

Atea Group

# Cisco Services Icebreaker Program Supports Rapid Business Growth

Atea Group fast-tracks services business and engages more confidently with customers.



## The customer summary

**Partner name**

Atea Group

**Location**

Scandinavia and Baltic States  
(headquarters in Norway)

**Number of employees**

6500



## Business challenge summary

- Accelerate services sales growth



## Solution

- Cisco Services Icebreaker Program



## Business results summary

- 19 percent rise in services sales, compared with nine percent in products
- Incremental revenue of US\$2 million in six months from newly-uncovered devices
- Contracts reduced by nearly 60 percent, simplifying administration

### Challenge

Sales began to climb steadily when Atea Group, Europe's second largest IT infrastructure company, complemented its own service offerings with the Cisco® portfolio and joined the Cisco Services Partner Program.

"We have a substantial Cisco business, and a large part of it used to be project-based with unpredictable revenues," says Steinar Sønsteby, CEO. "We started to focus on services as a source of more stable, recurring revenue." The company wanted to further accelerate growth, but it faced an obstacle in obtaining and managing service-related data.

Customers typically had multiple support contracts with different end dates, creating an administrative challenge. Incomplete data made it harder for customers to reach informed business decisions, making it tougher for Atea to engage, and creating added risk that service cover would lapse on critical systems.

What was needed was a way of giving customers a holistic view of their Cisco installed bases.

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**Steinar Sønsteby**  
CEO, Atea Group

## Solution

The Cisco Services Icebreaker Program has helped Atea simplify services administration and engage customers in business conversations with greater confidence.

The program creates a coordinated approach that enables Cisco and Atea to analyse a customer's installed base with a view to consolidating and co-terminating support contracts. Cisco shares data with Atea management teams for the purpose of joint business planning, and produces reports for use by Atea account managers as reasons for contacting customers, or as the basis for discussion in services review meetings.

"It took about six months until Icebreaker became a natural part of our business, but we started to see results after just two," says Sønsteby. "We were very positively surprised at how easy it was to implement the program, and that's one of the reasons we're enjoying such rapid growth."

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## Results

Boosted by Icebreaker, services are currently growing at 19 percent a year across the Atea Group, compared to nine percent in product sales. It posted US\$2 million of incremental revenue from newly-uncovered devices in the first six months of the program. Services now represent 22 percent of the group's Cisco business, a figure that looks certain to continue rising, especially as services growth has started driving up product sales.

Icebreaker is also speeding up the vital process of incremental service revenue. "Making the contract renewal process much easier is a faster profit generator than winning new business," says Sønsteby, "but it's also important for customers because their networks and data centers need to be correctly covered."

Atea has already consolidated contracts by nearly 60 percent. This streamlining is also welcome news for the Cisco Partner Services Development Manager in Atea, who has more time to help increase revenue and identify new business opportunities.

Customers are noticing the improvement in the company's knowledge of their networks and that, in turn, is building trust and making it easier to close sales. Thanks to Icebreaker, Atea is well on its way to achieving targets of 90 percent attach and renewal rates.

**Best of all, the productive collaboration is going from strength to strength. "It's about investing in a person-to-person approach—account manager to account manager, management to management—all the way through Atea and Cisco," says Dag Fodstad, managing director, Atea Group Norway. "We're having a tremendous journey with Cisco on the Icebreaker program."**

## For more information

To join the Cisco Services Icebreaker Program, speak to your Virtual Partner Account Manager or visit: <http://www.ciscoservicesicebreaker.com>

### Product list

Cisco Services Icebreaker Program