we’ve been able to reinvest 40% of our OpEx expenses back into the business within three years – without dropping work.”

JASON ANDREWS

Vice President of Strategy & Planning – Engineering Operations



CISCO

Cisco Networking provides intelligent network solutions for organizations to securely connect users, devices, applications, and workloads everywhere. The organization is part of Cisco, the worldwide technology leader that is revolutionizing the way organizations connect and protect in the AI era.

INDUSTRY

Software

NUMBER OF USERS

15,000

Location

United States

CHALLENGE

Cisco Networking – a giant enterprise with 40+ years of legacy systems and processes – needed to modernize and standardize its fragmented systems and ways of working, eliminate siloes, and reduce costs at scale.

SOLUTION

Faced with a corporate decision to exit the company’s legacy work management product, the team seized the opportunity to consolidate and migrate 75+ tools and instances to one Atlassian cloud platform.

IMPACT

By unifying its people, processes, and platforms with Atlassian, Cisco Networking is improving the company’s bottom line and employee satisfaction. Annual software spend is down 54% and OpEx by nearly 40%. Exponential time savings are also freeing up employees to focus on strategic work and innovation.

PRODUCTS USED



Jira

Flexible project management



Confluence

Knowledge, all in one place



Rovo

Transform teamwork with AI

Connecting the world requires a connected way of working

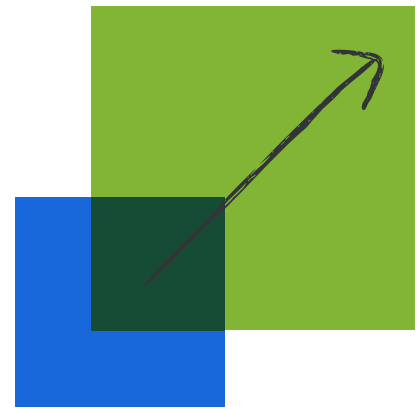
Cisco, the world's largest networking company, is driven by a mission to provide an inclusive future for all by securely connecting everything and making anything possible. More than 90,000 employees within Cisco's largest business unit, Cisco Networking – one-third of which is engineers – work toward this vision every day.

However, as the organization scaled, its teams were losing time and millions of dollars every year due to outdated and inconsistent ways of working, silos between teams and data, and a proliferation of legacy tools. Jason Andrews, the vice president of strategy and planning for the Engineering Operations Team, captured the stakes: “When you have 28,000 engineers, saving even one hour a week becomes tens of millions of dollars of value back to the business. Even small increments really matter.”

Faced with a corporate decision to exit Rally, the company's legacy work management product, Cisco Networking saw an opportunity. Rather than simply “lift and shift” to a new platform and bring decades of tech debt along with them, they set out to solve four key challenges, which they call the 4 S's: eliminate siloes, jumpstart a slow environment, simplify complex architecture, and lower costs at scale.

With support from Atlassian Advisory Services, Cisco Networking consolidated and migrated dozens of tools and Atlassian Data Center instances to one AI-enabled Atlassian cloud platform, which has helped:

- Reduced software spend by 54%
- Decreased overall OpEx by almost 40% without reducing work
- Accelerated program management reporting by 40x and weekly status updates by 24x
- Shifted 30% of engineering time from troubleshooting to innovation
- Built a unified, cloud-based platform connecting 15,000+ people and laying the foundation to enable AI at scale



Fragmentation drives up fees, friction, and frustration

Cisco Networking's success and longevity led to the classic large-enterprise problem: fragmentation. Over four decades, the company added new business units and acquired other companies – along with all their different ways of working. As Jason explains, “Cisco is a large, mature tech company that’s been around for over 40 years. We have a lot of groups and businesses that operate independently, but they need to converge in the middle.”

Jason says their customers – and most consumers – expect an integrated, ecosystem-like experience, but the company's environment needed to evolve to meet those expectations. Inside Cisco Networking, teams were using:

- 70+ Jira Data Center instances
- A large, aging work management product
- Nine environments within Aha!, another software development tool
- Nearly 75 other tools
- Endless workflows and documents in Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and Sharepoint

Each unique app and instance became a burden, with disconnected data and misaligned workflows. Leadership couldn't see a single, dependable roadmap with products, features, and status details across Cisco Networking.

Even when teams wanted to collaborate, inconsistent ways of working and taxonomy made it difficult. Basic questions like, “What is a program? What is a feature? What are the standard states?” lacked shared answers, making cross-team delivery and portfolio visibility challenging.

Cisco Networking's workforce is also highly distributed, with teams across the US, India, Mexico, the UK, and beyond. Tool admins worked around the clock to support them, while customers and executives demanded faster delivery, clearer visibility, and lower costs. To achieve these goals without burning out teams or sacrificing innovation, they had to figure out a way to do more with less.

More than migration: Taking advantage of the opportunity to improve, not just move

When the executive mandate came to exit Rally, Jason's team saw a rare window to make an even bigger improvement: "This was our opportunity to look at everything we did and understand, 'Is this the best possible way to drive the right outcome for the business?'"

In partnership with Atlassian's Advisory Services, Cisco Networking designed a System of Work that consolidated dozens of instances, environments, and tools onto one platform powered by Atlassian Cloud Enterprise. Advisory Services helped Jason's team design the cloud architecture, System of Work data model, and solutions to any issues that arose.

"We originally chose to partner with Advisory Services because we had a huge migration to complete in a very short period of time," says Senior Director of Business Operations Amy Hauth. "But what's really been great is the partnership beyond the migration. They give us great ideas. They really are our partner in taking our ecosystem forward."

Engineering Program Manager Eric Lyke shares an example: "One time, Advisory Services not only solved a problem with our API calls, but also helped our users understand the data they needed to supply to avoid the same error in the future. They're phenomenal at guiding us on how to best leverage Atlassian to meet our goals and troubleshooting any challenges that come up."

Partnership leads to high satisfaction and millions in savings

Partnering with Atlassian not only on the technical migration, but also on change management helped make the transition a smooth success. (Jason even calls it "easy," though he acknowledges it was the close teamwork that made a significant effort feel that way.)

Amy says a CSAT survey of ~3,000 users right after migration showed "very, very positive" feedback. More recent surveys continue to report tooling scores in the 90s at Cisco Networking – higher than most other functions.

On top of happy users, Cisco Networking is also seeing substantial cost savings and productivity improvements.

Jason says, “As we’ve started to build a System of Work with Atlassian, tooling spend is down 54% annually, and we’ve been able to reinvest 40% of our OpEx expenses back into the business within three years – without dropping work. We’re also spending 30% less time on tooling issues, which we reinvest in efficiency improvements and innovation.”

Amy adds, “Atlassian cloud has really helped us level the playing field. We’re all using the same process, the same workflows, and the same language, so we can collaborate better together.”

Connecting teams to drive better collaboration, efficiency, and outcomes

With the migration complete, Cisco Networking is focused on driving adoption of a standardized System of Work across engineering, program management, business operations, and service teams. Powered by Atlassian, the System of Work will include:

- A unified engineering platform with standard taxonomy for epics, stories, defects, tests (via Xray), and environments
- Shared fields and workflows for hardware and software work
- Integrated code and CI/CD through Bitbucket
- End-to-end traceability across development, testing, and operations

Connecting tools and teams with the Atlassian platform is making it easier for Cisco to collaborate; increasing productivity; and improving visibility, dependency management, tracking, and decision-making.

For example, static PowerPoints used to dominate Cisco Networking’s development lifecycle, but now teams manage program status, health, and approvals in real time with Jira. The “commit deck” is a living Confluence document linked directly to Jira data, and leaders present live data using Confluence presentation mode and Jira macros. Amy says this has made the process 24x faster: “Getting teams to do their status updates in Jira instead of PowerPoint and creating real-time reports and dashboards has been really powerful. What used to take two hours every week is maybe 5-10 minutes now.”

Beyond engineering, Cisco Networking is running more and more business workflows on Atlassian, including funding requests, procurement, audits, lab services ticketing, and executive dashboards. Amy says, “The biggest way that Atlassian has enabled Cisco is taking us out of the data silos and creating a System of Work. It’s helped us develop faster, move faster as a team, and connect the data to our strategy.”

Scaling efficiencies and innovation with Atlassian Rovo and Forge

For Cisco Networking, building a System of Work with Atlassian Cloud Enterprise is the foundation for connection and innovation. “Having a System of Work built on a great data platform with common ways of working will allow us to aggregate information and make AI very effective,” Jason says. “With Atlassian, we’re enabling users to connect in a very simple, effective manner and providing access to information in near real-time. Then, we’ll be able to enable AI at scale.”

Cisco Networking has already begun using Rovo for enterprise search, summarizing and creating content, and building agents to automate reporting – making some processes up to 40x faster. Eric says, “Our System of Work and Rovo Agents are making the program manager’s life easier, taking what would be a 10-hour tedious task down to 15 minutes. The other absolutely incredible thing is because we have all of these agents already available, we can build several agents in a multi-modal fashion to do in one task that would typically take three agents.”

Cisco Networking is also using Rovo with Forge, Atlassian cloud’s app development platform, to enable anyone to build custom apps and automations. For example, in one quarter alone their team built five apps, including:

- **Executive status AI summary:** Uses AI to pull health, risk, path-to-green, customer impacts, and schedule information from Jira fields and automatically generate a short executive summary
- **Confluence commit-deck generator:** Creates the standard Confluence “commit deck” for a program using a template, and places it in the right space/folder automatically
- **Bug scrubber:** Recreates an old homegrown tool that engineers loved, but now it runs inside Jira so data is no longer siloed

Jason says this is only the beginning of what’s ahead: “This is an amazing opportunity to increase productivity, make that mundane work go away, and really allow people to focus on higher value items. We are doubling down on the journey and excited to see where the Atlassian stack is going to take us.”

What's next: more adoption and productivity gains, fewer silos and costs

Cisco Networking has already made impressive improvements within a few short years, and they're just getting started. Their next priorities include:

- Expanding Atlassian cloud adoption by 25-50%+ as more roles and workflows move onto the platform
- Reducing 20-25% more in operational overhead through automation and AI
- Scaling Forge and Rovo Agents to support more teams' needs with tech writing, program management, and other disciplines
- Continuing to break down silos across the broader product portfolio to create a more comprehensive view for executives and customers

For Cisco Networking, Atlassian has become more than a set of tools. It's the platform and partnership that help unleash teams' potential. "When we talk about why we chose the Atlassian stack, a lot of it was the power of the platform," Jason says. "You can go grab six or seven best-of-breed tools, but then you spend your time integrating and moving data, not actually solving problems."

Eric adds, "With our Atlassian stack, our team controls the development of billions of dollars of Cisco Networking product. Atlassian cloud has helped speed up our evolution and digital transformation, and will continue to do so."

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