



Avaya Aura™ Session Manager Overview

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Chapter 1: Overview

What is Session Manager?

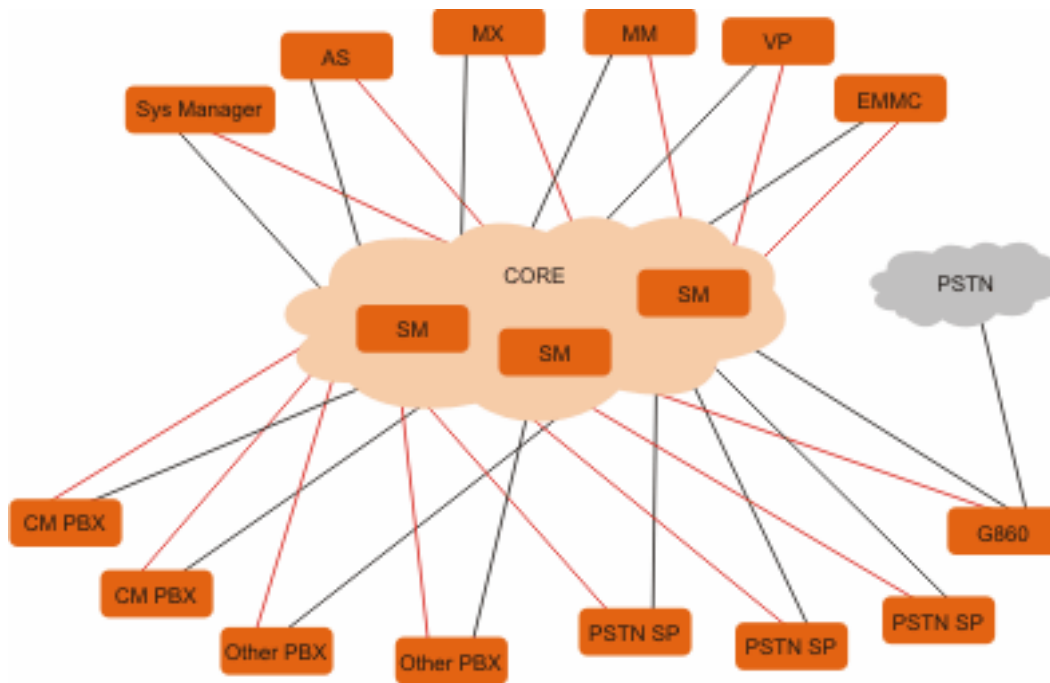
Companies typically have a diverse set of communications products within their corporate intranet that cannot communicate with each other. A standard signaling protocol is needed so these diverse products can work together. Avaya has adopted the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) as that signaling protocol for communication.

Session Manager is a SIP routing and integration tool and the core component within the Avaya Aura™ Enterprise Edition solution. It integrates all the SIP entities across the entire enterprise network within a company. Session Manager offers a new perspective on enterprise communication where individual locations are no longer managed as separate units within the enterprise. Each location, branch, or application is part of the overall enterprise, managed as an enterprise, and seen as an enterprise.

Session Manager offers a simplified network-wide feature deployment, centralized routing, cost-effective scalability (from small to very large deployments), high availability with geographic redundancy, and a secure environment that conforms to specific SIP standards and practices.

What does Session Manager do?

Session Manager offers a core communication service that builds on existing equipment but adds a SIP-based architecture.



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Session Manager connects both Avaya enterprise PBX and small key PBX systems within branch offices, third-party PBXs, gateways, service providers, and SIP-enabled adjuncts. It also integrates locations and applications. Specifically, Session Manager

- Normalizes disparate networks
- Routes SIP sessions across the network
- Provides the gateway for the enterprise for external SIP trunking
- Scales to support up to 25,000 SIP entities
- Is highly available with redundancy across different geographic regions
- Offers centralized management through System Manager.

Each Session Manager installation combines several or all of the following configurations:

- Centralized routing and dial plan
- Policy-based routing
 - Time of day routing
 - Alternate routing
 - Load balancing
 - Call admission control
- Tail end hop off (TEHO)
- Centralized SIP trunking
- Centralized applications

Normalization of disparate networks

Session Manager normalizes and adapts disparate SIP protocols to meet the strict SIP standards of the network. This allows third party PBXs to work with each other and with Avaya equipment, allowing customers to realize true vendor interoperability.

An example is the ability to connect Cisco and Nortel PBXs with Session Manager so they operate with each other and with Avaya equipment. Session Manager converts the headers in the SIP messages that are used to display calling and called-party information between the format required by each switch in a call.

Centralized routing and dial plan

Session Manager provides the centralized, global dial plan for an enterprise and access to external SIP trunking. The dial plan is managed through a centralized management console and governs PBXs that connect using SIP to one or more Session Manager instances. For example, an enterprise might have two instances of Session Manager in two different data centers with two different SIP trunking service providers.

Dual dial plan

Within Session Manager, dial plans are administered without requiring the various PBXs to change their dial plans or digit manipulations. Session Manager also does not require that the PBXs send or accept numbers that are unique across the enterprise, sometimes called the enterprise canonical form. This saves customers from having to re-administer or re-engineer each PBX.

Mixed, diverse enterprise

Many enterprises consist of several smaller dial plan domains that are a result of multiple mergers or acquisitions. Session Manager supports these enterprises and moves the administration of these various dial plans to the Session Manager core so that one single point of management is possible. This not only eliminates the need to administer and maintain these various dial plans in each PBX, but it allows the users in these locations to maintain the status quo and eliminates the need for users to change their dialing patterns.

Policy-based routing

With Session Manager customers can define their call routing policy. These policies allow customers to control when calls are made, how the call load is balanced, and how they are routed during network failures.

Least-cost routing, also called time-of-day routing, chooses the lowest cost route from a list of service providers on a time-of-day or time-of-week basis. This produces a cost savings for the enterprise. The routing table shows an example of setting up time-of-day routing.

Route #	Route Priority	D	Start Time 1	Host 1		Start Time 6	Host 6
1	1	Mon	0:00	Service Provider 1	○ ○ ○	20:00	Service Provider 2
				○			○
				○			○
	Sun	0:00	Service Provider 2	20:00		Service Provider 1	
	2	Mon	0:00	Service Provider 3		18:00	Service Provider 4
				○			○
				○			○
	Sun	0:00	Service Provider 4	18:00		Service Provider 3	
			○			○	
			○			○	
	6	Mon	0:00	Service Provider 5		14:00	Service Provider 6
				○			○
			○		○		
Sun	0:00	Service Provider 6	14:00	Service Provider 5			

Alternate routing routes calls around network failures on a global basis and uses global PSTN fallback when the internal network is unavailable.

Load balancing distributes calls to a SIP entity between multiple IP addresses. It is necessary for Avaya Voice Portal MPPs, Avaya Modular Messaging MASs, and SIP entities that are routed to more than one Session Manager to create redundancy. Load balancing uses priority and weights when selecting routes. Session Manager can be administered to choose between multiple IP addresses for a given entity and select these hosts based upon administered priorities and weights. If some entries have the same priority, then for each priority level, Session Manager picks a host according to the specified weights, with a lower weight receiving a higher priority.

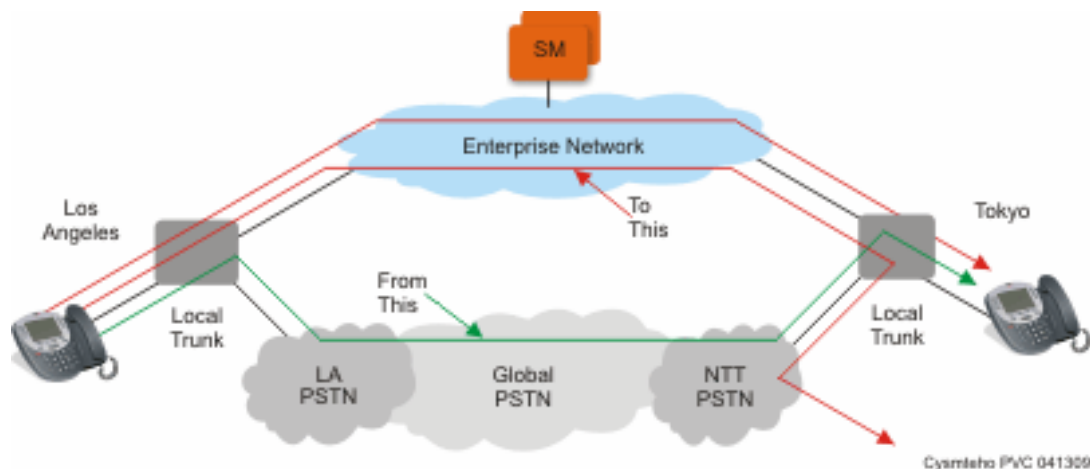
Call admission control allows calls to be rerouted when the WAN link to a branch fills up. Session Manager maintains the status of the link to each location, using administrator-set limits on each link.

Tail end hop off

Session Manager supports using the local trunks at each location to allow all users across the network enterprise to save toll charges for calls that go off the network. Outgoing calls are directed to local trunks on each location.

For example, calls from Tokyo to Los Angeles through a company's intranet are routed through the PSTN from the Los Angeles PBX, basically making it a "local" call from Los Angeles. And calls bound for Tokyo are routed through the Tokyo PBX. Local PBXs may not accept the full E.164 number, but Session Manager can change them to numbers that the PBXs can understand.

The figure provides a typical example of how tail end hop off works.



Centralized SIP trunking

Centralized SIP trunking allows SIP trunks to be shared within an enterprise. SIP trunks route calls from one PBX through a service provider over the network through a second service provider to another PBX. This requires each PBX to provide the SIP trunks. With Session Manager as the core, the individual PBXs share the SIP trunks. As a result, companies

- require fewer SIP trunks to provide the same level of service
- are able to buy SIP trunks in bulk
- eliminate local access costs, accessing the SIP trunking service provider directly.

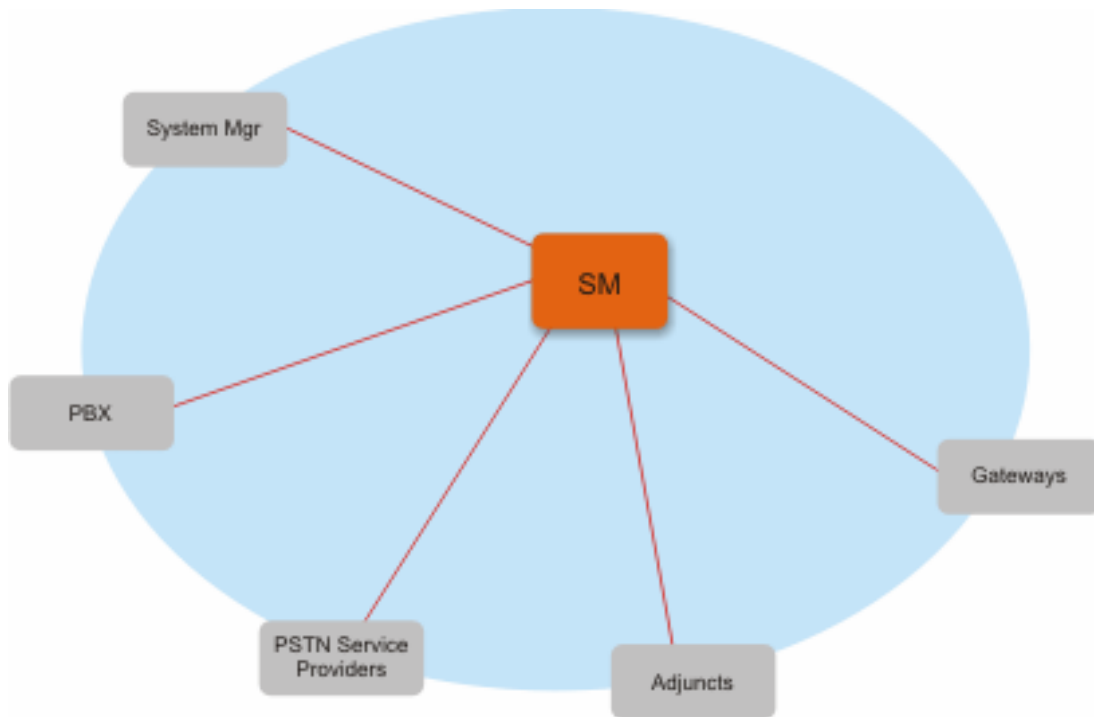
Centralized applications

Session Manager provides connectivity for centralized Avaya applications like Avaya Modular Messaging, Avaya Voice Portal, and Avaya Meeting Exchange. Each PBX, gateway, or location connects to Modular Messaging through the Session Manager core rather than individually. Session Manager also connects to SIP-enabled adjuncts, making the management and deployment of adjuncts infinitely simpler than the mesh-connect methods where each PBX connects to its own adjunct.

Session Manager architecture

Session Manager is the core of the network with SIP entities connecting to it. A grouping of Session Manager with System Manager and SIP entities is called a Session Manager instance.

The figure shows a typical Session Manager instance with multiple SIP entities.



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A *Session Manager instance* consists of one server supporting up to 25,000 SIP entities. An enterprise network can support up to 3 instances. These Session Manager instances can be installed in the same data center or in multiple data centers and in geographically redundant locations with virtually unlimited distance restrictions. All of the instances support mix and match.

A *SIP entity* is a logical element that either initiates requests, responds to requests, or both. Session Manager supports the following SIP entities:

- Private branch exchanges (PBXs)
- SIP gateways
- PSTN service providers
- SIP-enabled adjuncts

System Manager is the application used to manage Session Manager. It runs on a separate server, and only one is required for the entire network, not per instance.

SIP entities

Session Manager, Release 1.1, supports several PBXs, gateways, and other SIP entities and SIP-enabled adjuncts.

PBXs

A PBX serves a particular business or office, providing the telephone features to the employees. Session Manager connects both enterprise-wide and small key systems generally

used in branch offices. Session Manager connects to and acts as a system-wide dial plan for the following call processing applications:

- Avaya Aura™ Communication Manager 5.2 and later using direct SIP connections. Connections using SIP Enablement Services (SES) are not supported.
- SIP-enabled Cisco Unified CallManager, Release 7.X
- Nortel CS1000 SIP-enabled PBX, Release 4.5.

SIP gateways

SIP gateways work with the non-SIP service provider network. Session Manager works with SIP peer systems within the enterprise in the same way. These include non-Avaya SIP systems, SIP-enabled PBXs, and Communication Manager. Such SIP gateways are supported both for trunking services or line-side services. SIP gateways include trunk gateways, such as the Avaya G860 Trunk Gateway.

SIP PSTN service providers

Service providers are treated as SIP peer network elements, with which Session Manager maintains a trunking relationship. Foreign domain PBXs or SIP switching equipment are treated essentially the same as the SIP service providers, that is, as a SIP peer network element over a SIP trunk. Service providers supported include AT&T and Verizon.

SIP-enabled adjuncts

SIP-enabled adjuncts provide supplemental services to PBXs, such a voice mail and conferencing capabilities. Avaya products supported include Avaya Voice Portal on the latest firmware, Avaya Modular Messaging Release 5.1, and Avaya Meeting Exchange and Avaya Expanded Meet-me Conferencing Release 1.0.21.

Hardware

The Session Manager application is installed on an Avaya S8510 Server Family. For a list of components and specifications for this server, see the *Installing the Avaya S8510 Server Family and Its Components* (03–602918). The server used for Session Manager also includes

- a second quad core, 2-gigahertz processor
- 8 gigabytes of memory
- a second power supply to provide power redundancy
- an SM100 accelerator card installed in the middle slot on the back of the server.

The Avaya S8510 Server Family is shipped with all the required components and software applications installed. The server is connected to the customer's network and the System Manager server using customer-provided Category 5 (CAT5) Ethernet cables. Remote access is through the network only; modem access is not supported.

System Manager is installed on a customer-provided server. For the hardware requirements, see *Installing and Administering Avaya Aura™ Session Manager* (03–603324).

SM100

The SM100 is the security module that manages SIP connections between Session Manager and all other SIP elements. The SM100 module is a PCI-based Network Interface Card (NIC) installed in the Avaya S8510 Server Family. The SM100 has hardware security accelerators and multicore MIPS processors that perform security processing for Session Manager.

The SM100 supports connectivity using UDP and TCP in nonsecure deployments. External SIP elements connect to Session Manager through the SM100 card.

The SM100 module's primary functions are to offload most of the heavy security processing and provide a framework for Session Manager security, for example:

- The SM100 module terminates all the SIP TLS connections for Session Manager.
- It physically separates Session Manager from the voice network.
- It offers network and transport firewall and network denial-of-service protection.
- It offers SIP firewall and SIP denial-of-service protection.
- It uses PKI validation techniques to ensure that only trusted SIP elements can connect to Session Manager.

Secure Access Link

Secure Access Link (SAL) is a method to monitor the equipment and software. It is centralized and accessible through System Manager and has access to all the Session Manager equipment and software. SAL provides alarming and logging.

The major Session Manager components that are monitored include

- Server and all applicable components, including the SM100 card
- Operating system
- System Manager platform, including Network Routing Policy
- Session Manager solution.

High availability

Session Manager provides an opportunity for redundancy by supporting up to 3 Session Manager instances in an enterprise. The multiple Session Manager instances provide redundancy and are implemented in the same data center or in ones separated geographically, even around the world. No need exists for them to be on the same subnet.

Session Manager redundancy supports networks with round trip delays of less than 1 second.

Session Manager uses the active-active approach where two instances are simultaneously active, meaning any request goes to either instance and is served. Requests use either instance freely. This is an important concept for distributing traffic across the network.

Active-active redundancy requires that the Session Manager instances be interconnected over an IP network with sufficient bandwidth and low enough latency to synchronize runtime data.

Configuring more than one Session Manager in a network means that

- A failure of one of the Session Manager instances does not interrupt service. All calls that were stable before the failure remain stable with no discernible gaps in voice connectivity. New calls may be placed immediately after the failure with no more than 3 seconds of delay.
- A centralized enterprise-wide dial plan can be entered and managed using terminals logically connected to the server running System Manager.
- The centralized dial plan governs Avaya and third party PBXs (particularly Nortel and Cisco) and enables them to connect via SIP (either directly or via a SIP gateway) to one of the Session Manager instances.

Security

Session Manager is the SIP routing element between SIP entities. As the SIP router, all SIP sessions flow through Session Manager, allowing it to provide the following security capabilities to centralized SIP applications:

- TLS session connection termination for SIP trunks
- Network/transport firewall and denial of service (DoS) protection
- SIP DoS protection
- Access control to Avaya applications where only authenticated SIP elements are allowed access
- White listing and black listing of SIP elements.

System Manager

Central management of Session Manager is handled through the Avaya Aura™ System Manager application. System Manager delivers a set of shared, secure management services and a common console across multiple products. System Manager includes the following management services:

- **Network Routing Policy:** Allows for the single, central administration of routing policy for all Session Manager instances within an enterprise.
- **Alarm Management Service:** Supports alarm monitoring, acknowledgement, configuration, clearing and retiring.
- **Logging Service:** Receives log events formatted in the common log format.
- **Session Manager:** Provides miscellaneous functions for Session Manager, including administering instances, configuring SIP firewalls, monitoring SIP entities and the security module, and managing bandwidth usage.

A central database that resides on the System Manager server stores all the System Manager central data, the Session Manager administration data, and the Central Data Distribution Service information. The last item is used to detect changes to the System Manager central database and then distribute these changes to the Session Manager instances. All communications between System Manager and Session Manager instances is done over secure links.

Licensing

Session Manager requires a single license file. It is a one-time, nontransferable license and is based on the number of Session Manager instances. Licensing for Session Manager is downloadable from the Avaya Product Licensing and Delivery System Web site. License files for Session Manager run on the System Manager server.

Other documents

Session Manager comes with a complete set of documents. The following list provides the title and a brief description of all of the documents in the documentation set.

- *Installing the Avaya S8510 Server Family and Its Components* (03–602918) — Provides information and specifications on the Avaya S8510 Server Family and procedures for physically installing it in a rack.
- *Installing and Administering Avaya Aura™ Session Manager* (03–603324) — Provides information on installing and administering Session Manager, including System Manager.
- *Maintaining and Troubleshooting Avaya Aura™ Session Manager* (03–603325) — Provides information on maintaining and troubleshooting Session Manager, including logging and alarming.

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