

VMware Skyline

AT A GLANCE

VMware Skyline™ is an innovative, proactive support service aligned with VMware Global Support Services. Skyline automatically and securely collects, aggregates and analyzes product usage data that 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.

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 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.

Skyline is available globally in English, at no additional cost, to VMware supported customers with current Production or VMware Premier Support™ contracts.

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

Customers can also access VMware Skyline Advisor™—a browser-based, self-service portal—to view the inventory of products that Skyline collects data from, proactive findings, recommendations and risk if no action is taken. The Upgrade Recommendations feature provides upgrade recommendations based on the VMware Compatibility Guide.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

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

Customers can segment Skyline data by region, lines of business, departments and more, and manage user access permissions efficiently.

VMware Skyline Log Assist™, a feature within Skyline Advisor, eliminates the time-consuming process of manually uploading log files needed by VMware 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.

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.

Skyline provides increased visibility for VMware vSphere®, VMware NSX® Data Center for vSphere, VMware vSAN™, VMware Horizon® and VMware vRealize® Operations™ environments. Customers can also view Skyline proactive findings and recommendations within vRealize Operations by using the vRealize Operations Management Pack for Skyline. Additionally, Skyline identifies VxRail and VMware Validated Design™ solution deployments. Additional products will be added over time.

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.

The Skyline Collector virtual appliance gathers and aggregates product usage information such as configuration, feature and performance data. It also listens for changes and events that get streamed back to VMware. VMware supported customers with current Production or Premier Support contracts can download and install Skyline Collector from VMware Cloud™ Services. Supported customers can also use the Skyline Log Assist feature through Skyline Advisor to navigate proactive findings and easily associate logs (or approve requests from TSEs for logs to be transferred) to the support request.

VMware receives data from Skyline Collector and performs analyses, such as alignment with VMware best practices, KB articles and security advisories, and identifies problem areas that 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 Skyline rules engine is key to delivering rich insights and recommendations. The rules perform anything from a simple checking of data (such as configurations and patch levels) to complex, cross-product, cross-cloud checks. And it goes much further than just a single rule created for a single customer. 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.

The Skyline Advisor portal, also available via VMware Cloud Services, allows customers to access Skyline findings and recommendations at their convenience, and pinpoint any changes in their environment that may have caused an issue. Using Skyline Advisor, customers can segment Skyline data by region, lines of business, departments and more, and manage user access permissions efficiently.

“Skyline proactively identified several issues, such as upgrades needed to prevent Spectre and Meltdown vulnerabilities, storage pathing and misconfigured hypervisors we were unaware of.”

RICHARD HARRIS
VIRTUALIZATION ENGINEER IV
RACKSPACE

Through Skyline Advisor, customers can log in to their Skyline account to view the following features:

- Dashboard View – See a comprehensive summary of your environments, including account details, environment details, collector details, findings by severity and category, Skyline Log Assist details, updates and open support requests. The dashboard also allows you to quickly navigate to a particular place within Skyline Advisor.
- Inventory – Quickly view the details of all objects in your environments with the search or filter features.
- Proactive Findings – See associated recommendations from the VMware library of knowledge. Displayed as a card by default, with an optional list view.
- Skyline Log Assist – View requests, transfer status and the log library.
- Upgrade Recommendations – Resolve multiple issues with a single upgrade.
- Operational Summary Report (OSR) Library – See an archive of standard and custom OSRs with advanced findings. This feature is only available to Premier Support customers.

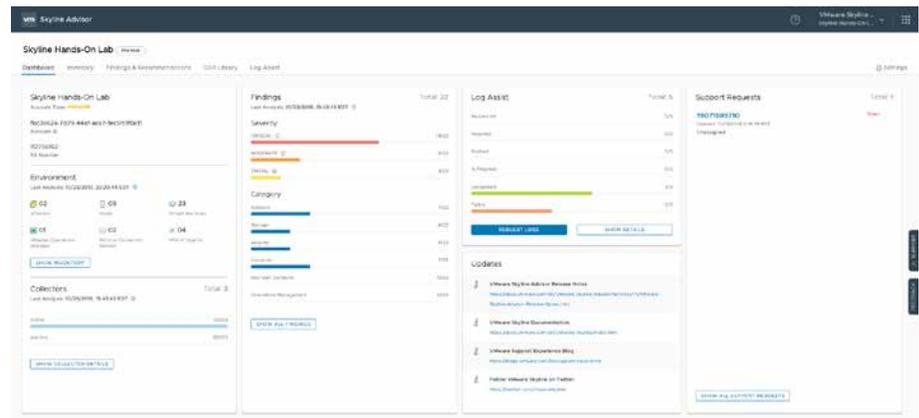


FIGURE 1: VMware Skyline Advisor dashboard view.

VMware TSEs can use the data to proactively review the customer environment, perform research analyses for support 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 Support 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. Skyline technology is included in the VMware Customer Experience Improvement Program (CEIP), a VMware-wide initiative that uses analytics 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.

Please read the following resources for more information regarding our privacy and security policies:

- [VMware Skyline FAQ](#)
- [VMware Skyline Data Collection Examples](#)
- [VMware Customer Experience Improvement Program](#)
- [VMware Skyline Consensus Assessments Initiative Questionnaire](#)

Skyline data is accessed on an as-needed basis by VMware support teams whose job responsibilities require access, primarily VMware TSEs. For more information, visit the [VMware Privacy Notices page](#).

Launch VMware Skyline today

Eligible VMware supported customers can download and install Skyline Collector from VMware Cloud Services today at vmware.com/go/skyline/download.

Need help? Read the [VMware Skyline Documentation](#).

VMware Skyline is subject to the [VMware End User License Agreement](#).

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