

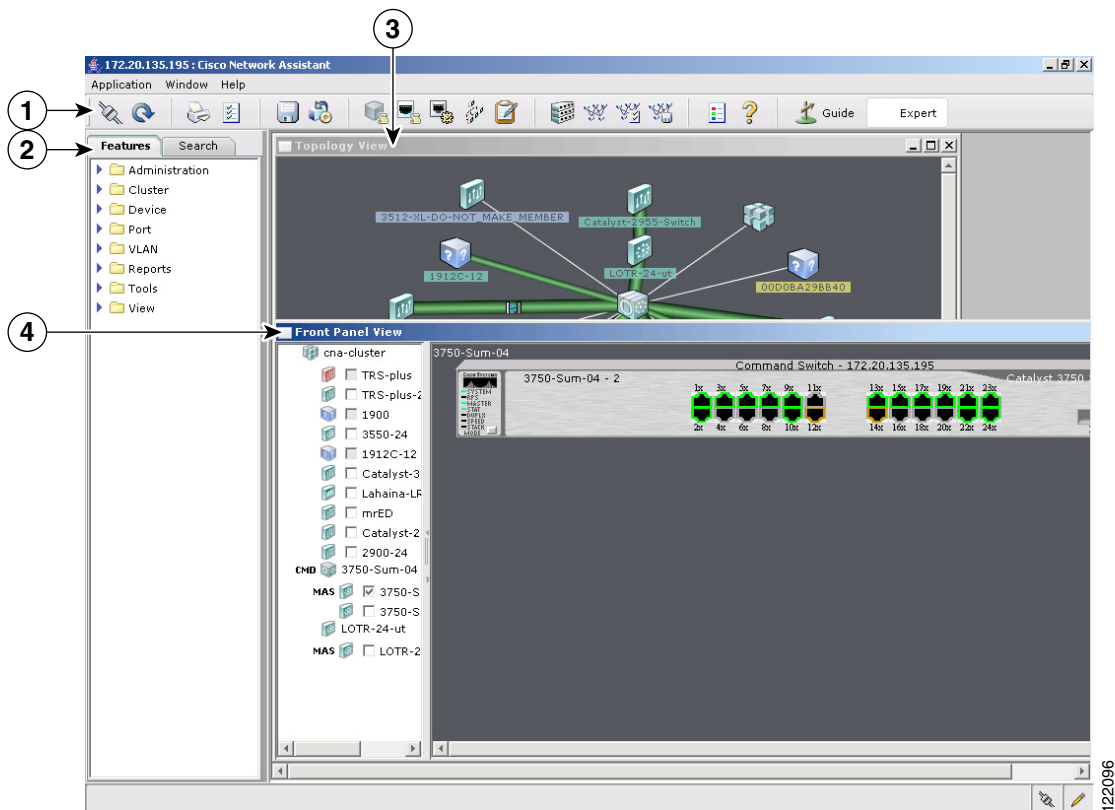


CHAPTER 2

Network Assistant Features

Network Assistant simplifies cluster management by offering an intuitive GUI, alternative modes for configuring network devices, two levels of access, and comprehensive online help. [Figure 2-1](#) shows the main features of the user interface.

Figure 2-1 Network Assistant GUI



1	Toolbar	3	Topology view
2	Feature bar	4	Front Panel view

The sections that follow describe the Network Assistant features.

Front Panel View

When Network Assistant connects to a device, you can display the Front Panel view by clicking the Front Panel icon on the toolbar or by choosing **View > Front Panel** from the feature bar. You see the front-panel image of the device. If the device commands a cluster, you also see the cluster members that were selected the last time the view was displayed.

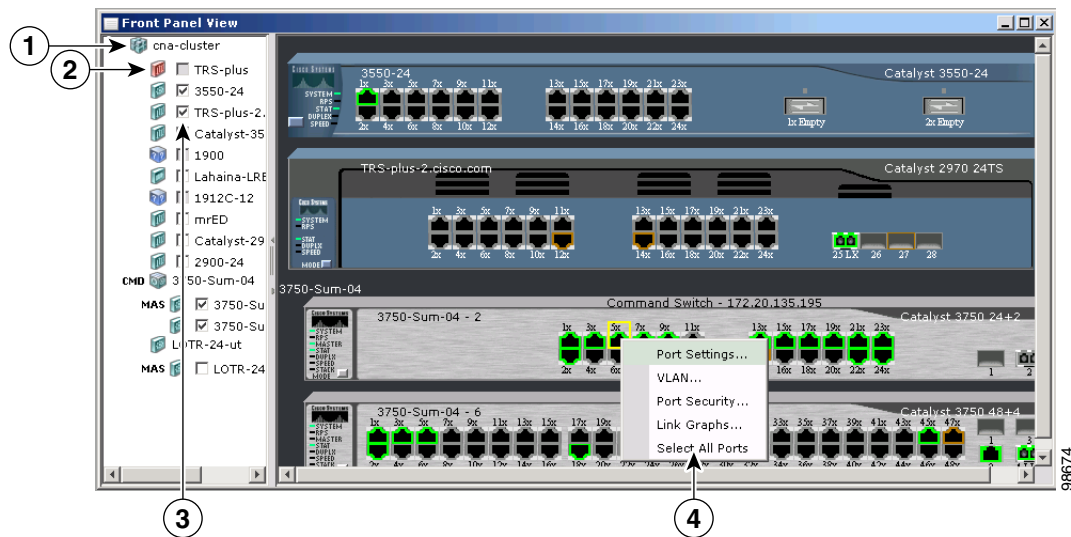
If Network Assistant connects to a device that does not command a cluster, the Front Panel view appears by default. You see only the front panel of that device.

By using the Front Panel view, you can

- Drag and re-arrange the devices that appear.
- Select and configure the devices.
- Right-click on a port and configure it.
- Select multiple ports, on the same device or on different devices, and configure the ports at the same time.

Figure 2-2 shows a cluster with a Catalyst 3750 switch as the command device.

Figure 2-2 Front Panel View and Port Popup Window



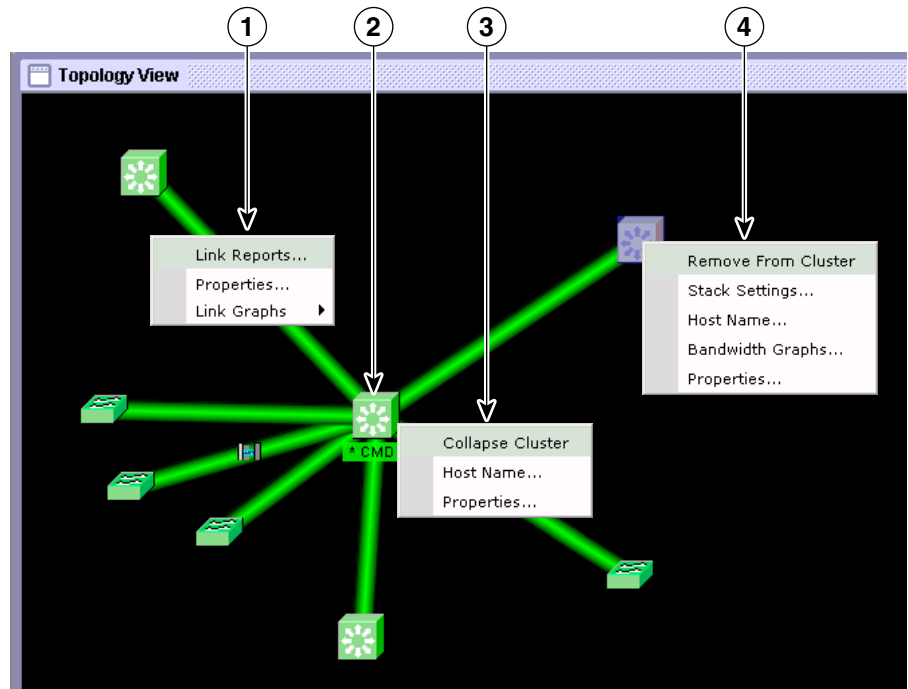
1	Cluster tree	3	Check boxes to show devices
2	Command device	4	Port settings popup window

Topology View

When Network Assistant connects to a device that commands a cluster, the Topology view appears by default. When Network Assistant connects to another device, you can see the Topology view by clicking the Topology view icon on the toolbar or by choosing **View > Topology**.

The Topology view displays a command device (shown by the **CMD** label) and the devices that are connected to it, as shown in Figure 2-3. When you right-click on a device or link icon, a popup window appears.

Figure 2-3 Topology View and Device Popup Windows



1	Link popup window	3	Command device popup window
2	Command device	4	Cluster member popup window

The Topology view shows how the devices within a device cluster are connected and how the cluster is connected to other clusters and devices. You can add and remove cluster members from this view.

You can see the network topology at two levels of detail:

- **Collapse Cluster**—When you right-click a command-device icon and select **Collapse Cluster**, the cluster collapses and is represented by a single icon. The view shows how the cluster connects to other clusters, candidate switches, and devices that are not eligible to join the cluster (such as routers, access points, IP phones, and so on).
- **Expand Cluster**—When you right-click a cluster icon and select **Expand Cluster**, the Topology view displays the cluster in detail. You see the command device, member devices, and candidate devices that can join the cluster. This view does not show the details of any neighboring clusters.

**Note**

The Topology view displays only the cluster and network neighborhood of the specific command or member device that you access. To display a different cluster, you must access the command device or a member device of that cluster.

Menu Bar, Toolbar, and Feature Bar

Configuration and monitoring options for configuring devices and device clusters are available from the menu bar, the toolbar, and the feature bar.

Menu Bar

The menu bar provides these options for managing Network Assistant, navigating among windows, and accessing online help:

- Application—Choose printing options, select interaction modes, set user preferences, search for and install Network Assistant updates, and show or hide the feature bar.
- Window—Navigate to Network Assistant windows that are open.
- Help—Launch the online help.

Toolbar

The toolbar has icons for commonly used device and cluster configuration options and for information windows like the legend and online help. [Table 2-1](#) lists the toolbar options from left to right on the toolbar.

Table 2-1 *Toolbar Icons*


















Toolbar Option	Icon	Task
Connect		Connect Network Assistant to a device.
Refresh		Update the views with the latest status.
Print		Print a Network Assistant window or help topic.
Preferences ¹		Set Network Assistant display properties, choose the views to open when Network Assistant is connected, and choose how often Network Assistant searches for new packages.
Save Configuration ^{2,3}		Save the configuration of the cluster or a device to flash memory.
Software Upgrade ^{2,4}		Upgrade the software for the cluster or a device.
Port Settings ^{1,4}		Display and configure port parameters on a device.
Smartports Device Macros ⁴		Display or configure Smartports macros on a device.
Smartports Port Macros ⁴		Display or configure Smartports macros on a port.
VLAN ¹		Display VLAN membership, assign ports to VLANs, and change the administration mode.

Table 2-1 Toolbar Icons (continued)

Toolbar Option	Icon	Task
Inventory ⁴		Display the device type, the software version, the IP address, and other information about a device.
Front Panel		Display the Front Panel view.
Topology		Display the Topology view.
Topology Options		Select the information to be displayed in the Topology view.
Save Topology Layout ²		Save your arrangement of the cluster icons in the Topology view to flash memory.
Legend		Display the legend, which describes the icons, labels, and links.
Help for Active Window		Display the help topic for the active, open window. You can also click Help from the active window or press the F1 key.

1. Not available in read-only mode. For more information about the read-only and read-write access modes, see the “[Privilege Levels](#)” section on page 2-8.
2. Some options from this menu option are not available in read-only mode.
3. The Catalyst 4500 series switch saves the configuration to the user’s PC, not to flash memory.
4. The Catalyst 4500 series switch does not support this option.

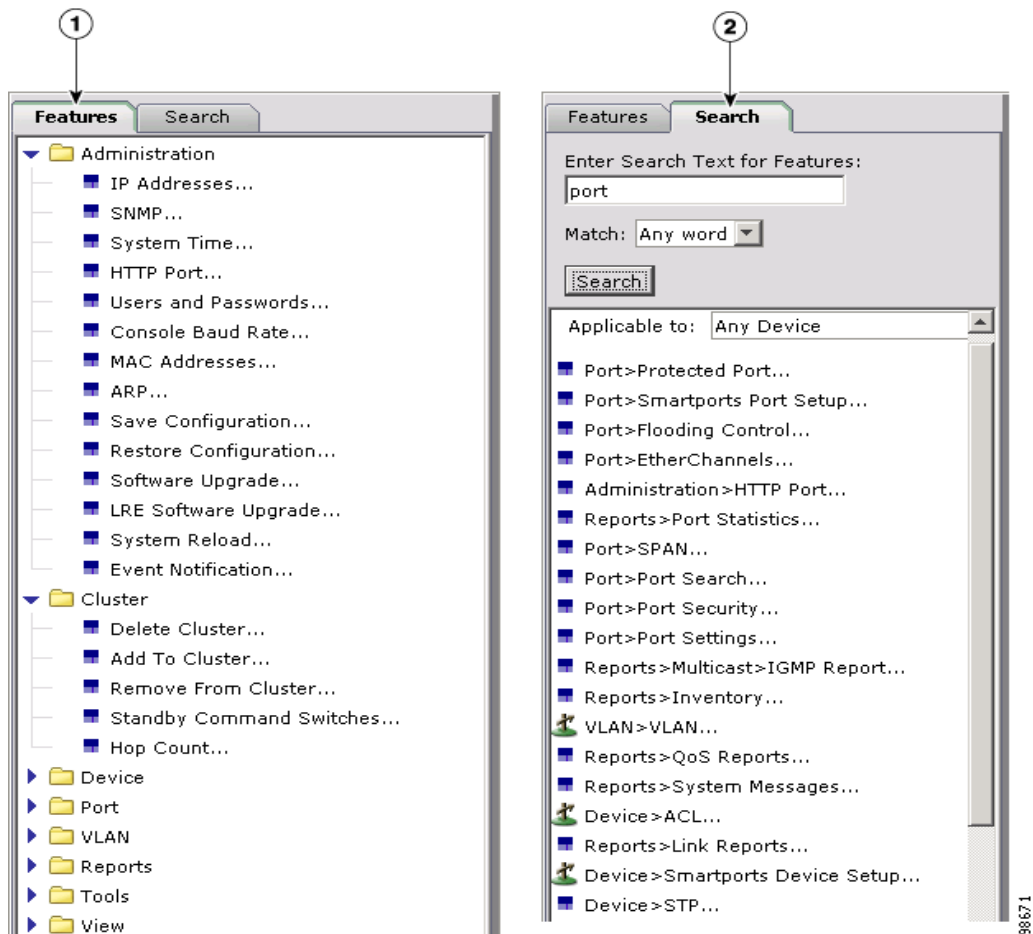
Feature Bar

The feature bar shows the networking features that are available for the devices in your cluster. By default, the feature bar is in standard mode. In this mode, the feature bar is always visible, and you can reduce or increase its width. In autohide mode, the feature bar appears only when you move the cursor to the left edge of the Network Assistant workspace.

- To see the feature bar in standard mode, click **Application > Feature Bar**, and select **Standard Mode**.
- To hide the feature bar, click **Application > Feature Bar**, and select **Autohide Mode**.

Figure 2-4 shows a feature bar for a sample cluster.

Figure 2-4 Feature Bar



1	Features tab	2	Search tab
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On the Features tab, the features are grouped under menus. When you click a menu item, the configuration window for the feature appears. On the Search tab, you can launch a configuration window by entering search text, clicking **Search**, and selecting from the search results.

Access modes affect the availability of features; some are not available in read-only mode. For more information about how access modes affect Network Assistant, see the [“Privilege Levels”](#) section on page 2-8.

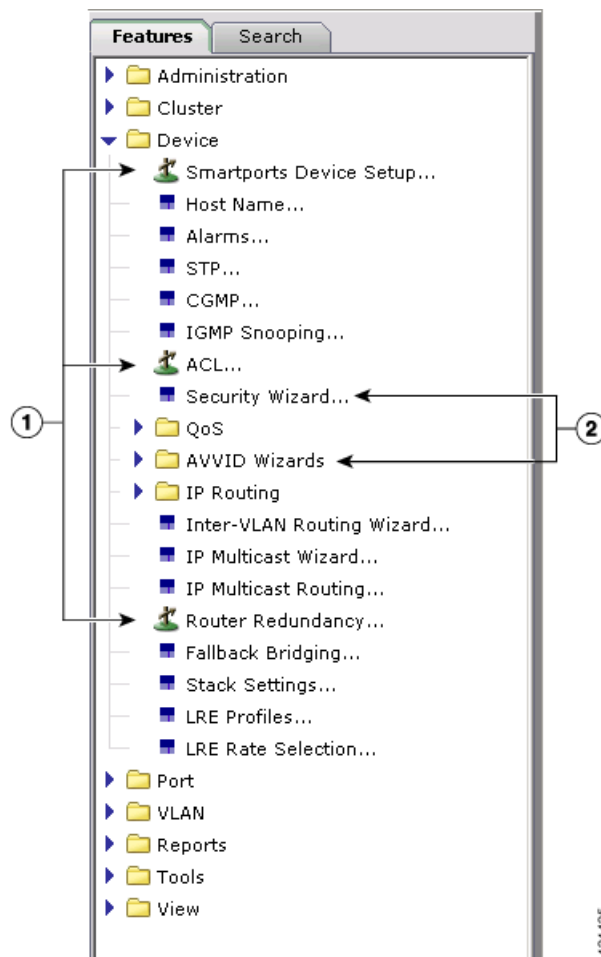
Interaction Modes

There are two modes for interacting with the Network Assistant GUI, guide mode and expert mode. Guide mode presents feature options one step at a time, with accompanying help information. Expert mode presents all the options for configuring a feature in a single window; to get help, you click **Help** in the window.

Guide Mode

Network Assistant is in guide mode by default. When you choose a feature on the feature bar with a signpost icon (see [Figure 2-5 on page 2-7](#)), you see a series of configuration steps—guide mode. If you choose a feature without this icon, you see a configuration window—expert mode.

Figure 2-5 Guide Mode and Wizards



1	Guide mode icon	2	Wizards
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Guide mode is not available if your switch access level is read-only. For more information about the read-only access mode, see the [“Privilege Levels”](#) section on page 2-8.

Expert Mode

If you prefer to see a configuration window for every feature, chose **Expert** in the **Application** menu, or click **Expert** on the toolbar. Even the features that are shown with a signpost on the feature bar will appear in expert mode. If you want to see guide mode again, choose **Guide** in the **Application** menu, or click **Guide** on the toolbar.

To launch a guide-mode feature in **Expert** mode, you must choose **Expert** *before* selecting the feature.

Wizards

Like guide mode, wizards provide a step-by-step approach for completing a specific configuration task. Unlike guide mode, a wizard does not prompt you to provide information for all of the feature options. Instead, it prompts you to provide minimal information and then uses the default settings of the remaining options to set up default configurations.

When you select a feature that has *Wizard* in its name, as shown in [Figure 2-5](#), the wizard launches.

Wizards are not available for read-only access levels. For more information about the read-only access mode, see the “[Privilege Levels](#)” section.

Privilege Levels

Network Assistant provides two types of access to configuration options: read-write and read-only. Your access type is determined by your privilege level, a number from 1 to 15. Privilege levels correspond to access types as follows:

- Level 15 provides read-write access.
- Levels 1 to 14 provide read-only access. Any options in the Network Assistant windows, feature bar, toolbar, and popup windows that change the device or cluster configuration are not shown for read-only access.

If your privilege level is not 15, you must specify it in the Connect window that appears when you launch Network Assistant. If you do not specify it, you are denied access to Network Assistant.

**Note**

You must have privilege level 15 to access Network Assistant through a TACACS+ or a RADIUS server.

Searches for New Packages

Network Assistant is made up of *packages*. They are components that support devices or features or correct defects. Network Assistant can search Cisco.com to see whether new packages are available. Take either of these actions to request a search:

- Choose **Application > Preferences**, and use the Preferences window to request an automatic search every week or every month.
- Choose **Application > Application Updates**. Network Assistant does an immediate search for new packages.

If a new package is found, you can install it through Network Assistant.

Online Help

Network Assistant provides comprehensive online help that explains configuration and monitoring tasks.

Sometimes the information in a help topic differs for different cluster devices. In these cases, the right pane of the Help window contains all the versions of the topic, each labeled with the host names of the cluster devices it applies to.

Online help includes these features:

- Conceptual help that gives background information on networking features
- Window help that gives procedures for performing tasks
- An index of online help topics
- A glossary of terms used in the online help

You can send us feedback about the online help. Click **Feedback** on the Help window to display an online form. After completing the form, click **Submit** to send your comments to Cisco Systems Inc. We appreciate and value your comments.

