Brocade EOL & EOS Changes for 2011 & 2012

2011 and 2012 were big years for changes in support for Brocade legacy products. In 2012, three (3) Brocade products reached End-of-Support (EOS) status. In 2011, no less than nine (9) Brocade products reached End-of-Support (EOS) status and five (5) additional products were designated End-of-Life (EOL).

End-of-Support is Brocade's designation that indicates all support for a product has ended. It means that going forward Brocade will no longer support the product hardware, its firmware or the software designed to run on that product.

2012

Brocade has added three additional 4-Gbps switches to the End-of-Support rolls; the Brocade 4100, 4700 and 4400. After which Brocade support will be available solely for 8-Gbps products. Rumors are swirling that Brocade will add a full line of 16-Gbps switches and directors midway through 2012.

Equipment	End-of-Support Date
McData 4700	October 1, 2012
McData 4400	October 1, 2012
McData 4100	October 1, 2012

2011

The nine (9) Brocade hardware products that reached End-of-Support in 2011 are shown in the table below. If you still have any of these machines in your SAN, you should be making alternative plans for continued support now.

Products Designated End-of-Support by Brocade in 2011

Equipment	End-of-Support Date
Brocade 3850	January 13, 2011
Brocade 3232	January 31, 2011
Brocade 3250	March 31, 2011
Brocade 24000	April 28, 2011
Brocade 6064	May 1, 2011
Brocade 4500	June 30, 2011
Brocade USDX (Non-RoHS)	June 30, 2011
Brocade 3000 (Non-RoHS)	June 30, 2011
McData 4300	October 29, 2011

End-of-Life is the Brocade designation that indicates all software and firmware development for the product has ended. Microcode is frozen, new software features are no longer developed, enhancements to existing features are stopped, and bug fixes are no longer performed. The End-of-Life designation tells you that going forward hardware and software revision levels will remain fixed. With any given End-of-Life announcement Brocade will simultaneously announce a future End-of-Support date. The five products designated End-of-Life in 2011 are shown in the table below along with their future End-of-Support dates.

Products Designated End-of-Support in 2011 with Future End-of-Support Dates

Equipment	End-of-Support Date
Brocade 48000	February 17, 2016
Brocade 7500	August 15, 2015
Brocade 7500e	August 15, 2015
Brocade USDX RoHS Compliant	May 15, 2015
Brocade Edge 3000 RoHS Compliant	May 15, 2015

Once a Brocade product reaches End-of-Life, Brocade historically raises the maintenance rate for that product by 10% per year until the product reaches End-of-Support. Over a typical five year transition period from End-of-Life to End-of-Support the maintenance rate for a product will increase between 40% and 50%. When a product reaches End-of-Life it is usually a good point to jump off the manufacturer's band wagon and switch to a third party maintenance provider which can run up to 70% less than the Brocade's rates for comparable SLA's. Since software enhancements and firmware are frozen on products designated End-of-Life there is little risk in moving SAN maintenance to a third party specialist for your technical support. Savings on certain Brocade directors can reach upwards of $15,000 per machine per year.

For more information about Brocade End-of-Life and End-of Support dates please contact the author. Jeff Klein 201-934-6500 extension 11, jeffk@TeamKCI.com.