Microsoft Visio Stencils for Cisco Products: User's Guide and Q&A

What You Will Learn

This guide provides step-by-step instructions for downloading, installing, and using the Microsoft Visio stencils for Cisco® products.

Downloading Microsoft Visio Stencils for Cisco Products

To download Microsoft Visio stencils for Cisco products, follow these steps:

1. To download stencils, go to http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/hw/prod_cat_visios.html.
2. Select the stencils you want to use.
   - The stencils are listed in categories such as Routers, Security, Switches, etc., and the categories are listed alphabetically.
   - Stencils with posting dates in 2010 and later typically contain all chassis and module shapes. Some of the older stencils may require separate downloads of chassis and module stencils.
   - The file you download will be in .zip format. You can unzip it into any convenient directory. The folder that works best with Visio is My Shapes, located in the Documents Library in Microsoft Windows 7, or in the My Documents folder in Microsoft Windows XP. If you place the stencils in My Shapes, you can most easily access them from within Microsoft Visio as described in this document.

Opening Stencils

To open the stencils, follow these steps:

1. Do one of the following, depending on your version of Microsoft Visio:
   - Microsoft Visio 2007: From the menu bar, choose File > Shapes > My Shapes.
   - Microsoft Visio 2010/2013: In the stencil navigation window at the left, choose More Shapes > My Shapes.
2. Select the name of the stencil that you want to open.
3. To open multiple stencil files, instead of choosing My Shapes, choose Open Stencil; you can then select multiple files by holding the Ctrl key while clicking the names of several files.

Using Shapes

You can drag and drop any of the shapes from the stencil onto your drawing.

- If the shape is a chassis, you can drag and drop modules into the chassis.
- All modular chassis have Microsoft Visio glue points to allow you to snap modules into chassis'. Note that Microsoft Visio does **not** verify that you are placing a module in an appropriate slot. For example, it is possible (but not wise) to put a router module in a switch slot and a switch module in a router slot.
- Please be sure to validate your hardware configurations before documenting them using these stencils.

To use shape and icon features (for stencils posted 2010 and later), follow these steps:

1. Hover the mouse cursor over the icon on the stencil to see a description of the device.
2. Hover over the shape on the page to see a description of the device.
3. Right-click the shape on the page and choose from the menu:
   - Hide or show the text label.
   - Enable editing of the text label.
   - Open the shape data (Custom Properties) window to see the metadata.
   - Hyperlink to the Cisco website for additional information.
4. To reposition the text labels, drag the yellow control handle that appears when you hover over the shape.

Using Properties (Shape Data)

Microsoft Visio maintains a set of properties for each shape on your drawing.

- To see the properties, right-click an item and then choose Custom Properties.
- The old default set of properties for each shape supplied by Cisco consists of the part number, a short description, a long description, the service category, and comments.
- The newer default set of properties for shapes developed 2010 and later is much more extensive.
- Refer to the Microsoft Visio Help feature for instructions about how to add your own shape data fields.

Q&A

The list that follows is designed to answer your questions about the Microsoft Visio stencils provided by Cisco for Cisco products.

Q. I don't see the product family that I'm interested in. Where is it?

A. There may not be an existing stencil for the product you are interested in. If you believe that a stencil or a particular product should be included, you can post a request to the Cisco Support Community: Go to https://supportforums.cisco.com/index.jspa. Under Online Tools and Resources, choose Technical Documentation Ideas.

The appropriate product group will be informed of the request and asked to approve development of the Microsoft Visio graphics. However, we cannot guarantee that your request will be accepted by the product group or that the Microsoft Visio icon will be added.

Q. How can I learn what part numbers are found on a particular stencil?

A. Under documentation, download the Stencil Index and Table of Contents file. The Table of Contents tab includes a list of each .vss file and the part numbers contained in that .vss file.

Q. I can't find a part in the product family where I expect to find it. Where is it?

A. Check the Stencil Index and Table of Contents file. The Table of Contents tab lists each .vss file and the part numbers it contains.

Q. I know the part number I want, but I can't find it. How can I find the stencil for a particular part number?

A. Check the Stencil Index and Table of Contents file. The Index tab provides an alphabetical list by part number of all parts available. The name of the stencil in which that part number can be found is in the column adjacent to the part number.

Q. Some modules or line cards aren't oriented the way I want: for example, the Cisco 7600 Router has vertical slots, but the line card I want to insert is oriented horizontally. How do I fix this?

A. Click the Microsoft Visio Rotation tool and reorient the part to suit your needs.

Q. What version of Microsoft Visio do I need to use the stencils?

A. The Cisco product stencils are saved in Microsoft Visio 2002 format for compatibility with all versions through 2013.

Q. Who can use the Microsoft Visio stencils for Cisco products?

A. Cisco provides this set of stencils in the public domain. Anyone can use them free of charge.

Q. I'd prefer to select from a list of part numbers. How do I do this?

A. Right-click the stencil header and choose Names Only.

Q. Can I alphabetize this list?

A. Unfortunately, no; Microsoft Visio doesn't provide this capability. However, stencils posted 2010 and later are now alphabetized before posting.

Q. Where can I find additional information about how to optimize my use of the Microsoft Visio stencils for Cisco products and Microsoft Visio in general for network documentation drawings?

A. The Visimation website, http://www.ShapeSource.com, provides more information and tools to help with your network diagrams. You can contact Visimation directly at info@shapesource.com.