

Optimizing Branch IT Services: Cisco Wide Area Application Services and Microsoft Windows Server 2008

Q. What is Cisco® Wide Area Application Services?

A. Cisco Wide Area Application Services (WAAS) is a powerful application acceleration and WAN optimization solution for the branch office that improves the performance of any TCP-based application operating in a WAN environment. Cisco WAAS enables organizations to deliver applications and services from data centers to remote sites over the WAN while helping ensure optimal remote user experience.

Q. What are Cisco and Microsoft announcing at Microsoft Launch Wave?

A. Microsoft and Cisco® are announcing that they intend to develop joint architectures that integrate Windows Server 2008 with Cisco WAN optimization for branch-office environments. Cisco will leverage a new virtualization component within the Cisco WAAS family of appliances that will enable customers to deploy Windows Server 2008 within their network infrastructures for branch offices.

The two companies intend for Cisco to offer Windows Server 2008 preinstalled on its new virtualized Cisco WAAS appliances that will be available later this year. To optimize the value of this solution for customers, the two companies plan to test and validate the resulting architectures for remote IT infrastructure in the branch office and to offer integrated customer support. In addition, Cisco and Microsoft plan to work together to promote the integrated solution among channel partners and customers by offering business frameworks and marketing promotions.

Q. What are the detailed elements of the solution?

A. The main features of the Microsoft and Cisco solution for remote IT infrastructure optimization include:

- **Embedded Windows Server 2008 services:** Cisco WAAS is being enhanced with an embedded virtualization component that will enable it to host Windows Server 2008 services on the WAAS platform, alongside existing WAN optimization services.

The resulting solution retains the local presence of Windows Server 2008 services while providing optimized performance for the centralized applications and services accelerated by Cisco WAAS.

The integrated platform combines WAN optimization services with Windows Server 2008 services such as Microsoft Active Directory, Domain Name System (DNS), Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP), and print services.

- **Flexible remote IT infrastructure architecture:** Cisco WAAS with Windows Server 2008 offers full flexibility for remote IT infrastructure. Selected applications and services can be centralized at the data center and effectively delivered over the WAN. At the same time, critical Windows services can be locally deployed at the remote office, without the need for additional hardware. This architecture will help customers optimize their branch IT infrastructure for delivery of centralized applications and services over the WAN as well as local availability of core Windows services.

- **Central management:** The Cisco WAAS platform is managed centrally using the Cisco WAAS Central Manager to enable shared management by network and application administrators. The Cisco WAAS Central Manager minimizes operational dependencies by providing comprehensive role-based management features. Windows services hosted on the Cisco WAAS platform are centrally managed using the Microsoft System Center management suite.
- **Simplified provisioning through prepackaged offering:** Customers can obtain this solution prepackaged as an integrated solution from Cisco, thereby simplifying the provisioning and deployment of this architecture.
- **Joint customer support program:** IT organizations can obtain support for the solution jointly from Microsoft and Cisco, with the two companies working together to resolve customer problems.

Q. What are the key IT benefits of the enhanced Cisco WAAS?

A. This new remote infrastructure optimization solution from Microsoft and Cisco helps organizations optimize the availability, agility, and cost of delivering remote IT services.

- **“LAN-like” application performance**
 - Near-LAN performance for centralized applications
 - Local, LAN access to Windows services hosted on the Cisco WAAS platform
 - Transparent and reliable optimizations of enterprise applications
- **Agility of remote services deployment**
 - Faster IT planning using Microsoft and Cisco remote infrastructure optimization architectures
 - Rapid, software-based enablement of Windows services to remote sites without truck-rolls
 - Simplified deployment using Cisco WAAS with prepackaged Windows Server 2008
- **Lowest total cost of ownership (TCO) solution**
 - Minimize remote office device footprint
 - Centralized management using Microsoft System Center and Cisco WAAS central management
 - Reliable operations with joint customer support from Microsoft and Cisco

Q. What are the business benefits offered by the enhanced solution?

A. The Microsoft and Cisco jointly enhanced WAN optimization solution improves business agility and continuance, while reducing the costs of providing information resources for enabling customer experience.

- Business agility enabled by faster deployment and delivery of business applications
- Improved employee productivity enabled by “LAN-like” application services
- Local information resources to provide optimal customer experience

Q. How do the new capabilities enhance the Cisco WAAS platform?**A.** The integrated Windows Server 2008 services enhance Cisco WAAS in three areas:

- Host critical local Windows services while accelerating centralized applications and services
- Support a wide variety of remote office IT requirements
- Enable flexible, scalable management using Microsoft System Center and Cisco WAAS

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