



**Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE)**

# **Reviews, tips, and advice from real users**



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# Product Recap



Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE)

# Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE)

## Recap

Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE) offers comprehensive network access control and visibility, supporting features like 802.1X authentication, profiling, and posturing. It integrates with Microsoft and other Cisco products, facilitating robust security policies across distributed networks.

Cisco Identity Services Engine is a key player in network access control, offering centralized management and a user-friendly interface. It supports zero trust principles and provides strong authentication for wired and wireless networks. ISE's capabilities include granular security policies, enhanced device posturing, and seamless integration, bolstering security infrastructure. Users benefit from its dual authentication through EAP, simplifying access management across networks.

### What are the key features of Cisco ISE?

- **802.1X Authentication:** Supports network security for authorized device access.
- **Profiling:** Identifies devices for accurate policy enforcement.
- **Posturing:** Evaluates device compliance for access decisions.
- **TACACS:** Streamlines network device authentication and authorization.
- **Guest Access:** Provides secure access to visitors.
- **Microsoft Compatibility:** Seamlessly integrates with Microsoft environments.

### What benefits and ROI should be considered?

- **Security Enhancement:** Offers strong network security policies.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Centralized management improves operational aspects.
- **Improved Compliance:** Ensures adherence to industry standards.
- **Scalability:** Supports growing network demands effectively.

In industries like finance, healthcare, and education, Cisco ISE is pivotal for securing wired and wireless networks, implementing BYOD policies, and managing user access. Organizations leverage ISE for effective authentication and authorization, while maintaining compliance with industry security standards.

# Valuable Features

Excerpts from real customer reviews on PeerSpot:



“Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE) is very good at device administration.”



**SunilkumarNaganuri**

Service Line Manager (Service Operations Expert) - Network Access Control at a pharma/biotech company with 10,001+ employees



“The policies allow us to enforce certain rules on the network to be able to screen our users more effectively.”



**John Ntambi**

Ag Systems & Networks Head at UNBS



“Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE) is very stable.”



**Jeremiah Njure**

Technical Services Lead at Telenet Solutions



“The solution is integrated with other Cisco devices and can offer automation for an organization, making deployments more dynamic and providing real-time visibility.”



**Verified user**

Solution Architect, Presales Engineer at a computer software company with 51-200 employees



“The solution enables us to do everything from one interface.”



**Brad Lossing**

Manager Network Operations at RAND Corporation



“The solution enables us to authenticate with AD.”



**Song Loo**

Network Engineer at a financial services firm with 10,001+ employees



“Being able to authenticate wired users through 802.1X is valuable as it enhances our security.”



**Solomon Okonta**

Network Architect at Great Canadian Gaming Corp

What users had to say about valuable features:

“Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE) is very good at device administration. This is one of the best features. Other than that, for the wireless authentication and network access control (NAC) use cases, it is not a solid product because there are better products for NAC than Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE)..”

**SunilkumarNaganuri**

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Service Line Manager (Service Operations Expert) - Network Access Control  
at a pharma/biotech company with 10,001+ employees

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Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE) offers authentication using RADIUS, enhancing network security by separating and segregating networks. It prevents unauthorized access to network points. This solution ensures organizations have secure environments and also supports robust policy enforcement, allowing control over who has access to various parts of the network.

**Jeremiah Ngure**

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Technical Services Lead at Telenet Solutions

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“The solution is integrated with other Cisco devices and can offer automation for an organization, making deployments more dynamic and providing real-time visibility. It gives feedback on what is happening within the network and assists mostly with troubleshooting.

Additionally, it's considered highly reliable and scalable..”

**Verified user**

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Solution Architect, Presales Engineer at a computer software company with 51-200 employees

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“Many Cisco ISE features are good. It offers automatic profiling of phones and computers, enabling administrators to identify and categorize devices seamlessly. Additionally, Cisco ISE can block anonymous devices attempting to connect to the network. This includes unauthorized attempts from non-domain computers or users trying to obscure their identity to gain network access. Cisco ISE ensures such attempts are thwarted by enforcing full identification authentication..”

**Junaid Shaikh**

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Networks & Security Solutions Architect at EIIC

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“The policies allow us to enforce certain rules on the network to be able to screen our users more effectively. It allows us to have more visibility to what the users are trying to do on the network, which really helps us know how to control them.

“There is value because it helps us secure the network and prevents certain things from happening which could cause financial loss. This demonstrates good value for money..”

**John Ntambi**

Ag Systems & Networks Head at UNBS

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“In terms of features, the best feedback I've received has to do with guest portals. The guest portals and sponsor portals are where a company can customize their appearance. As people join the guest network, they're presented with the branding of the company that they're in.

A lot of customers use a third party to manage their guest Wi-Fi. Cisco ISE presents the ability to bring that in-house so that customers can have full control over it, change the branding, and get extra telemetry from it and the user data. It works really well for our customers.

I first started working with ISE at version 1.2, which was quite a few years ago. Over the years, the user interface has become a lot easier. The way the different parts of ISE come together and the connections between the different sections are a lot easier to follow. The interface gives you a much clearer picture of how the different policies and standards that you are building are brought together..”

**Ashley Mead**

Sr Network Consultant at CAE Technology Services Limited

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# Other Solutions Considered

“I have previously used other portals to provide guest user access. Cisco ISE provides many more options in functionality. Also when troubleshooting ISE provides detailed logs to pinpoint the problem. I have been unable to get this detailed information from other portals..”

**Ashley Mead**

Sr Network Consultant at CAE Technology Services Limited

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“Detailed mentions of other solutions include HPE ClearPass and Fortinet. However, these are mentioned for comparison purposes rather than as alternatives considered before using Cisco ISE..”

**Verified user**

Solution Architect, Presales Engineer at a computer software company with 51-200 employees

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“If I take the two that I really compared, it would be LogSoft MPS. Cisco ISE has a lot more features, you can do a lot more regarding the policies than you can currently with MPS.

I also have limited experience with ClearPass. ClearPass is a lot more difficult to configure and manage and is less intuitive. The visibility side of ISE is far superior as well. .”

**Darren Hill**

Technical Consultant at a computer software company with 1,001-5,000 employees

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“We have actually always been a Cisco shop right from the start, and ISE has always been our AAA authentication tool right from the start. As far as the evaluation and selection process goes, because we're a Cisco shop, it kinda just made sense to choose a product or a tool that neatly integrates with the rest of our products. We use a lot of Cisco products in terms of our wireless control, network management, and legal firewall. So, it was just a natural fit to choose Cisco ISE and use it as part of that existing ecosystem..”

**Ty Awoderu**

Network Analyst at a healthcare company with 10,001+ employees

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“We have been a Cisco shop for more than twenty years now. Cisco is a company that we can trust in every aspect of the work that we do together. Cisco is our partner for everything we do on the network.

We are very observant of the kind of solutions Cisco provides us. It is feature-rich. It is very easy to implement. There is longevity there. Our first choice is to go directly to Cisco..”

**Rohit-Joshi**

Head of IT Infrastructure at a tech vendor with 10,001+ employees

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“Identity Services Engine compares favorably with many of the other competitor's products that are in that space. I won't mention them now, but I think we know that all of the same industry competitors have been delivering identity solutions and NAC solutions over the last decade or so. Cisco continues to rank in the upper and farther to the right in Gartner Magic Quadrant for those identity solutions, and I think they'll continue on that trajectory. Cisco has long been the number one network vendor in the world, and I think you'll continue to see that growth as the network continues to be important to business..”

**Brad Davenport**

VP of Technical Architecture at Logicalis

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# ROI

Real user quotes about their ROI:

“Our ROI is that once clients have a Cisco system installed, they tend to stick with Cisco. They'll upgrade to the latest Cisco product rather than looking at any other vendors..”

**Ashley Mead**

Sr Network Consultant at CAE Technology Services Limited


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“Security is about risk control and exposure avoidance. You can only calculate its return on investment based on how you avoid penalty fees. Cisco ISE improves our security stats..”

**Verified user**

Director, Information Technology Solutions at a healthcare company with 5,001-10,000 employees

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“Cisco ISE protects your environment from potential physical attacks. This ensures that your environment and users are fully safe, thus enhancing your overall security posture as a first line of defense..”

**Junaid Shaikh**

Networks & Security Solutions Architect at EILC


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“The return on investment for Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE) is difficult to gauge due to complexities. For enterprise customers, it comes at a lower cost and is comparatively cost-effective. Direct comparisons with Forescout reveal up to 30% to 40% difference in cost savings..”

**SunilkumarNaganuri**

Service Line Manager (Service Operations Expert) - Network Access Control  
at a pharma/biotech company with 10,001+ employees

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“In terms of return on investment, I would like to think that we've seen a significant return on investment with Cisco ISE. Just looking at it purely from my perspective, in terms of time-saving, if we consider this impact on a single person and then scale it over two to three thousand employees when you multiply that data on a day-to-day basis, the time-saving is tremendous. Moreover, in terms of solutions, having the ability to keep things integrated and manage them through a single pane of view adds to the benefits. I believe the return on investment goes beyond just the financial aspect. It extends to mental well-being, reduction in stress, and as employees. It's really great..”

**Ty Awoderu**


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Network Analyst at a healthcare company with 10,001+ employees

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“It's difficult to say whether the clients have seen an immediate ROI with the deployment of the Identity Services Engine. Oftentimes, you have to take on additional technologies in the ISE product family in order to receive that comprehensive benefit. So I think only time will tell what the true ROI is. I can tell you that the value exchange that occurs between a partner and a client when we're talking about everything within the Cisco security portfolio being fully integrated together and working comprehensively has been an enormous advantage to customers who today have a complex act of multi-vendor products. Being able to consolidate on a platform-based solution is an incredibly powerful story to tell, and it's also incredibly powerful from a cost-benefit standpoint as well..”

**Brad Davenport**

[Read full review](#) 

VP of Technical Architecture at Logicalis

# Use Case

“We primarily use the solution for network access control solution and network device access management. The solution comes with features like posturing..”

**Md Manirul Islam**

Assistant general manager at Beximcocomputers

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“I do the designing and implementation and hand it over to the customer. Sometimes, I provide support to the customer. The solution is used for network access control. I have implemented almost all the features of the product..”

**Ahmed\_Shalaby**

Senior Cyber Security Engineer at Beta Information Technology

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“We use it to secure our networks. We can secure our switches and wireless networks, basically everything.

We use it primarily for wireless security, but it can be used for many other things as well, like LAN and WAN security..”

**VikasKumar13**

Associate consultant at HCL Technologies

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“We use it for network access control.

“It isolates the bring your own devices and the guests from the corporate network. It also segregates connections when a user comes in and connects. There is a certain profile review that goes on to confirm that the device is allowed to access resources on the network..”

**John Ntambi**

Ag Systems & Networks Head at UNBS

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“The primary use case of Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE) is to serve as a security solution that can specify the endpoints in an organization for segmentation. This involves defining the reachability domain for each endpoint in an organization.

It automates pushing access lists or authorizations and offers profiling to define and manage endpoints. It provides profiling to help organizations define the type and points of the endpoints, building security rules, and providing health checks to ensure endpoints comply with rules..”

**Verified user**

Solution Architect, Presales Engineer at a computer software company with 51-200 employees

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“I often use Cisco ISE for guest portals to onboard devices. For example, if a company wants to allow their employees to bring their own devices, there's a large security risk. Cisco ISE can help with onboarding those devices and check whether they're up-to-date with security patches and whether they fit the criteria to join the network.

There's so much stress involved with the pressures of trying to make it easy for customers to use the product without constantly having to jump over security hurdles. On the other hand, there is the constant threat of cyber attacks. Balancing the two can be quite stressful for developers, engineers, and consultants.

Our main goal, as an intermediary between Cisco and our clients, is to help IT managers, IT engineers, and administrators have better days. There is a lot of pressure on IT staff, and by giving them the right tools and solutions, we can help them feel more empowered to do their job much more effectively and, therefore, feel proud of their work..”

**Ashley Mead**

Sr Network Consultant at CAE Technology Services Limited

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# Setup

The setup process involves configuring and preparing the product or service for use, which may include tasks such as installation, account creation, initial configuration, and troubleshooting any issues that may arise. Below you can find real user quotes about the setup process.

“Setup is not about deploying ISE itself, but rather about managing the number of switches and endpoints in the organization. After initial deployment, routine upgrades and backups are part of the normal process..”

## Verified user

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Solution Architect, Presales Engineer at a computer software company with 51-200 employees

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“The initial setup is challenging. For enterprises, it can take months due to VM setup requirements, poor tech support, and Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE) having many bugs. Small setups might take a day, but larger enterprise setups are much longer..”

## SunilkumarNaganuri

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Service Line Manager (Service Operations Expert) - Network Access Control at a pharma/biotech company with 10,001+ employees

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“A benefit to using Cisco ISE as far as deployments are concerned is the fact that because it's software-based, everything can be tested before deployment. You can then be confident that everything is going to work when it's deployed in the real world..”

**Ashley Mead**


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Sr Network Consultant at CAE Technology Services Limited

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“The initial setup of Cisco ISE is complex. For the deployment, the solution needs to be installed and then it needs to be integrated with the network and certificates to get to the endpoints. .”

**Tola Olaayan**

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General Manager, Enterprise Solutions at Arravo

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“The initial setup is straightforward.

It's also recommended for clients during deployment. You're making everything very efficiently managed within the policies. The deployment is also very smooth, allowing you to configure your rooms easily. Once the initial setup is done, it becomes straightforward to understand, especially regarding Windows maintenance.

It was deployed to protect the network from unauthorized users but does not contribute directly to operational efficiency..”

**Abdul-Mumin-Iddrisu**

Chief Technology Officer at Oduma Solutions Ltd

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“The initial setup is straightforward. They are very easy to manage and not complicated at all.

We have received all our files from the client and deployed them. Currently, we are using single active nodes. We have one Primary Admin Node, which is active, and one Policy Service Node. We don't have a secondary admin node for administrative purposes. We have an active operational node. The deployment is pretty simple. You download the file from Cisco, import it into your Cisco ISE, and follow the prompts to set it up based on your requirements, including IPs, basic security needs, DNS servers, etc. Once the initial setup is complete, you can begin creating policies..”

**Junaid Shaikh**

Networks & Security Solutions Architect at EIIC

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# Customer Service and Support

“Technical support is poor. It heavily relies on a reactive approach, and resolving issues can take a long time. Simple issues can take 72 hours or more than six months for resolution. I rate the technical support as one out of ten..”

**SunilkumarNaganuri**

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Service Line Manager (Service Operations Expert) - Network Access Control  
at a pharma/biotech company with 10,001+ employees

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“We are working with a partner for support and are very happy with them.

On a scale from one to ten, where one is bad and ten is good, I rate their support a seven or eight out of ten..”

**Verified user**

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Director, Information Technology Solutions at a healthcare company with  
5,001-10,000 employees

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“When it's time to generate a TAC case, it means that things have gone very wrong and that my colleagues and I have run out of ideas and are desperate. Cisco's technical support staff are very much aware of that and know that by the time an issue comes to them that all the obvious roots of troubleshooting have already been explored. It's great that they comprehend this and that they understand the urgency as well.

I'm always thankful for their help and would rate technical support at ten out of ten..”

**Ashley Mead**

Sr Network Consultant at CAE Technology Services Limited

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“Cisco support is actually fantastic, especially in being able to use the tech support. At least, I personally use it all the time. Being able to actually just pick up the phone and quickly get in touch with a Cisco rep, because we definitely always run into some of those issues where it's unforeseen and we're not really sure what's going on. So, it's nice to be able to have that support on standby; it comes in handy a lot of the time and it actually saves us a lot as well in terms of time, money, and headaches when it comes to managing the network. Because we all know when the network goes down, everybody starts to look for you. Being able to have that rep to assist you right away and kinda solve that problem is something that everyone should have – that tech support.

When it comes to rating tech support, nothing is perfect. So, I'll say seven. But overall, that's because of the speed, the urgency, and now the ticket seriousness. So there's always room for improvement, but I think overall, I'll say we're getting a good bang for our buck..”

**Ty Awoderu**

Network Analyst at a healthcare company with 10,001+ employees

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“Cisco has very good partner support, and they're in their own support. I noticed that the first level of defense always comes from the partner ecosystem that Cisco has built. There are many partners we work with along with Cisco. Any time we are stuck, these partners are available for the first level of support.

Any time we are stuck with anything, these partners are there as the first level of support. We get L1 level of support. When we feel that there is an issue that needs to be escalated to L3, Cisco TAC is always available. We have very good engagement with Cisco enterprise teams and the account directors. We do have dedicated people who work with us on the Cisco team. We always have their support any time something needs to get escalated.

I would rate Cisco support an eight or nine out of ten. We have seen a lot of cases in the last ten years where any time we needed to get their support we could get it. We also have a customer support team who works with the backend tech team to ensure that we get whatever help we need on time..”

**Rohit-Joshi**

Head of IT Infrastructure at a tech vendor with 10,001+ employees

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“Cisco support for Identity Services Engine has been world-class. The guts of ISE are still a RADIUS server. They're still AAA-based functionality. So many folks that have been deploying and supporting the Cisco Secure ACS Server as well as the TACACS server and all of the things that have come along with that, continue to use the same skill set to support and deploy ISE. Really, the differences nowadays in terms of support are bringing about more comprehensive offerings to support the systems that surround ISE. Many things plug into ISE and provide much richer context, and really that's where the complexity tends to creep in. Our support from Cisco both as an end user and a partner has been beyond reproach, and we really appreciate Cisco's continued investment in the TAC, and in all the areas they bring to bear to help you receive that business outcome you're after.

Cisco support is always going to be ranked a strong nine with me, mainly because we know there's always room to improve things. We don't want to give a full passing score, but without a doubt, I don't know how anyone could consume and deploy business outcomes with Cisco technologies without leveraging support. And so Cisco leads the way and continues to invest in that area..”

**Brad Davenport**

VP of Technical Architecture at Logicalis

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## Other Advice

Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE) is very involving and requires committed and skilled IT personnel for deployment and day-to-day management. Enterprises with large infrastructures, like in the banking and energy sectors, may find it beneficial. I would rate it nine as it is good and does what it's supposed to do.

**Jeremiah Ngure**

Technical Services Lead at Telenet Solutions

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“I would like to advice that Cisco ISE is a reliable and stable solution although it is not very easy to use. They should work on integrating the solution with other platforms.

Overall, I will rate the solution an eight out of ten. .”

**Tola Olaayan**

General Manager, Enterprise Solutions at Arravo

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“I am only using the [Cisco Identity Services Engine \(ISE\)](#) and the switches. Higher licensing is required for additional features. I rate this solution 8 out of 10..”

**John Ntambi**

Ag Systems & Networks Head at UNBS

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“For small setups and if the backend infrastructure is Cisco-based, Cisco Identity Services Engine (ISE) is suitable. However, for large organizations with mixed infrastructure, other solutions should be considered. I would rate it four out of ten based on my experience from the last year..”

**SunilkumarNaganuri**

Service Line Manager (Service Operations Expert) - Network Access Control  
at a pharma/biotech company with 10,001+ employees

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“We recommend it to our customers.

Cisco ISE provides authentication for various applications. It can integrate with other applications to manage access, including Privileged Access Management for those applications. For a comprehensive environment, Cisco ISE should be able to integrate and provide asset management for an IT organization or any organization.

Overall, I rate the solution an eight out of ten..”

**Abdul-Mumin-Iddrisu**

Chief Technology Officer at Oduma Solutions Ltd

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“I've worked with customers who have used Purple Portal, for example, for their guest wireless access. In comparison to using Cisco ISE, Purple Portal adds an extra layer of complexity on all their guest networks running through a third party. This means that the customer will not have as much visibility into their guest users or control over what their guests see when they join the Wi-Fi network.


With Cisco ISE and the way the policies are built, it gives you a lot of freedom. It covers a wide range of potential solutions. Because each bit can be built together modularly, you can build anything with it. Therefore, Cisco ISE applies to so many different applications.

On a scale from one to ten, I would rate Cisco ISE at eight because it is a complex product and requires more technical ability to deploy it, though it fits many more solution requirements.

Cisco is the main player in networking and security. Having that backing behind our company gives us credence. We're proud to sell the products and to recommend them. Cisco's portfolio is what I would sell by choice. It just makes my job a lot easier..”

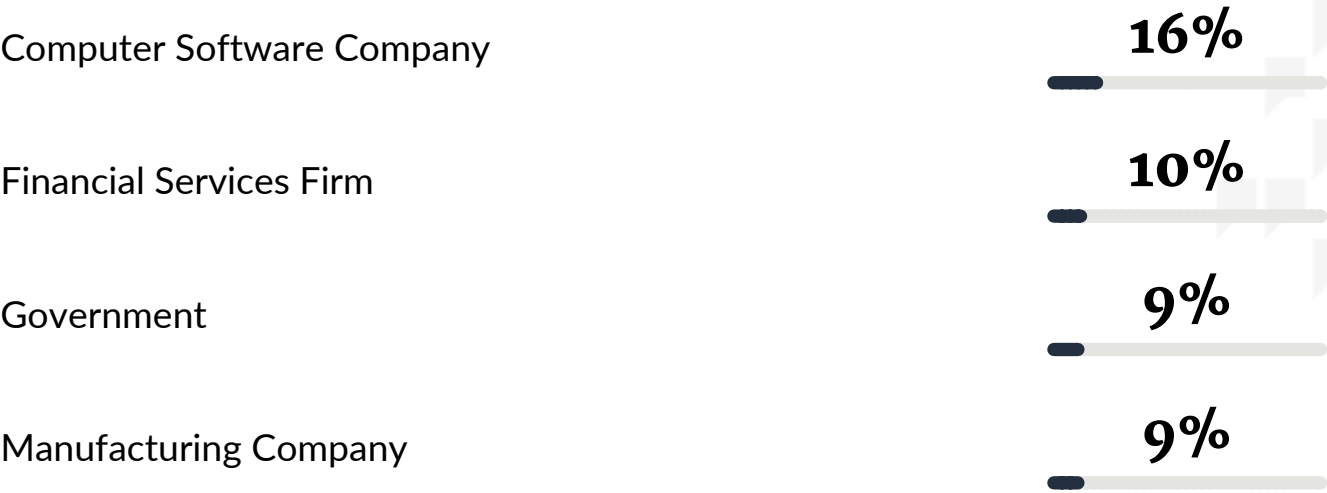
**Ashley Mead**

Sr Network Consultant at CAE Technology Services Limited

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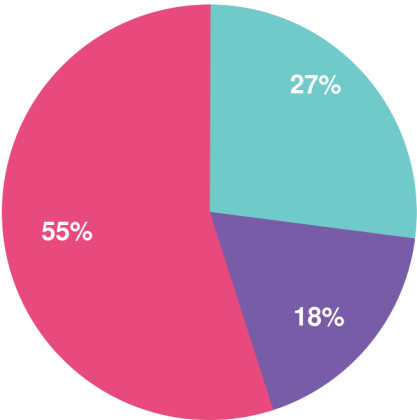
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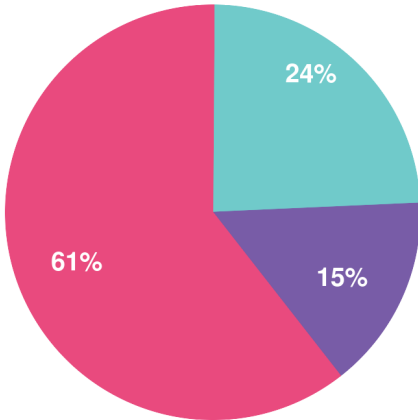
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