



## SERVICES BRIEF

# A Converged Infrastructure Solution for Midsize Businesses and Branch Offices

### The Challenge

Procuring and managing complex IT infrastructure

For many small and midsize businesses and branch offices, procuring, maintaining, and managing IT infrastructure can bring daunting challenges. Often, separate servers are dedicated to each application, so many organizations have too many servers to manage. The environment is difficult to control, and it wastes resources, overburdens IT staff, and strains budgets. What's needed is a cost-effective, easy-to-deploy solution that consolidates all application and data requirements.

### The Solution

**Reduce costs and complexity by consolidating on a convenient, easy-to-manage platform**

NetApp and Cisco have teamed up to deliver FlexPod Express—a convenient, converged platform for your business applications. FlexPod Express can help you save money, simplify management, and enhance data protection by using innovative systems that your small or midsize business or branch office will not outgrow. This affordable solution helps you streamline your servers and storage to build a cost-effective IT infrastructure that accelerates deployment, centralizes management, and automates operations.

FlexPod Express leverages best-in-class components, including Cisco Unified Computing System (Cisco UCS) C-Series servers and UCS Mini, Cisco Nexus switches, and NetApp® FAS2500 series, NetApp FAS2600 series, and NetApp E2800 series storage. You can:

- Reduce the number of servers and the storage capacity needed for applications.

## Key Features

### Consolidate your infrastructure and optimize applications

- Implement quickly with an affordable, easy-to-deploy platform.
- Achieve superior application performance.
- Use a trusted solution that is prevalidated by Cisco and NetApp.

### Simplify your IT

- Reduce complexity with integrated server, storage, and network resources.
- Simplify operational processes and management.
- Manage more resources per person.

### Support business growth

- Standardize your environment to more easily predict budgets and growth.
- Speed decision making and grow intelligently to keep up with increasing business demands.
- Scale up or scale out FlexPod® Express, with the ability to leverage common components across FlexPod solutions.



- Gain operational efficiencies by using virtualization so that your staff can manage more systems and storage in less time.
- Standardize your environment to more easily predict your budgets and support growth.

Built on groundbreaking technology from NetApp and Cisco—and delivered by an ecosystem of joint channel partners—FlexPod Express simplifies and modernizes your IT infrastructure, delivering superior application performance and improved operational efficiency.

### Trusted Application Consolidation and Optimization

FlexPod is trusted by thousands of customers around the globe. Now your small or midsize business or branch office can consolidate common applications—such as e-mail, data-base, collaboration, and content management—onto a single infrastructure solution. With its streamlined architecture and processes, FlexPod Express helps you easily manage your IT resources and take full advantage of the benefits of virtualization.

The FlexPod platform supports the leading hypervisors, applications, and management platforms. FlexPod has been tested with Cisco UCS Director, VMware vSphere, and Microsoft Hyper-V Server 2012 R2.

### Start with FlexPod Express

FlexPod Express delivers benefits for small and midsize businesses and branch offices based on three key concepts.

#### Start right

Start with a low-cost, easy-to-deploy solution. FlexPod Express is tested and documented by Cisco and NetApp and includes an implementation guide to facilitate integrating the solution with your existing data center environment.

#### Keep it simple

Simplify your IT with the built-in efficiencies of Cisco UCS servers, Cisco Nexus switches, and NetApp FAS or E-Series systems. With FlexPod Express, fewer IT resources are needed to manage a pool of server, network, and storage systems in a virtualized infrastructure. This streamlined approach reduces the number of devices to purchase, cable, and power—and it simplifies management.

#### Grow smart

FlexPod Express provides easy infrastructure scaling to keep up with business demands. Protect your investment in equipment and training with a consistent operational environment as you grow. Scale up by adding components or scale out with a standardized platform to more easily predict budgets and support growth.

### The Integrated Components

FlexPod Express leverages best-in-class building blocks from Cisco and NetApp. The no-compromise, entry-level server, networking, and storage components include:

#### Cisco Unified Computing System

Cisco UCS is a data center platform that eliminates time-consuming manual configuration, reduces total cost of ownership, and increases business agility. It combines compute and network resources, storage access, and virtualization into a scalable, modular system that is easily managed as a single entity by Cisco UCS Manager.



Figure 1) FlexPod Express: an infrastructure solution.

### Cisco Nexus switches

Cisco Nexus 3000 and 9000 series switches deliver high-performance and low-latency switching to create a fast network foundation for Cisco UCS C-Series and aggregation connectivity.

### NetApp FAS Series

The NetApp FAS2500 series and NetApp FAS2600 series hybrid arrays provide powerful, flexible storage that maximizes the long-term value of your IT investment. The unified architecture supports a broad set of SAN and NAS workloads. It also provides built-in data protection and scalability features; optimized performance; built-in deduplication; thin provisioning; rapid cloning; and automated storage management, data protection, and security features.

### Cooperative Support Speeds Problem Resolution

FlexPod Cooperative Support is a partnership between NetApp, Cisco, and our technology partners Microsoft, VMware, Citrix, and Red Hat. Your IT staff chooses which vendor to call based on your initial assessment of the problem's origin. Multivendor engineers work to resolve your issue quickly by using shared communication, expertise gained through ongoing joint training, and a formal escalation process.

### Our Partners

NetApp, Cisco, our strategic partners, and authorized resellers can help you successfully make the move to FlexPod Express and can assist with the consolidation, optimization, and virtualization of your IT environments. Together, we deliver solutions that increase utilization and reduce complexity and costs.