Broadcom’s low end is priced by the channel and dated by jurisdiction

Broadcom put a low-end hypervisor back on sale on 4 November 2026 and published neither a price nor a term. The offer is a distributor’s: one SKU, $9,600 for 128 cores, one year. The only right Broadcom dates keeps vSphere Standard 8 and Enterprise Plus 8 on sale in the EEA until 31 October 2027, with Extended Support to 31 October 2028.

- The only published price for vSphere Express is a distributor’s: $9,600 for a 128-core package on a one-year term, and neither Broadcom nor TD SYNNEX states what month thirteen costs.
- The package is a ceiling as well as a floor. An estate above 128 cores cannot buy it, and an estate at 16 cores pays $600 a core for the same $9,600.
- The single right Broadcom dates is written for EEA contracting entities: the two version 8 SKUs stay on sale to 31 October 2027 with Extended Support to the earlier of the subscription end or 31 October 2028, and no equivalent is stated for any other region.
- Infrastructure software returned 83.7% segment operating margin and 45.9% of quarterly operating income on 29.6% of revenue, and the majority of new software contracts no longer allow termination for convenience.
- Three Advanced Services were added the same day and none of them was priced, so each reaches a renewal as a quoted line before 31 October 2027.

> *“One SKU, one price, for one year.”*
>
> TD SYNNEX, VMware Marketplace Offer: vSphere Express, published November 2026

Broadcom returned to the low end of the hypervisor market on 4 November 2026 with a product it priced nowhere and dated for one jurisdiction. vSphere Express covers 128 cores across all environments, is available immediately in all regions, and carries a price and a one-year term supplied by the distributor that sells it: TD SYNNEX lists the single SKU, VCF-VSP-EXP, at $9,600 for 128 cores. The one right Broadcom’s own publication dates is for customers in the European Economic Area, where vSphere Standard 8 and Enterprise Plus 8 stay on sale until 31 October 2027. This reaches you if a vSphere renewal falls before that date, or if a migration case was funded on the read that Broadcom had stopped selling the low end.

$9,600
Price of the 128-core package at a distributor, one-year term

$75
Cost per core a year at the 128-core ceiling

83.7%
Infrastructure software operating margin, quarter to 2 August 2026

31 Oct 2027
Last day vSphere Standard 8 may be sold in the EEA

Source: TD SYNNEX, VMware Marketplace Offer: vSphere Express, November 2026, listing VCF-VSP-EXP at $9,600 for 128 cores against “128 cores = $75 MSRP”; Broadcom Form 10-Q for the quarter ended 2 August 2026, segment tables; VMware Cloud Foundation blog, 4 November 2026, for the EEA sale date. The 83.7% is Mosaic Singularity analysis, November 2026: $7,325m of segment operating income on $8,752m of segment revenue.

The product is Broadcom’s, the price and the year belong to a distributor

Broadcom published the specification and not the price. The 4 November post says vSphere Express is “Built on the reliability, resiliency, and performance of vSphere 9 and available immediately in all regions”, and delivers “core compute virtualization capabilities for customers with 128 cores across all environments with a simplified experience”. It lists vMotion, High Availability, the Distributed Switch, vCenter Quick Patch and TPM based security. It carries no price for any of it, no subscription term and no eligibility rule. The number a buyer needs sits on the distributor’s page instead: “One SKU, one price, for one year”, with “128 cores = $75 MSRP” against a package price of $9,600, described as “A single standardized SKU (vCenter, ESX and VDS) licensed up to 128 cores” on “a simple one-year term”. Ars Technica reported the same figure from the same listing on 4 November 2026. A VMware spokesperson told The Register the per-core subscription would be “significantly lower” than vSphere Foundation and VCF, and gave no figure.

Cost per core a year at the distributor price of $9,600 for a 128-core package



Source: TD SYNNEX, VMware Marketplace Offer: vSphere Express, November 2026, listing one price for one year regardless of core count below the ceiling. Per-core figures are Mosaic Singularity analysis, November 2026: $9,600 divided by each estate size.

The package does not flex. A 16-core estate pays $9,600 for capacity it will never run, which is $600 a core against $75 at the ceiling, a rate that moves eightfold before any discount is discussed. Above the ceiling it does not exist. Prashanth Shenoy, chief marketing officer and vice president of product marketing for the VCF Division, told TechTarget that customers needing more “obviously they can upgrade” to VMware Cloud Foundation. And it holds instances rather than an estate: “The product only supports discrete instances, and organizations won’t be able to manage them centrally”, Shenoy said, in The Register’s account of the briefing. The package includes vCenter, so the constraint is aggregation rather than a console: a group with five sites does not get five sites under one management plane by buying it.

The same publication adds three Advanced Services to the VCF catalogue and prices none of them. VMware Live Recovery and VMware Compliance and Configuration Management were both added to the list of available Advanced Services on 4 November 2026, the day the post was published. VMware HyperArmor was “announced at Explore on Tour Frankfurt” on 13 October 2026 and appears in that catalogue on 4 November. Each arrives at a renewal as a quoted line, and no document in this record carries a rate for any of the three.

The only expiry Broadcom dates belongs to one jurisdiction

One sentence in the announcement grants something and dates it, and it is written for customers rather than for products. It keeps two version 8 SKUs purchasable in the EEA to 31 October 2027, and it carries support past the sale date to 31 October 2028 at the outside. Where a group's contracting entity sits is a decision its own legal function controls, which makes this the one part of the package a buyer chooses rather than accepts. A group that signs through a European subsidiary holds a right that the same group signing through a United States parent is not offered anywhere in this record.

The clause, as published on 4 November 2026

"Furthermore, for customers in countries in the European Economic Area, vSphere Standard version 8 and vSphere Enterprise Plus version 8 will remain available for sale until October 31, 2027, and will have Extended Support included in any active subscriptions to those offerings until the earlier of the applicable subscription end date or October 31, 2028." Source: VMware Cloud Foundation blog, Broadcom Updates VMware Portfolio to Protect and Accelerate Private AI Cloud Deployments, 4 November 2026.

No equivalent calendar appears for any other region, and nothing in the post commits to developing either version 8 SKU past the support date: this is a sale and support window, not a roadmap. The EEA is also the only jurisdiction where the acquisition itself is still contested. The EU General Court ruled on 3 November 2026 that CISPE may keep confidential the identities of the members backing its action to annul the European Commission's approval, a procedural ruling that in CISPE's account "removes the immediate obstacle to the action moving forward". The usable fact is not causation: the only jurisdiction with a different calendar is also the only one where the approval is still being argued.

Three ways to buy the low end, and when each one closes

What you buy	Who may buy it	Last day it may be bought	Support stated
vSphere Express, one 128-core package, one-year term	Any customer in any region, stated by Broadcom; eligibility rules are not published	Not stated by Broadcom; the distributor sells it on a one-year term	Not stated in the publication
vSphere Standard 8 or Enterprise Plus 8, EEA	Customers in countries in the European Economic Area	31 October 2027	Extended Support included until the earlier of the subscription end date or 31 October 2028
vSphere Standard 8 or Enterprise Plus 8, outside the EEA	Not stated: no equivalent calendar is published	Not stated	Not stated

Source: VMware Cloud Foundation blog, 4 November 2026, for the Express scope and the EEA calendar; TD SYNNEX, VMware Marketplace Offer: vSphere Express, November 2026, for the one-year term and the package price.

Who carries the risk: the estate that signed past the calendar

Migration money is committed before a supplier reverses course, and two cases in the record were funded during the withdrawal. Tesco is hiring a Head of Software Engineering for its Edge Platform to carry out the move away from VMware to Proxmox for the systems that run inside its stores, a listing reported on 27 October 2026. Australia's Department of Defence was reported on 30 October 2026, from sources with knowledge of the situation, to have "been mandated to get off VMware, essentially" ahead of a $178 million licence renewal whose cost was to double, with sovereignty cited as well as cost; a Defence spokesperson declined to comment. Neither report is first-party. What changed on 4 November is that staying has a price and a term again.

Nutanix’s filing holds both halves of the demand case. Its Form 10-K for the year ended 31 July 2026 states that Broadcom’s changes “have led many VMware customers to evaluate, adopt or consider alternatives to VMware's virtualization and cloud infrastructure solutions”, and then that “a variety of factors could adversely affect our ability to convert these opportunities”. The vendor selling against VMware tells its shareholders that the pipeline is real and the conversion is not certain.

Broadcom’s own filing shows where the risk sits and why the concession is affordable. The Form 10-Q for the quarter ended 2 August 2026 states: “As of the fiscal quarter ended August 2, 2026, we no longer have termination for convenience provisions for the majority of new software contracts.” It attributes infrastructure software growth to VCF demand “including additional license revenue recognized on contracts where customers do not have the right to terminate”. Put those sentences beside the launch and the shape is arithmetic: the base that cannot leave is booked at Broadcom’s rate, and the part that could still leave is the estate under 128 cores.

Broadcom keeps the margin and the buyer keeps a year

Broadcom gains the tail of a base that returns 83.7 cents of operating income on the dollar. Infrastructure software revenue was $8,752m in the quarter against $6,786m a year earlier, up 29% as the filing prints it, and segment operating income was $7,325m, which is 45.9% of Broadcom’s $15,955m total operating income on 29.6% of its $29,591m revenue. A margin at that level is why a fixed package at $9,600 can be offered at the bottom without moving the price at the top.

Express is not aimed at the base Broadcom already holds. Shenoy put VCF 9 at 2,600 customers running more than 24 million allocated cores as of September, an average a little over 9,200 cores and 72 times the new package’s ceiling. It is built on vSphere 9, so a small estate that takes it moves a release forward without moving vendor, and it stops where the enterprise bundle begins.

The losers are specific. Proxmox, Nutanix and the integrators who scoped the migrations lose an exhibit, because the argument that VMware no longer wants your estate has been partly withdrawn by the vendor. The smallest estates lose on arithmetic, paying the flat package price for cores they do not run. And an enterprise that has already funded a migration now compares itself against a product that exists again, on a one-year term with no month-thirteen price in print.

> *“The smaller you are, the more unused capacity you’re buying.”*
>
> Nick Watson, chief technologist, C4C Group, in TechTarget, 4 November 2026

Watson’s reading is the one to carry into the renewal meeting. He wrote in TechTarget that Express exists because “customers looked at VCF, did the sums and started packing”, and that this was “Broadcom putting a door back on the building”. Broadcom’s own account of the gap is the admission to keep: “We started listening to a lot of our lower-end customers who didn’t really want the VVF but wanted the core virtualization capability, and [vSphere Express is] really meant for that market”, Shenoy said, per SDxCentral. That describes a customer who was leaving, not one who was upgrading. How long the door stays open is a calendar question: to 31 October 2027 for the version 8 SKUs in the EEA, and to the end of a one-year term everywhere for the package.

What each seat owes before 31 October 2027

Five seats, five artefacts, one date that is the supplier's own

Seat	Decision to take	By when	Why this one, from this record
CIO, with procurement	Put the package price in writing at your own core count and at the 128-core ceiling, and set it against the approved migration case	Before the renewal is signed and no later than 31 October 2027	The only published price is a distributor's one-year package, so a case built on the low end being closed now has a comparison
General Counsel, with procurement	Establish which contracting entity sits in the EEA, and whether the renewal can run through it	31 October 2027, the last day the two version 8 SKUs may be sold there	The EEA sentence is the only term in the announcement that carries both a date and a jurisdiction
CFO	Re-forecast the FY27 virtualization line with Express as a one-year item, the three Advanced Services as separate lines, and the month-thirteen price required in writing	At the renewal, before 31 October 2027	Broadcom prices none of it, the distributor states a one-year term, and no document in this record says what the renewal costs
CIO and CISO	Count billable cores and decide whether an estate under 128 cores stays as discrete instances or consolidates, then price the operating model that follows	31 October 2027	The package stops at 128 cores and the instances cannot be managed centrally, so it changes how the estate is run, not only what it costs
CEO	Decide whether the FY27 renewal commits beyond 31 October 2027 before it is signed	Before signature and no later than 31 October 2027	The majority of new software contracts no longer carry termination for convenience, so a term signed now outlives the calendar that prompted it

Source: Dates are the supplier's: 31 October 2027 is the last day vSphere Standard 8 and Enterprise Plus 8 may be sold in the EEA under the VMware Cloud Foundation blog of 4 November 2026, and the one-year term is TD SYNNEX's listing of VCF-VSP-EXP. Seats, artefacts and the reasoning in the last column are Mosaic Singularity analysis, November 2026.

One decision sits above the five. Before the FY27 renewal is signed, and in any case no later than 31 October 2027, the CEO decides whether this estate is staying, moving or bridging, because the term, the contracting entity and the three Advanced Services all become commitments when the signature lands, and the majority of Broadcom's new software contracts no longer let a customer leave for convenience.

The questions a board should put to management

- Which of our contracting entities sits inside the EEA, and does the renewal we are about to sign run through it?
- How many billable cores does the estate carry, and what does the 128-core package cost us at that number rather than at the ceiling?
- What did the migration case assume about standalone vSphere being available, and does it survive a one-year package?
- Which of the three Advanced Services have already been quoted into the renewal, at what price, and on whose authority?
- Does the renewal carry termination for convenience, and how far past 31 October 2027 does it run?

What to watch, and when this reading fails

The price is the first thing to test and it is testable. If any distributor republishes the package with a price that falls below 128 cores before 31 December 2026, the flat reading fails and the arithmetic here goes with it.

The second is eligibility. Broadcom publishes no eligibility rule, and reseller briefings describe the package as open to customers new to VMware, or absent for three years, with existing customers needing Broadcom's authorisation and an order open to rejection afterwards. If Broadcom publishes rules before 31 October 2027 that admit existing customers as a class, the package is a product rather than a gate.

The third is the map. If Broadcom extends the EEA calendar to another region before 31 October 2027, the term was a staged withdrawal and the jurisdiction reading falls with it.

Two filings report in between. Broadcom's next Form 10-Q shows whether the segment margin holds while Express is on sale: a flat 83.7% is the price holding, and a fall says the discount is being paid for. Nutanix's next Form 10-K shows whether the opportunity it describes converts.

The documents this rests on

- Broadcom, VMware Cloud Foundation blog, Broadcom Updates VMware Portfolio to Protect and Accelerate Private AI Cloud Deployments, 4 November 2026.
- TD SYNNEX, VMware Marketplace Offer: vSphere Express, published November 2026.
- Broadcom, Form 10-Q for the quarter ended 2 August 2026, signed 9 September 2026.
- Nutanix, Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended 31 July 2026.
- Broadcom, investor release introducing VMware HyperArmor, 13 October 2026.
- The Register, on the EU General Court ruling in CISPE's action against the Commission's approval, 3 November 2026.
- Ars Technica and TechTarget, on the vSphere Express briefing, both 4 November 2026.
- iTnews, on the Department of Defence mandate, 30 October 2026; itsfoss, on the Tesco listing, 27 October 2026.