



# FlexPod Edge: Transforming IT Operations at the Edge with Scalable, Secure, and Simplified Infrastructure

**FlexPod® Edge not only simplifies deployment and management but also enhances security and operational efficiency, making it the perfect choice for enterprises looking to optimize their edge computing strategy.**

In today's rapidly evolving IT landscape, edge computing is becoming increasingly crucial for enterprises. This solution brief explores how FlexPod Edge, a joint offering from Cisco and NetApp, addresses the challenges of edge computing and delivers robust, scalable, and secure infrastructure.

## Benefits of FlexPod:



**Simplified Deployment:** Validated designs reduce complexity and deployment time, accelerating time-to-value.



**Scalability:** FlexPod solutions can scale to meet the needs of growing workloads, from small deployments to large enterprise environments.



**Operational Efficiency:** Unified management tools streamline operations, reduce administrative overhead, and improve resource utilization.



**Workload Optimization:** FlexPod is optimized for diverse workloads, including virtualized environments, containerized applications, and AI/ML workloads.



**Reliability and Resilience:** Built-in redundancy and high availability features deliver consistent performance and minimize downtime.



**Seamless Integration:** FlexPod integrates with public clouds, enabling hybrid cloud strategies and centralized data management.

## Understanding the challenges of edge computing

AI is enabling real-time data processing and decision making across the enterprise. Edge and remote office deployments are evolving to meet the needs of users by providing these capabilities where data is created and processed. Moving AI closer to end users enables faster insights with local inferencing, reduces bandwidth costs by keeping data in place, and improves data security and sovereignty. This shift highlights the growing demand for localized compute and storage resources to support latency-sensitive applications, IoT devices, and AI workloads.

However, edge environments often face constraints such as limited IT staff, inconsistent infrastructure management, and fragmented data security. Additionally, scaling edge operations across multiple sites can be complex, leading to inefficiencies and higher operational costs. Organizations must overcome these barriers while supporting seamless integration between edge, core, and cloud environments.

Addressing these challenges requires robust solutions that simplify deployment, centralize management, and provide secure, scalable infrastructure tailored to edge-specific needs. Let's explore how FlexPod Edge provides a comprehensive solution to these challenges.

## Introducing FlexPod Edge: The ideal solution for edge computing

FlexPod Edge is a comprehensive converged infrastructure solution designed to address the unique challenges of edge computing. Combining Cisco Unified Computing System (UCS) with NetApp® storage technologies, FlexPod Edge delivers a scalable, reliable, and secure platform optimized for edge environments. This solution integrates compute, storage, and networking into a single, validated architecture, simplifying deployment and management across distributed locations.

FlexPod Edge offers centralized fleet management, enabling IT teams to oversee and control multiple edge sites from a single interface. Automated deployment capabilities reduce setup time and deliver consistent configurations, enhancing operational efficiency. The solution supports a wide range of workloads, including AI inferencing, IoT data processing, and containerized applications, providing the flexibility needed to meet diverse edge requirements.

FlexPod Edge is designed with security at its core, incorporating features to safeguard data both in transit and at rest. Its seamless integration with core and cloud environments delivers reliable data synchronization and continuity, enabling organizations

to extend their IT operations to the edge without sacrificing performance or security. With FlexPod Edge, enterprises gain the ability to support latency-sensitive workloads, maintain operational consistency, and efficiently manage data across distributed locations, unlocking the full potential of edge computing.

## FlexPod: The backbone of modern IT infrastructure

FlexPod, jointly developed and supported by Cisco and NetApp, is a converged infrastructure solution that integrates compute, storage, and networking into a validated architecture, simplifying IT operations, accelerating deployment, and supporting diverse workloads such as virtualization, cloud, AI, and data-intensive applications across data centers and hybrid cloud environments.

FlexPod Edge extends the benefits of FlexPod, including operational consistency, simplified management, and workload optimization, to remote and edge environments while supporting seamless integration with core and cloud resources.



## Cisco Unified Edge: Enhancing compute and connectivity at the edge

Cisco addresses edge computing challenges through its Unified Edge architecture, which integrates advanced compute, networking, and management capabilities to deliver scalable, secure, and efficient edge infrastructure.

### **Turnkey Deployment and Fleet Management with Cisco Intersight**

Cisco Intersight simplifies deployment and ongoing management of edge infrastructure. Using zero-touch provisioning and infrastructure-as-code blueprints, organizations can onboard systems quickly and achieve consistent configurations across edge locations. Fleet management is streamlined with automated lifecycle management, reducing operational complexity, and supporting reliability for day-2 operations.

### **Integrated Networking for Seamless Connectivity**

Cisco Unified Edge incorporates networking technologies that reduce complexity in remote locations. With internal 25G node-to-node networking and redundant management controllers, the solution delivers high-speed, reliable connections essential for latency-sensitive workloads. Cisco's Catalyst switches further enhance connectivity between edge, core, and cloud environments, addressing bandwidth and latency challenges.

### **Flexible Deployment Options**

The Cisco XE9305 chassis offers versatility for edge environments with compact 3RU dimensions, flexible mounting options, and acoustic optimization. These features make it ideal for constrained spaces such as retail outlets, medical offices, and industrial sites.

### **High-Performance Compute Nodes**

Cisco's XE130c M8 and XE150c M8 compute nodes are optimized for edge workloads. Powered by Intel Xeon processors with up to 32 cores, DDR5 memory, and optional NVIDIA GPUs, these nodes support AI inferencing, real-time analytics, and other data-intensive applications. The modular design allows customization for storage or I/O optimization.

### **Enhanced Security**

Cisco Unified Edge incorporates advanced security measures, including secure boot processes, encryption, and access controls, to protect edge systems. These features mitigate security risks associated with distributed deployments and support compliance with data protection regulations.

By combining high-performance compute, simplified management, and secure networking, Cisco's Unified Edge architecture addresses the operational complexity, scalability, and security challenges of edge computing.



## NetApp storage solutions: Delivering efficiency and security at the edge

NetApp complements Cisco's edge solutions by providing advanced storage technologies and data management capabilities tailored to the unique demands of edge environments.

**Flexible Storage Options** NetApp offers a range of storage solutions, including the [NetApp® AFF A20 storage array](#) and [ONTAP® Select software-defined storage \(SDS\)](#). The AFF A20 provides up to 4PB of raw capacity, ideal for demanding workloads like AI inferencing and high-performance databases. ONTAP Select delivers scalable SDS with up to 200TB of effective storage capacity, supporting edge environments with minimal hardware footprints.

**Small Footprint Option** ONTAP Select provides flexible, scalable storage for edge environments, enabling rapid deployment on commodity hardware while offering advanced data management features such as snapshots, tiering, and replication. It supports popular hypervisors, including VMware vSphere and KVM, supporting broad compatibility across virtualization platforms.

**Data Management with ONTAP** NetApp ONTAP software is central to edge data management, offering features such as snapshots, tiering, caching, and backup. These capabilities deliver data consistency, optimize storage efficiency, and enable seamless synchronization between edge, core, and cloud environments.

**Agility and Scalability** NetApp solutions are designed for dynamic scaling, allowing organizations to increase or decrease capacity as needs evolve. ONTAP Select supports virtualization platforms like VMware vSphere and KVM, enabling rapid provisioning and flexible deployment of edge storage infrastructure.

**Data Protection and Security** NetApp integrates robust data protection features, including disaster recovery, ransomware protection, and MetroCluster® for high availability across multiple sites. These capabilities safeguard edge data against loss or corruption, supporting compliance and business continuity.

**Integration Across Hybrid Environments** NetApp's storage solutions seamlessly integrate with core data centers and cloud platforms, such as Google Cloud, Amazon Web Services, and Microsoft Azure. This hybrid cloud support enables efficient data synchronization and centralized analytics, enhancing the value of edge-generated data.

By delivering flexible, secure, and scalable storage solutions, NetApp empowers organizations to overcome edge computing challenges, enabling efficient data management and operational consistency across distributed locations.

## Ready to modernize your edge computing strategy with FlexPod Edge?

FlexPod Edge represents a powerful solution for organizations looking to overcome the unique challenges of edge computing. By combining Cisco's high-performance compute and networking technologies with NetApp's advanced storage and data management capabilities, FlexPod Edge delivers a scalable, secure, and efficient infrastructure tailored to edge environments. It

enables enterprises to extend IT operations to distributed locations with operational consistency, simplified management, and seamless integration across edge, core, and cloud environments.

### Ready to transform your edge computing strategy?

Contact your Cisco or NetApp representative today to learn more about FlexPod Edge.

Visit our websites for detailed information and access our deployment guide to get started.

### Links:

- [Cisco FlexPod](#)
- [NetApp FlexPod](#)

Disclaimer: No ransomware detection or prevention system can completely guarantee safety from a ransomware attack. Although it's possible that an attack might go undetected, NetApp technology acts as an important additional layer of defense.

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