

VMWARE SKYLINE

Beyond Break/Fix

Customers that run business-critical operations on VMware environments need an infrastructure that's always-on and optimized for peak performance. Best-in-class reactive technical support is table stakes for achieving the necessary operational efficiency, risk reduction, and business continuity. With VMware powering the data center infrastructure, customers are asking for more than traditional break/fix. They expect fast, environment-specific remediation recommendations, and proactive analytics that identify problems before they occur.

VMware addresses these needs with VMware Skyline: an innovative, proactive support service, developed entirely by VMware Engineering, that brings high-performing technology and tools to the workbench. For VMware customers, this means that proactive, predictive, and prescriptive recommendations may improve overall stability and reliability, and reactive support issues can be resolved more quickly.

AT A GLANCE

VMware Skyline™ is an innovative, proactive support service aligned with VMware Global Support Services. VMware Skyline automatically and securely collects, aggregates, and analyzes product usage data which helps VMware Technical Support Engineers improve time-to-resolution and proactively resolve potential problems. These capabilities transform support operations from a reactive, break/fix mode to a proactive, predictive, and prescriptive experience that produces even greater returns on your VMware support investment.

Enhanced Reactive & Proactive Support

A large part of the support process today is dedicated to identifying the problem and determining its underlying cause. It's up to the customer administrator to communicate deployment and contextual information each time they log a service request. That takes valuable, irreplaceable time.

The time required to troubleshoot is significantly decreased when the support engineer is armed with detailed, environment-wide visibility. Such knowledge helps support engineers more readily engage with customers to improve time-to-value and meet business requirements.

Active VMware support customers download and install the VMware Skyline Collector™ appliance. Skyline Collector then automatically and securely collects product usage data, and the customers' environment-specific analytics based upon configuration, feature, and performance data are executed against this data. The resulting information may radically improve visibility into a customer's environment, enabling richer, more informed interactions between customers and VMware without extensive time investments by support administrators.

Customers will access VMware Skyline Advisor™, a browser-based, self-service portal. Customers can view the inventory of products that Skyline is collecting data from, proactive findings, recommendations and risk if no action is taken. The Upgrade Assist feature (coming soon) will provide upgrade recommendations based on the VMware Compatibility Guide. Customers can segment Skyline data by region, lines of business, departments, etc. and manage user access permissions efficiently.

VMware Skyline Log Assist™ is a feature within Skyline Advisor that eliminates the time-consuming process of manually uploading log files needed by Technical Support Engineers (TSEs) to assist customers with solving technical issues. Manually uploading logs can take several hours or even days to complete. Skyline Log Assist automates this process.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Proactively identify and prevent problems
- Solve problems, not just symptoms
- Improve reliability and scalability of the environment
- Get back to business: shift IT focus from problem-solving to endeavors with more value to the business
- Reduce time-to-resolution for service requests

VMware TSEs can also request the logs needed to assist with troubleshooting and obtain customer approval for those specific logs to be automatically uploaded to VMware. Using drop-down menus within Skyline Advisor, customers can also quickly and easily select which hosts to upload log files from, select the support requests to associate the logs to, and approve the automatic upload request to VMware. Customers can use the “Auto Approve” feature to automatically approve all log upload requests from Tech Support.

Today VMware Skyline provides increased visibility for VMware vSphere®, VMware NSX®, and VMware vSAN™ environments. VMware Horizon® View™, VMware vRealize®, VxRail and VMware Validated Design environments will be supported by Skyline soon. Additional products will be added over time.

VMware Skyline is available globally in English, at no additional cost, to VMware supported customers with current Production Support or Premier Services contracts. Premier Services includes Business Critical Support (BCS), Mission Critical Support (MCS), Healthcare Critical Support (HCS), and Carrier Grade Support (CGS).

VMware Skyline Technology

Skyline enables proactive support by merging visibility into the VMware infrastructure as a unified solution with comprehensive analytics. The solution includes customer site and VMware cloud components.

- VMware Skyline Collector™ virtual appliance gathers and aggregates product usage information such as configuration, feature, and performance data. It also listens for changes and events, which are streamed back to VMware. VMware supported customers with current Production Support or Premier Services contracts can download and install Skyline Collector from VMware Cloud Services. To use the Log Assist feature through Skyline Advisor, supported customers can then navigate proactive findings and easily associate logs (or approve requests from TSEs for logs to be transferred) to the Service Request.
- VMware receives data from the Skyline Collector and performs analyses such as alignment with VMware best practices, KB articles, Security Advisories and identifies problem areas can be addressed with a recommended solution. The platform also enriches collected data with information such as support requests and active investigations to perform further analyses.

The VMware Skyline rules engine is key to delivering rich insights and recommendations. The rules perform anything from simple checking of data such as configurations and patch levels, to complex, cross-product, cross-cloud checks. But it doesn't stop with just a single rule created for a single customer. It goes much further than that. The issue and solution are fed into the analytics library which consists of hundreds of detection rules to solve issues for multiple customers. Only VMware, with our in-depth product expertise, is able to build and continue to evolve the most comprehensive rules engine possible.

“VMware Skyline deployment and data collection have been seamless. It gives us early insight into issues that might arise, including zero-day exploits and vulnerabilities, so we know ahead of time which drivers and patches we need. It makes the business safer.”

MATT SZEWCZYK
COMPUTE & STORAGE TEAM LEAD
ALLEGIS GROUP

- VMware Skyline Advisor™, is a self-service, browser-based portal available via VMware Cloud Services for customers to access Skyline findings and recommendations at their convenience, and pinpoint any changes in their environment that may have caused an issue. Using Advisor, customers can segment Skyline data by region, lines of business, departments, etc. and manage user access permissions efficiently.

Through Skyline Advisor, customers can log into their Skyline account to view:

- **Account Details** - valuable information about their VMware Skyline implementation such as Master ID, number of Skyline Collectors registered with VMware, and the total number of vCenter Servers, ESXi hosts, and virtual machines that are being analyzed for potential issues.
- **Proactive Findings** - displayed as a card by default (list view optional) that includes associated recommendations from VMware's library of knowledge.
- **Log Assist** - requests, transfer status and Log Library.
- **Upgrade Assist (coming soon)** - upgrade recommendations based on the VMware Compatibility Guide.
- **Operational Summary Report (OSR) Library** - an archive of standard and custom OSRs with advanced findings. This feature is only available to Premier Services customers.

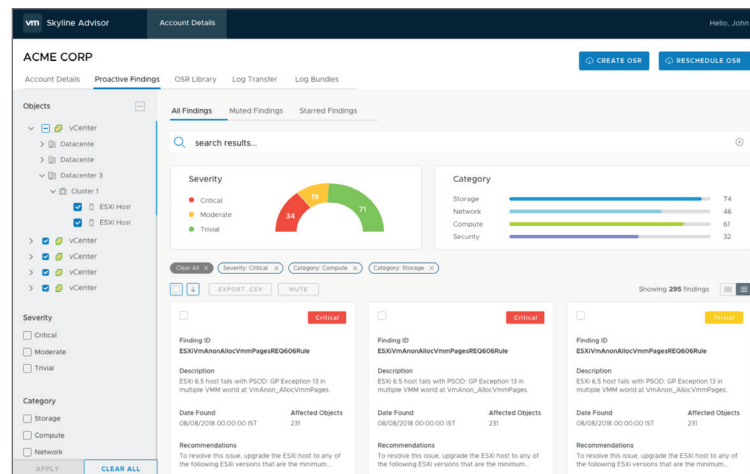


Figure 1. VMware Skyline Advisor Proactive Findings

- **Technical Support Engineers** can use the data to proactively review the customer environment, perform research analyses for service requests, and provide prescriptive recommendations to improve overall environmental health and performance. VMware TSEs can also request the logs needed to assist with troubleshooting and obtain customer approval for those specific logs to be automatically uploaded to VMware. Premier Services customers receive tailored guidance and review proactive recommendations on a regular cadence with their designated support team members.

VMWARE SKYLINE STORY

One room. Six support experts.
Six months.

- **The mission:** Foundationally transform the customer support experience through technology.
- **The process:** A handful of technical support engineers are taken out of their day jobs. Brainstorming begins, lines of code are written. Momentum builds with rapid prototyping and VMware engineering teams jump on board.
- **The result:** Full time investment in an Innovation Team. User feedback from customers on the technology. Full speed ahead with building what becomes VMware Skyline.

With extreme visibility and an as-it-happens pace VMware Skyline brings high-performing technology and tools to the customer workbench to radically transform customer support.

Privacy and Security

VMware Skyline has a rigorous privacy program. VMware Skyline technology is included in the VMware Customer Experience Improvement Program (CEIP), a VMware-wide initiative that uses analytics both to understand how customers use VMware products, and to expand and enhance VMware technical support capabilities. Data collected includes configuration data, feature usage data, and performance data. Customer data is transferred to VMware over an encrypted channel and is stored in a secure VMware repository in the US, operated by VMware.

VMware Skyline is subject to the VMware End User License Agreement; www.vmware.com/download/eula.

VMware Skyline data is accessed on an as-needed basis by VMware support teams whose job responsibilities require access—primarily VMware TSEs. Please find our privacy program on www.vmware.com/solutions/trustvmware/ceip.html.

Launch VMware Skyline Today

Eligible VMware supported customers can download and install Skyline Collector from VMware Cloud Services today.

Note System Requirements: VMware vSphere 5.5 or higher; VMware NSX 6.0 or higher; VMware vSAN 6.7 or higher.

For more information and details on VMware Skyline, please visit: www.vmware.com/go/skyline.

