Configuring Source Specific Multicast

This module describes how to configure Source Specific Multicast (SSM). The Source Specific Multicast feature is an extension of IP multicast where datagram traffic is forwarded to receivers from only those multicast sources to which the receivers have explicitly joined. For multicast groups configured for SSM, only source-specific multicast distribution trees (no shared trees) are created.

Restrictions for Source Specific Multicast

Legacy Applications Within the SSM Range Restrictions

Existing applications in a network predating SSM will not work within the SSM range unless they are modified to support (S, G) channel subscriptions. Therefore, enabling SSM in a network may cause problems for existing applications if they use addresses within the designated SSM range.

IGMP v3lite Requires a Cisco Last Hop Router

SSM and IGMPv3 are solutions that are being standardized in the IETF. However, IGMP v3lite is a Cisco-developed solutions. For IGMP v3lite to operate properly for a host, the last hop router toward that host must be a Cisco router with IGMP v3lite enabled.

Note This limitation does not apply to an application using the HSIL if the host has kernel support for IGMPv3, because then the HSIL will use the kernel IGMPv3 instead of IGMP v3lite.

Address Management Restrictions

Address management is still necessary to some degree when SSM is used with Layer 2 switching mechanisms. If different receivers in a switched network request different (S, G) channels sharing the same group, then they will not benefit from these existing mechanisms. Instead, both receivers will receive all (S, G) channel traffic (and filter out the unwanted traffic on input). Because of the ability of SSM to reuse the group addresses in the SSM range for many independent applications, this situation can lead to less than expected traffic filtering in a switched network. For this reason it is important to follow the recommendations set forth in the IETF drafts for SSM to use random IP addresses out of the SSM range for an application to minimize the chance for reuse of a single address within the SSM range between different applications. For example, an application service providing a set of television channels should, even with SSM, use a different group for each television (S, G) channel. This setup will guarantee that multiple receivers to different channels within the same application service will never experience traffic aliasing in networks that include Layer 2 switches.

IGMP Snooping Limitations

IGMPv3 uses new membership report messages that may not be recognized correctly by older IGMP Snooping switches, in which case hosts will not properly receive traffic. This situation is not an issue if IGMP v3lite is used with hosts where the operating system is not upgraded for IGMPv3, because IGMP v3lite relies only on IGMPv1 or IGMPv2 membership reports.

State Maintenance Limitations

In PIM-SSM, the last hop router will continue to periodically send (S, G) join messages if appropriate (S, G) subscriptions are on the interfaces. Therefore, as long as receivers send (S, G) subscriptions, the shortest path tree (SPT) state from the receivers to the source will be maintained, even if the source is not sending traffic for longer periods of time (or even never).

This case is opposite to PIM-SM, where (S, G) state is maintained only if the source is sending traffic and receivers are joining the group. If a source stops sending traffic for more than 3 minutes in PIM-SM, the (S, G) state will be deleted and only reestablished after packets from the source arrive again through the RPT. Because no mechanism in PIM-SSM notifies a receiver that a source is active, the network must maintain the (S, G) state in PIM-SSM as long as receivers are requesting receipt of that channel.

Information About Source Specific Multicast

SSM Overview

Source Specific Multicast (SSM). SSM is an extension of IP multicast where datagram traffic is forwarded to receivers from only those multicast sources that the receivers have explicitly joined. For multicast groups configured for SSM, only source-specific multicast distribution trees (not shared trees) are created.

SSM Components

SSM is a datagram delivery model that best supports one-to-many applications, also known as broadcast applications.

SSM is a core networking technology for Cisco's implementation of IP multicast solutions targeted for audio and video broadcast application environments and is described in RFC 3569. The following components together support the implementation of SSM:

- Protocol Independent Multicast source-specific mode (PIM-SSM)
- Internet Group Management Protocol Version 3 (IGMPv3)

Protocol Independent Multicast (PIM) SSM, or PIM-SSM, is the routing protocol that supports the implementation of SSM and is derived from PIM sparse mode (PIM-SM). IGMP is the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) standards track protocol used for hosts to signal multicast group membership to routers.

IGMP Version 3 supports source filtering, which is required for SSM. IGMP For SSM to run with IGMPv3, SSM must be supported in the router, the host where the application is running, and the application itself.

How SSM Differs from Internet Standard Multicast

The standard IP multicast infrastructure in the Internet and many enterprise intranets is based on the PIM-SM protocol and Multicast Source Discovery Protocol (MSDP). These protocols have proved to be reliable, extensive, and efficient. However, they are bound to the complexity and functionality limitations of the Internet Standard Multicast (ISM) service model. For example, with ISM, the network must maintain knowledge about which hosts in the network are actively sending multicast traffic. With SSM, this information is provided by receivers through the source addresses relayed to the last-hop devices by IGMPv3. SSM is an incremental response to the issues associated with ISM and is intended to coexist in the network with the protocols developed for ISM. In general, SSM provides IP multicast service for applications that utilize SSM.

ISM service is described in RFC 1112. This service consists of the delivery of IP datagrams from any source to a group of receivers called the multicast host group. The datagram traffic for the multicast host group consists of datagrams with an arbitrary IP unicast source address S and the multicast group address G as the IP destination address. Systems will receive this traffic by becoming members of the host group. Membership in a host group simply requires signaling the host group through IGMP Version 1, 2, or 3.

In SSM, delivery of datagrams is based on (S, G) channels. Traffic for one (S, G) channel consists of datagrams with an IP unicast source address S and the multicast group address G as the IP destination address. Systems will receive this traffic by becoming members of the (S, G) channel. In both SSM and ISM, no signaling is required to become a source. However, in SSM, receivers must subscribe or unsubscribe to (S, G) channels to receive or not receive traffic from specific sources. In other words, receivers can receive traffic only from (S, G) channels to which they are subscribed, whereas in ISM, receivers need not know the IP addresses of sources from which they receive their traffic. The proposed standard approach for channel subscription signaling utilizes IGMP INCLUDE mode membership reports, which are supported only in IGMP Version 3.

SSM can coexist with the ISM service by applying the SSM delivery model to a configured subset of the IP multicast group address range. The Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) has reserved the address range from 232.0.0.0 through 232.255.255.255 for SSM applications and protocols. The software allows SSM configuration for an arbitrary subset of the IP multicast address range from 224.0.0.0 through 239.255.255.255. When an SSM range is defined, an existing IP multicast receiver application will not receive any traffic when it tries to use addresses in the SSM range unless the application is modified to use explicit (S, G) channel subscription.

SSM Operations

An established network in which IP multicast service is based on PIM-SM can support SSM services. SSM can also be deployed alone in a network without the full range of protocols that are required for interdomain PIM-SM. That is, SSM does not require an RP, so there is no need for an RP mechanism such as Auto-RP, MSDP, or bootstrap router (BSR).

If SSM is deployed in a network that is already configured for PIM-SM, then only the last-hop routers must be upgraded to a software image that supports SSM. Routers that are not directly connected to receivers do not have to upgrade to a software image that supports SSM. In general, these non-last-hop routers must only run PIM-SM in the SSM range. They may need additional access control configuration to suppress MSDP signaling, registering, or PIM-SM shared-tree operations from occurring within the SSM range.

The SSM mode of operation is enabled by configuring the SSM range using the **ip pim ssm** global configuration command. This configuration has the following effects:

- For groups within the SSM range, (S, G) channel subscriptions are accepted through IGMPv3 INCLUDE mode membership reports.
- PIM operations within the SSM range of addresses change to PIM-SSM, a mode derived from PIM-SM. In this mode, only PIM (S, G) Join and Prune messages are generated by the router. Incoming messages related to rendezvous point tree (RPT) operations are ignored or rejected, and incoming PIM register messages are immediately answered with Register-Stop messages. PIM-SSM is backward-compatible with PIM-SM unless a router is a last-hop router. Therefore, routers that are not last-hop routers can run PIM-SM for SSM groups (for example, if they do not yet support SSM).
- For groups within the SSM range, no MSDP Source-Active (SA) messages within the SSM range will be accepted, generated, or forwarded.

IGMPv3 Host Signaling

IGMPv3 is the third version of the IETF standards track protocol in which hosts signal membership to last-hop routers of multicast groups. IGMPv3 introduces the ability for hosts to signal group membership that allows filtering capabilities with respect to sources. A host can signal either that it wants to receive traffic from all sources sending to a group except for some specific sources (a mode called EXCLUDE) or that it wants to receive traffic only from some specific sources sending to the group (a mode called INCLUDE).

IGMPv3 can operate with both ISM and SSM. In ISM, both EXCLUDE and INCLUDE mode reports are accepted by the last-hop router. In SSM, only INCLUDE mode reports are accepted by the last-hop router.

Benefits of Source Specific Multicast

IP Multicast Address Management Not Required

In the ISM service, applications must acquire a unique IP multicast group address because traffic distribution is based only on the IP multicast group address used. If two applications with different sources and receivers use the same IP multicast group address, then receivers of both applications will receive traffic from the senders of both applications. Even though the receivers, if programmed appropriately, can filter out the unwanted traffic, this situation would cause generally unacceptable levels of unwanted traffic.

Allocating a unique IP multicast group address for an application is still a problem. Most short-lived applications use mechanisms like Session Description Protocol (SDP) and Session Announcement Protocol (SAP) to get a random address, a solution that does not work well with a rising number of applications in the Internet. The best current solution for long-lived applications is described in RFC 2770, but this solution suffers from the restriction that each autonomous system is limited to only 255 usable IP multicast addresses.

In SSM, traffic from each source is forwarded between devices in the network independent of traffic from other sources. Thus different sources can reuse multicast group addresses in the SSM range.

Denial of Service Attacks from Unwanted Sources Inhibited

In SSM, multicast traffic from each individual source will be transported across the network only if it was requested (through IGMPv3 or IGMP v3lite memberships) from a receiver. In contrast, ISM forwards traffic from any active source sending to a multicast group to all receivers requesting that multicast group. In Internet broadcast applications, this ISM behavior is highly undesirable because it allows unwanted sources to easily disturb the actual Internet broadcast source by simply sending traffic to the same multicast group. This situation depletes bandwidth at the receiver side with unwanted traffic and thus disrupts the undisturbed reception of the Internet broadcast. In SSM, this type of denial of service (DoS) attack cannot be made by simply sending traffic to a multicast group.

Easy to Install and Manage

SSM is easy to install and provision in a network because it does not require the network to maintain which active sources are sending to multicast groups. This requirement exists in ISM (with IGMPv1, IGMPv2, or IGMPv3).

The current standard solutions for ISM service are PIM-SM and MSDP. Rendezvous point (RP) management in PIM-SM (including the necessity for Auto-RP or BSR) and MSDP is required only for the network to learn about active sources. This management is not necessary in SSM, which makes SSM easier than ISM to install and manage, and therefore easier than ISM to operationally scale in deployment. Another factor that contributes to the ease of installation of SSM is the fact that it can leverage preexisting PIM-SM networks and requires only the upgrade of last hop devices to support IGMPv3, or IGMP v3lite.

Ideal for Internet Broadcast Applications

The three benefits previously described make SSM ideal for Internet broadcast-style applications for the following reasons:

- The ability to provide Internet broadcast services through SSM without the need for unique IP multicast addresses allows content providers to easily offer their service (IP multicast address allocation has been a serious problem for content providers in the past).
- The prevention against DoS attacks is an important factor for Internet broadcast services because, with their exposure to a large number of receivers, they are the most common targets for such attacks.
- The ease of installation and operation of SSM makes it ideal for network operators, especially in those cases where content needs to be forwarded between multiple independent PIM domains (because there is no need to manage MSDP for SSM between PIM domains).

IGMP v3lite Host Signalling

IGMP v3lite is a Cisco-developed transitional solution for application developers to immediately start programming SSM applications. It allows you to write and run SSM applications on hosts that do not yet support IGMPv3 in their operating system kernel.

Applications must be compiled with the Host Side IGMP Library (HSIL) for IGMP v3lite. This software provides applications with a subset of the IGMPv3 applications programming interface (API) that is required to write SSM applications. HSIL was developed for Cisco by Talarian and is available from the following web page:

http://www.talarianmulticast.com/cgi-bin/igmpdownld

One part of the HSIL is a client library linked to the SSM application. It provides the SSM subset of the IGMPv3 API to the SSM application. If possible, the library checks whether the operating system kernel supports IGMPv3. If it does, then the API calls simply are passed through to the kernel. If the kernel does not support IGMPv3, then the library uses the IGMP v3lite mechanism.

When using the IGMP v3lite mechanism, the library tells the operating system kernel to join to the whole multicast group, because joining to the whole group is the only method for the application to receive traffic for that multicast group (if the operating system kernel only supports IGMPv1 or IGMPv2). In addition, the library signals the (S, G) channel subscriptions to an IGMP v3lite server process, which is also part of the HSIL. A server process is needed because multiple SSM applications may be on the same host. This server process will then send IGMP v3lite-specific (S, G) channel subscriptions to the last hop Cisco IOS router, which needs to be enabled for IGMP v3lite. This router will then “see” both the IGMPv1 or IGMPv2 group membership report from the operating system kernel and the (S, G) channel subscription from the HSIL daemon. If the router sees both of these messages, it will interpret them as an SSM (S, G) channel subscription and join to the channel through PIM-SSM. We recommend referring to the documentation accompanying the HSIL software for further information on how to utilize IGMP v3lite with your application.

IGMP v3lite is supported by Cisco only through the API provided by the HSIL, not as a function of the router independent of the HSIL. By default, IGMP v3lite is disabled. When IGMP v3lite is configured through the **ip igmp v3lite** interface configuration command on an interface, it will be active only for IP multicast addresses in the SSM range.

How to Configure Source Specific Multicast

Configuring SSM

To configure SSM, use the following commands beginning in global configuration mode:

SUMMARY STEPS

1. **ip pim ssm** [**default** | **range***access-list*]
2. **interface** *type number*
3. **ip pim** {**sparse-mode** | **sparse-dense-mode**}
4. Do one of the following:
   - **ip igmp version 3**
   - **ip igmp v3lite**

DETAILED STEPS

	Command or Action	Purpose
Step 1	**ip pim ssm** [**default** | **range***access-list*] **Example:** `Router(config)# ip pim ssm default`	Defines the SSM range of IP multicast addresses.
Step 2	**interface** *type number* **Example:** `Router(config)# interface gigabitethernet 0/0/1`	Selects an interface that is connected to hosts on which IGMPv3, IGMP v3lite, and URD can be enabled.
Step 3	**ip pim** {**sparse-mode** | **sparse-dense-mode**} **Example:** `Router(config-if)# ip pim sparse-mode`	Enables PIM on an interface. You must use either sparse mode or sparse-dense mode.
Step 4	Do one of the following: • **ip igmp version 3** • **ip igmp v3lite**	Enables IGMPv3 on this interface. The default version of IGMP is set to Version 2. or

	Command or Action	Purpose

	Example:
	
	`Router(config-if)# ip igmp version 3`
	
	`or`
	
	`Router(config-if)# ip igmp v3lite`
		Enables the acceptance and processing of IGMP v3lite membership reports on an interface.
		
		or
		
		Enables interception of TCP packets sent to the reserved URD port 465 on an interface and processing of URD channel subscription reports.

Monitoring SSM

Command	Purpose
`Router#` **`show ip igmp groups detail`**	Displays the (S, G) channel subscription through IGMPv3 or IGMP v3lite.
`Router#` **`show ip mroute`**	Displays whether a multicast group supports SSM service or whether a source-specific host report was received.

Configuration Examples of Source Specific Multicast

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SSM with IGMPv3 Example

The following example shows how to configure a router (running IGMPv3) for SSM:

```
ip multicast-routing
!
interface GigabitEthernet3/1/0
 ip address 172.21.200.203 255.255.255.0
 description backbone interface
 ip pim sparse-mode
!
interface GigabitEthernet3/2/0
 ip address 131.108.1.2 255.255.255.0
 ip pim sparse-mode
 description ethernet connected to hosts
 ip igmp version 3
!
ip pim ssm default
```