



CHAPTER 14

Configuring Virtual Blades

This chapter describes how to configure virtual blades, which are computer emulators that reside in a WAE or WAVE device. A virtual blade allows you to allocate WAE system resources for use by additional operating systems that you install on the WAE hardware. You can host third-party applications in the isolated environment provided by a virtual blade. For example, you could configure a virtual blade in a WAE device to run Windows printing and domain lookup services.

For detailed information on installing and configuring Windows on a virtual blade, see the [Cisco WAAS Installation and Configuration Guide for Windows on a Virtual Blade](#).

Virtual blades are supported only on certain models of WAE and WAVE devices. On unsupported WAE and WAVE devices, the virtual blade configuration screens are nonfunctional.



Note

Throughout this chapter, the term WAAS device is used to refer collectively to the WAAS Central Managers, WAEs, and WAVEs in your network. The terms WAE and WAVE refer to WAE appliances, WAVE appliances, and WAE Network Modules (the NME-WAE family of devices).

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About Virtual Blades

WAAS virtual blades act as computer emulators within your WAE or WAVE device. You can install an operating system and applications on the virtual blade to work with your WAAS system and provide additional services for the users on your network.



Note

WAAS virtual blades support only the Windows Server 2003 or Window Server 2008 operating systems, and the Active Directory, Print Services, DHCP, and DNS services. Although other operating systems and applications may operate on a virtual blade, the WAAS virtual blade does not support these other operating systems and applications.

Each virtual blade has its own virtualized CPUs, memory, firmware, disk drives, CD drives, and network interface cards. A virtual host bridge controls communications between the virtual blade, your WAE device, and the rest of your WAAS network.

**Note**

When you configure a virtual blade on your WAE or WAVE device, system resources are reserved for the virtual blade. These resources are not available to your WAAS system, even if the virtual blade is not active. This can affect the performance of your WAAS system.

With a virtual blade you can perform the following activities:

- Configure system characteristics of the virtual blade environment
- Install an operating system and applications
- Configure the network flow to and from the virtual blade
- Start and stop the virtual blade

Table 14-1 lists an overview of the steps required to set up and enable one or more virtual blades on your WAE.

Table 14-1 Virtual Blade Configuration Overview

Step	Description
1. Prepare your WAE for using virtual blades.	Locates your operating system image and enables the virtual blade feature on your WAE. See the “Preparing to Use Virtual Blades” section on page 14-2.
2. Configure the virtual blade system parameters.	Sets up system resources and interfaces for your virtual blade. See the “Configuring Virtual Blades” section on page 14-4.
3. Enable the virtual blade on your WAE.	Activates the virtual blade resources. See the “Enabling and Disabling Virtual Blades” section on page 14-7.
4. Transfer files to the virtual blade.	Copies files to the WAE hard drive for use by your virtual blade. See the “Copying a Disk Image to a Virtual Blade” section on page 14-8, and see the “Backing Up and Restoring a Virtual Blade” section on page 14-8.

Preparing to Use Virtual Blades

Before you configure and enable a virtual blade on your WAVE or WAE device, follow these steps:

Step 1 From the WAAS Central Manager GUI navigation pane, choose **My WAN > Manage Devices**.

Step 2 Click the **Edit** icon next to the WAE device that you want to configure.

**Note**

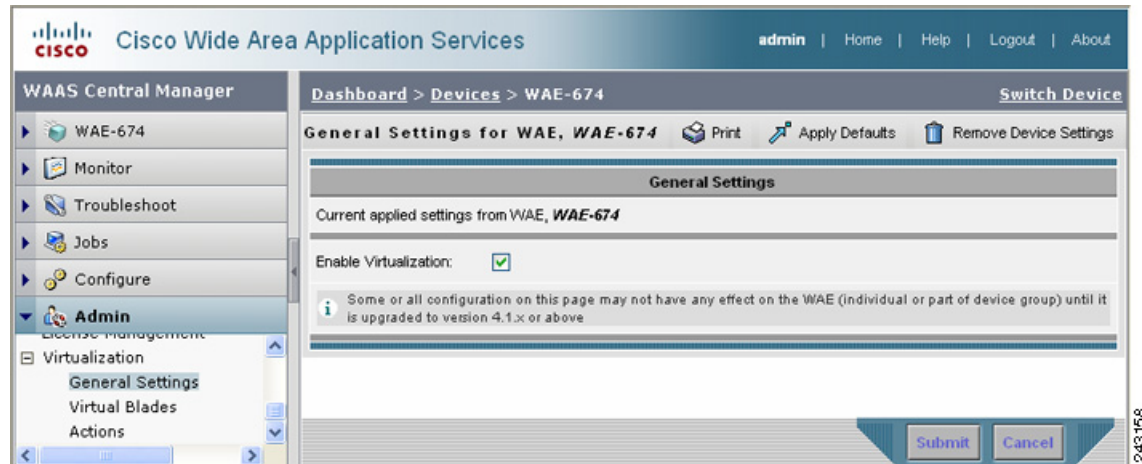
You can enable virtual blades only on application accelerator WAEs, not on Central Manager devices.



Note You can only configure virtual blades on individual WAAS devices. You cannot configure virtual blades on device groups.

Step 3 From the navigation pane, choose **Admin > Virtualization > General Settings**. The General Settings window appears (see [Figure 14-1](#)).

Figure 14-1 General Settings Window



Step 4 Check **Enable Virtualization** to enable virtualization.

Step 5 Click **Submit**.

You are prompted to confirm that you want to modify general settings. Doing so will reboot the WAE. After the reboot, the WAE will have a disk partition and other resources reserved for virtual blade use.



Note You will not be able to undo this change unless you restore the WAE from the rescue CD.



Note When you configure a virtual blade on your WAE device, system resources are reserved for the virtual blade. These resources are not available to your WAAS system, even if the virtual blade is not active. This can affect the performance of your WAAS system.

Step 6 Click **OK**. The WAE restarts.

Step 7 Locate the disk or image of the operating system that you want to run on the virtual blade. Make sure that you either have the CD-ROM available, or that you have copied the disk image to the WAE hard drive. See [“Backing Up and Restoring a Virtual Blade”](#) section on page 14-8.

To enable virtualization with the WAAS CLI, use the **virtual-blade** global configuration command.

Configuring Virtual Blades

This section describes how to configure a new virtual blade or edit an existing blade. You can configure resources such as virtual blade number, description, boot method, disk allocation, and other parameters. Note that after a virtual blade is initially configured, the only resource parameters that can be changed are memory and the bridged interface. To change these parameters on a virtual blade, stop the virtual blade first, then start the virtual blade after making changes.

To configure a virtual blade on your WAE or WAVE device, follow these steps:

- Step 1** From the WAAS Central Manager GUI navigation pane, choose **My WAN > Manage Devices**.
- Step 2** Click the **Edit** icon next to the WAE device that you want to configure.
- Step 3** From the navigation pane, choose **Admin > Virtualization > Virtual Blades**. The Virtual Blade Entries window appears (see [Figure 14-2](#)).

Figure 14-2 Virtual Blade Entries List window

The screenshot shows the Cisco Wide Area Application Services (WAAS) Central Manager GUI. The navigation pane on the left is expanded to 'Admin > Virtualization > Virtual Blades'. The main content area displays the 'Virtual Blade Entries for WAE, WAE-674' window. The window includes a 'Switch Device' button and 'Create', 'Refresh', and 'Print' icons. Below these is a table with the following data:

Blade Number	Description	Disk Space (GB)	Memory (MB)
1	2003 Server	10	512
2	2008 Server	20	1024

Any existing virtual blades are displayed in the Virtual Blade Entries list.

- Step 4** Click the **Edit** icon next to the virtual blade that you want to configure, or click the **Create** button to create a new virtual blade. The Virtual Blade configuration pane appears (see [Figure 14-3](#)).

Figure 14-3 Virtual Blade configuration pane

The screenshot shows the 'Virtual Blade' configuration pane in the Cisco Wide Area Application Services (WAAS) Central Manager. The interface is for device WAE-674. The configuration fields are as follows:

- Blade Number:** 1
- Description:** 2003 Server
- AutoStart:**
- Boot From:** cd-rom
- CD Image:** disk, /local1/vbs/wow.iso
- Floppy Image:** (empty)
- Disk Space:** 10 (1-1000) GB
- Memory:** 512 (512-8000) MB
- Disk Emulation:** IDE
- NIC Emulation:** rtl8139
- CPU Emulation:** qemu64

The **Virtual Interfaces** table is shown below:

Interface Name	Bridge Interface	MAC Address
1	GigabitEthernet 1/0	00:16:3E:54:B6:23

A note at the bottom states: "Some or all configuration on this page may not have any effect on the WAE (individual or part of device group) until it is upgraded to version 4.1.x or above." Buttons for 'Submit' and 'Cancel' are visible at the bottom right.

Step 5 Configure the virtual blade system parameters as needed to run your operating system and applications:

- a. If you are creating a new virtual blade, type the number of the virtual blade that you want to create in the Blade Number field.

The number of virtual blades you can configure depends on which model of WAAS appliance you are using, and the amount of memory installed in that appliance.
- b. (Optional) In the Description field, type a brief description of the virtual blade.
- c. (Optional) Check **Autostart** to set the virtual blade to start automatically whenever the WAE starts.
- d. Choose a source for the virtual blade to boot from using the Boot From list. Choose **cd-rom** to boot the virtual blade from a CD or a CD image, or choose **disk** to boot the virtual blade from an image located on the WAE hard drive.
- e. Specify the location of the boot disk image by doing one of the following:
 - If you set Boot From to **cd-rom**, choose the CD image using the CD Image list. Choose **cd-rom** to read the CD image from a physical CD in the WAE CD-ROM drive. Choose **disk** to read the CD image from an ISO file on the WAE hard drive. If you chose **disk**, type the ISO file's path (for example: /local1/vbs/windows_2003.iso).
- f. If you want to reserve resources for a virtual floppy disk on your virtual blade, enter the name of the floppy disk image in the Floppy Image field.
- g. In the Disk Space field, allocate the amount of WAE hard disk space, in Gigabytes, that you want allocated for the virtual blade.
- h. In the Memory field, allocate the amount of WAE memory, in Megabytes, that you want to make available for the virtual blade.

The amount of memory that can be allocated for a virtual blade depends on the amount of memory in your WAE or WAVE appliance, and on the amount of memory that is assigned to other virtual blades. The minimum amount of memory that you can allocate for a single virtual blade is 512 MB.

- i. In the Disk Emulation list choose the type of disk emulation that the virtual blade uses. Choose **IDE** or **virtio**.

IDE specifies an IDE (ATA) type disk emulator. **Virtio** specifies a generic disk controller emulator optimized for virtual machines. If you select the virtio emulator, you must have the paravirtualization (PV) drivers installed on your system.

- j. On the NIC Emulation list, choose the type of network interface card emulation the virtual blade uses. Choose **rtl8139** or **virtio**.

Rtl8139 specifies a Realtek network card emulator, and **virtio** specifies a generic NIC emulator optimized for virtual machines. If you select the virtio emulator, you must have the paravirtualization (PV) drivers installed on your system.

Step 6 Configure the interface bridge you want to use between the virtual blade and the physical interfaces on your WAE by doing the following:

- a. In the Virtual Interfaces pane, click **Add**. The Virtual Interface Add pane is displayed (see [Figure 14-4](#)).

Figure 14-4 Virtual Interfaces Add Display pane

Interface Name	Bridge Interface	MAC Address
1	GigabitEthernet 1/0	00:16:3E:54:B6:23

Add/Edit Interface

Interface Number: * 1 Bridge Interface: GigabitEthernet 1/0 MAC Address: 00:16:3E:54:B6:23

- b. In the **Interface Number** field Enter the virtual blade interface to be bridged. Valid values are 1 or 2.
- c. In the **Bridge Interface** list, choose the physical WAE interface that the virtual blade interface is bridged to. Choose either **GigabitEthernet** or **PortChannel**.
- d. In the MAC Address field, enter the MAC address of the bridged interface or click **Generate** to have WAAS generate the MAC address for you.
- e. Click **Add to List** to add the virtual interface to the virtual blade interface list.



Note To access the virtual blade console use the IP address of the bridge interface, with the virtual blade number specified as the port number (separated by a colon). For example if you bridged the GigabitEthernet 1/0 interface, and its IP address is 10.10.10.20, use **10.10.10.20:1** to get to the virtual blade 1 console.

Step 7 Choose the virtual interface by clicking its radio button on the display.

Step 8 Click **Submit**.

To configure virtual blades with the WAAS CLI, use the following commands:

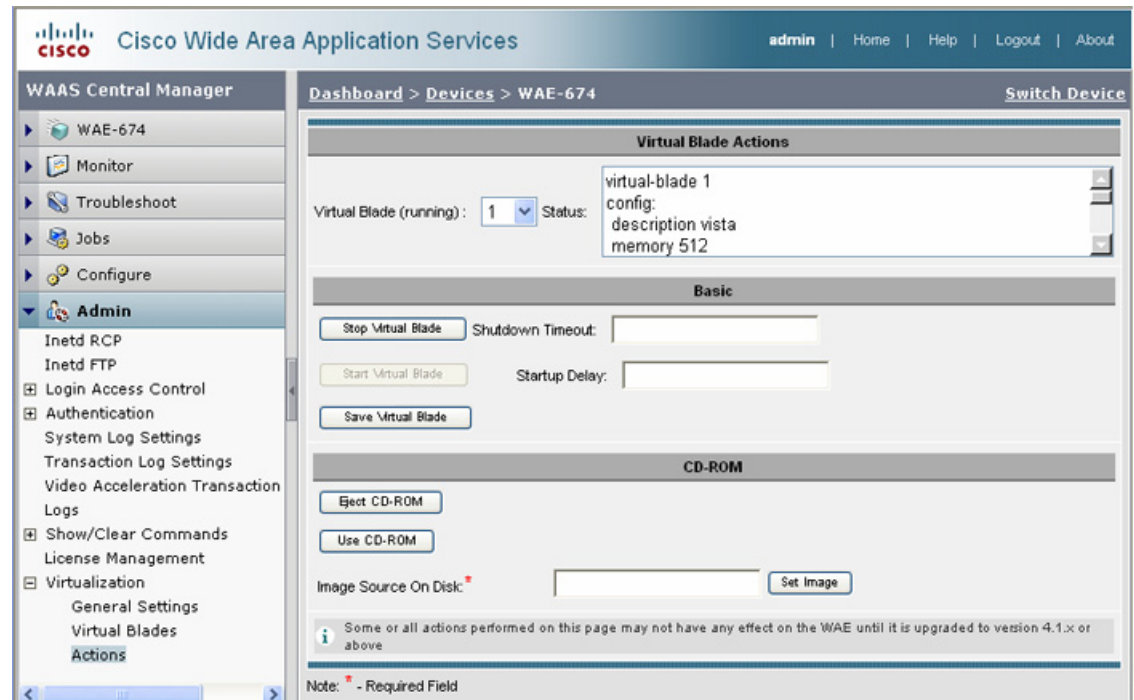
- **virtual-blade** (to enter virtual blade configuration mode)
- **(config-vb) autostart** to enable autostart
- **(config-vb) boot** to set the boot device
- **(config-vb) description** to enter a description for the virtual blade
- **(config-vb) device** to define the CPU, NIC, and disk emulators
- **(config-vb) disk** to allocate disk space for the virtual blade
- **(config-vb) interface** to bridge a virtual blade interface to an interface on your WAE
- **(config-vb) memory** to allocate system memory for the virtual blade

Enabling and Disabling Virtual Blades

To enable or disable a virtual blade on your WAE, follow these steps:

- Step 1** From the WAAS Central Manager GUI navigation pane, choose **My WAN > Manage Devices**.
- Step 2** Click the **Edit** icon next to the WAE device that you want to configure.
- Step 3** From the navigation pane, choose **Admin > Virtualization > Actions**. The Virtual Blade Actions window appears (see [Figure 14-5](#)).

Figure 14-5 Virtual Blade Actions Display window



- Step 4** In the Virtual Blade list, choose the virtual blade that you want to enable or disable. The status of the virtual blade is displayed in the Status field.

The default selection for the Virtual Blade list is All. When All is selected, the Status field displays the current status for all virtual blades.

Step 5 Click **Start Virtual Blade** to enable the selected virtual blade.

- (Optional) Enter a startup delay by typing a value, in seconds, in the **Startup Delay** field.

The startup delay can be used to give you time to connect a VNC session to the console before the virtual blade boots, so you can observe the initial startup.

Step 6 Click **Stop Virtual Blade** to disable the selected virtual blade.

- (Optional) To give the virtual blade operating system time to shut down the virtual blade after you click the Stop Virtual Blade button, enter a value (in seconds) in the Shutdown Timeout field.

The shutdown timeout provides a delay period during which the operating system can shutdown gracefully. If the operating system has not shut down the virtual blade by the end of this period, WAAS forces the shutdown. A forced shutdown is comparable to pulling the power cord on a real computer.

If you set the Shutdown Timeout to 0, the WAAS will force a shutdown immediately.

To avoid losing data in open programs running on the virtual blade, it is safer to have the operating system perform the shutdown.



Note

The operating system on your virtual blade does not shut down and restart when you reboot a WAAS device. When you reboot a WAE or WAVE device, the WAAS software saves the virtual blade in its current state and then restores that state when the reboot is complete.

To enable a virtual blade with the WAAS CLI, use the **virtual-blade n start EXEC** command. To disable a virtual blade use the **virtual-blade n stop EXEC** command.

Copying a Disk Image to a Virtual Blade

If you want to boot from a disk image stored on the WAAS device hard drive, you must copy that image file to the virtual blade directory. To copy the operating system ISO image to the virtual blade directory use the **copy ftp disk EXEC** command. For example, the following command copies the boot image `winserver.iso` from the WAAS directory on FTP server 10.10.10.200 to the virtual blade directory on the WAE device (`/local1/vbs/`):

```
wae# copy ftp disk 10.10.10.200 WAAS winserver.iso /local1/vbs/winserver.iso
```

Backing Up and Restoring a Virtual Blade

You can use the WAAS CLI to backup and restore a virtual blade's disk image. The disk image is the bootable operating system and applications that run on the virtual blade. For example, your virtual blade might have a disk image of Windows Server 2003 running Print Services.

**Note**

WAAS virtual blades support only the Windows Server 2003 or Window Server 2008 operating systems, and the Active Directory, Print Services, DHCP, and DNS services. Although other operating systems and applications may operate on a virtual blade, the WAAS virtual blade does not support these other operating systems and applications.

To back up the disk image of a virtual blade on your WAE to an FTP server, use the **copy virtual-blade EXEC** command. For example, the following command transfers the file file.img from disk 1 on virtual blade 1 to FTP server 10.75.16.234:

```
wae# copy virtual-blade 1 disk 1 ftp 10.75.16.234 / file.img
```

To transfer a disk image to a virtual blade on your WAE, use the **copy ftp virtual-blade EXEC** command. For example, the following command transfers the file file.img from the FTP server 10.75.16.234 to disk 1 on virtual blade 1:

```
wae# copy ftp virtual-blade 1 disk 1 10.75.16.234 / file.img
```

**Note**

The disk image file must reside in the /local1/vbs directory on the virtual blade.
