Cisco AP 541N Wireless Access Point

Why Should I Care About the Cisco AP 541N Wireless Access Point?

More and more small companies are relying on wireless networks to give employees greater mobility and flexibility, and to support partners and guests at the business site. But configuring, securing, and managing wireless networks can be daunting for small businesses without an IT department. The Cisco® AP 541N, an 802.11n dual-band clustering access point designed for small businesses, provides the ideal wireless solution. With its advanced clustering capabilities, you can configure and manage a customer’s entire wireless network, including up to 10 access points, as a single system. Designed to integrate with other solutions in the Cisco Small Business Pro Series, the Cisco AP 541N makes even advanced wireless and communications applications easy to install, configure, and support.

With the Cisco AP 541N, you can:

- Easily set up, configure, and manage multiple wireless access points, without a wireless controller
- Support demanding applications with high-bandwidth, long-range 802.11n wireless connectivity
- Deploy virtually any application a small business requires, including mobile data, voice over wireless LAN, and highly secure guest access
- Protect your wireless network and mission critical data with robust security features
- Provide a solution rather than a product, with a scalable wireless platform that integrates with other Cisco Small Business Pro Series products, grows with the customer’s business, and protects the investment

Product Positioning

The Cisco AP 541N is part of the Cisco Small Business Pro Series. Pro Series products work together to deliver powerful, integrated systems that are easy for a Cisco partner to deploy and manage. Individually, every product in the Pro Series solves a small business need. Together, they form a solid foundation that you can build on as your customers’ technology needs change. Table 1 highlights the positioning of Cisco Small Business Pro Series products within the larger Cisco portfolio.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cisco Small Business</th>
<th>Cisco Small Business Pro</th>
<th>Cisco</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company size</td>
<td>Up to 100 users</td>
<td>Up to 100 users</td>
<td>Medium and large enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deployment type</td>
<td>Off-the-shelf; discrete products</td>
<td>Partner-integrated solutions</td>
<td>Partner-integrated custom solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation</td>
<td>Customer</td>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Browser based; device level</td>
<td>Cisco Configuration Assistant; solution level</td>
<td>Command-line interface; network/system management solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner services</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Partner managed and supported</td>
<td>Cisco SMARTnet® Service; Smart Care Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When Do I Sell the Cisco AP 541N Versus Cisco Small Business Wireless Products?

Products in the Cisco Small Business Series are designed to meet point network technology needs and provide affordably priced, reliable networking products. They are purpose-built for small businesses, easy to install and use, and deliver basic, reliable connectivity right out of the box.

Cisco Small Business Pro Series products are intended for small businesses that want powerful, integrated, and scalable systems that are competitively priced and supported by a Cisco partner. Designed to be easy to install and manage, they help enable you to quickly and easily deploy comprehensive solutions for your small business customers and sustain more profitable and strategic relationships. Table 2 highlights the key differentiating features and target customer requirements for the two product families.

**Table 2. Comparison of Cisco Small Business Pro and Cisco Small Business Series Products**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Differentiating Features</th>
<th>Customer Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cisco Small Business Pro</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP 541N</td>
<td>● 802.11n dual-band single-radio access point</td>
<td>● Foundation platform for a wireless data/voice/video communications solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Clustering capability</td>
<td>● Business-class security and wireless feature set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Easy to use and configure using embedded GUI</td>
<td>● Plan to extend and grow the wireless network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● or Cisco Configuration Assistant</td>
<td>● Solution tested and integrated for voice and multimedia applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Integrated guest access capability</td>
<td>● Requires long-term service and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cisco Small Business</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAP4410N</td>
<td>● 802.11n access point</td>
<td>● Basic wireless mobility at an affordable price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAP200</td>
<td>● 802.11g access point</td>
<td>● Business-class security and wireless feature set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAP2000</td>
<td>● 802.11g access point</td>
<td>● Standalone wireless solution managed at the device level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Metal enclosure</td>
<td>● Does not require ongoing product support and upgrades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● High-gain antenna</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAP200E</td>
<td>● 802.11g outdoor access point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Weatherproof housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WET200</td>
<td>● 802.11g wireless bridge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How Do I Qualify Customers for the Cisco AP 541N Wireless Access Point?

The Cisco AP 541N is designed for small businesses (up to 100 users) that:

- Require high-performance wireless connectivity with business-class security and manageability, either as a standalone product or as part of an overall technology solution
- Require robust, reliable wireless connectivity to support wireless voice and/or video monitoring applications
- Expect to add employees, access points, or advanced features (such as captive portal guest access) in the next few years
- Currently use the Cisco Smart Business Communications System (SBCS) or other Cisco Small Business Pro Series solutions with 802.11g wireless capabilities and require greater wireless range, reliability, and throughput
• Are currently using the Cisco Mobility Express solution and are ready to migrate to the AP 541N

What Questions Should I Ask to Initiate Sales?
The following questions can help initiate a sale:

• How much do your employees and customers depend on your network applications? How much more productive could they be if applications were accessible anywhere in your business location?
• If you have an existing Wireless-G network, how much do your employees rely on it? How much more productive could they be if the network had greater range and more bandwidth, and was more reliable?
• Are you using or planning to deploy IP-based telephony or video applications? Have you considered the new capabilities and cost savings you could realize by extending those applications over a high-performance wireless network?
• How much more reliable and effective do you think your voice and video services could be if they were deployed as part of a single, integrated network solution that had been rigorously tested for such applications?
• Do you plan to expand your wireless network and add new applications over the next few years? If so, how confident are you that your current wireless network can meet these demands without a major additional investment?

What Problems Need to Be Solved?
To compete and succeed, small businesses must:

• Empower employees to become more mobile, productive, and responsive
• Support demanding voice and video applications on their network
• Provide secure Internet access to partners, vendors, and guests
• Maintain strong security by preventing access by unauthorized users and protecting mission-critical data
• Support growing business and technology requirements while controlling costs

Features and Capabilities
The Cisco AP 541N provides:

• **Clustering intelligence:** The Cisco AP 541N is built for small businesses. Its clustering capabilities enable all access points in the cluster to form a dynamic, configuration-aware group that self-organizes—for example, cloning configuration settings and balancing wireless channels to minimize interference. You can configure and manage all access points in the cluster as a single wireless network, instead of as individual devices, without a wireless controller.

• **Robust wireless performance:** As an 802.11n dual-band single-radio wireless solution, the Cisco AP 541N provides greater range, reliability, and data throughput than 802.11g technologies. With the ability to configure the access point for either the 2.4-GHz frequency or the 5-GHz frequency, your customers can realize greater wireless capacity and a cleaner signal, with less interference.

• **Simple setup and configuration:** The Cisco AP 541N is designed to easily integrate with other Cisco Small Business Pro Series solutions and the Cisco SBCS, allowing you to implement advanced voice and video applications quickly and easily. The solution includes intuitive wizards to guide you through each step in an implementation, and lets you configure the entire wired and wireless environment from a single interface, using the Cisco Configuration Assistant.
• **Strong security:** The Cisco AP 541N access point includes robust security features for your customer’s wireless network. Features include advanced Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA2) encryption, support for 802.1X authentication, rogue access point detection, and MAC address filtering.

• **Power options:** The Cisco AP 541N can operate using both standard AC power and Power over Ethernet (PoE), simplifying installation in locations such as drop ceilings where power outlets may not be accessible.

• **Voice roaming:** The AP 541N supports fast roaming while maintaining good voice quality with 802.11i pre-authentication.

• **Repeater mode:** You can extend wireless connectivity to remote locations easily without wires. The AP 541N supports both point-to-point and point-to-multipoint topologies using wireless distribution system (WDS) technology.

• **Scalable design:** Designed to operate as either a standalone wireless access point or as part of a larger business network, the Cisco AP 541N can meet virtually any small business requirement, from basic mobile access to elaborate wireless voice and video installations. This flexibility, along with the ability to easily add wireless access points, means that the Cisco AP 541N solution will grow with your customers’ business as their needs change.

• **Peace of mind:** As a Cisco Small Business Pro Series product, the Cisco AP 541N is backed by a Cisco standard 1-year hardware warranty and optional 3-year Cisco Small Business Pro Service to protect your customer’s investment and help you ensure long-term customer satisfaction.

• **An integrated solution:** The Cisco AP 541N works with other Cisco Small Business Pro Series products to deliver powerful, integrated systems that are competitively priced and easy to deploy and manage. Together, they provide a strong, versatile technology foundation that you can build on as your customers’ needs change.

### Applications and Deployments

The Cisco AP 541N provides an ideal solution for:

- Basic small office mobility/data connectivity
- Wireless voice deployments
- Highly secure guest access

### Benefits for Customers

The Cisco AP 541N:

- Empowers employees to work more productively and efficiently
- Provides robust range, reliability, and performance to support even advanced wireless voice and video applications
- Delivers business-class wireless security and reliability features to protect sensitive information and reduce downtime
- Boosts organizational agility with highly secure, easy-to-implement guest Internet access
- Protects technology investments with a scalable solution that can meet new demands as the business grows

### Benefits for Cisco Partners

With the Cisco AP 541N you can:

- Reduce the cost and effort required to sell, deliver, deploy, configure, and manage your small business customers’ networks
- Increase profitable sales in the small business segment by offering integrated, centrally managed network solutions instead of point products
- Build a wired and wireless network foundation that supports advanced voice and video communications, opening opportunities for new product and service sales
- Strengthen your role as a trusted adviser to your small business customers by providing long-term technology strategies aligned to their unique needs
- Become more competitive by offering a large portfolio of products and services that are designed and priced to meet the needs of small businesses
- Develop and grow a profitable small business and managed services practice

**Warranty**

The Cisco AP 541N wireless access points is covered by a Cisco standard 1-year hardware warranty. To download software updates, go to: [http://www.cisco.com/go/smallbiz](http://www.cisco.com/go/smallbiz).

Product warranty terms and other information applicable to Cisco products are available at [http://www.cisco.com/go/warranty](http://www.cisco.com/go/warranty).

**Service and Support**

Cisco Small Business Pro Service provides “peace-of-mind” support coverage so that your customers can get the most value from their Cisco Small Business Pro Series solution. This optional service provides three years of device-level service for the Cisco AP 541N, including telephone and online chat support through the Cisco Small Business Support Center, software updates and bug fixes, and access to the Cisco Small Business Support Community. If a wireless access point needs to be replaced, the service also includes next-business-day advance hardware replacement where available (same day shipping in other areas).

**Ordering Information**

Table 3 provides ordering information for the Cisco AP 541N.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product SKU</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AP541N-A-K9</td>
<td>Dual-band, single-radio 802.11n clustering access point with PoE, certified for North America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP541N-E-K9</td>
<td>Dual-band, single-radio 802.11n clustering access point with PoE, certified for EU countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP541N-N-K9</td>
<td>Dual-band, single-radio 802.11n clustering access point with PoE, certified for Australia and New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CON-SBS-SVC2</td>
<td>3-year extended service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP540N-CMK</td>
<td>Ceiling mount kit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How Should I Address Common Objections?**

**Objection:** The Cisco solution is too expensive.

**Response:** When you choose the Cisco AP 541N, you have the peace of mind that comes with purchasing a Cisco product that provides proven reliability and investment protection. The Cisco AP 541N also includes more extensive, business-class service and support than a consumer-grade wireless solution.

**Objection:** I can just buy a wireless access point at an electronics retailer.

**Response:** Unlike consumer-grade access points, the Cisco AP 541N is a business-class wireless solution that provides advanced security and authentication features to protect your applications and data. In addition, the Cisco
AP 541N has been rigorously tested to support business-critical applications such as wireless voice. With support for clustering and other advanced features, the Cisco AP 541N can also grow with your business as your needs change.

**Objection:** The solution sounds difficult to install.

**Response:** The Cisco AP 541N integrates clustering technology that speeds and simplifies deployment. It lets you easily implement the same configuration across multiple access points and provides a single point of management for your entire wireless environment.

**Additional Resources**

For more information about the Cisco AP 541N and other Cisco Small Business Pro Series solutions, including data sheets, user guides, firmware, and competitive information, visit: [www.cisco.com/go/ap500](http://www.cisco.com/go/ap500).