



Data Sheet

Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment

IT organizations have been deploying e-mail, Web, and file servers in a distributed fashion to make them available to large enterprise audiences. With data growth, demand for storage capacity has increased tremendously, and managing and protecting a distributed environment is extremely difficult. Thus, enterprises are now adopting a more centralized and manageable data center architecture whereby they are replacing file servers in branch offices with Cisco® Wide Area Application Engine (WAE) Appliances. This approach simplifies plans for business continuity, but it is imperative to plan these environments carefully so that they deliver LAN-like performance over the heavily used WAN infrastructure. A successful implementation requires careful planning and redesign of the existing WAN, server, and network attached storage (NAS) infrastructures, including planning of various migration steps to achieve fully optimized Cisco Wide Area Application Services (WAAS).

SERVICE OVERVIEW

The Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment analyzes the customer's application and file services environment, accounting for specific customer requirements, documenting initial findings, and outlining high-level recommendations. The assessment also provides a long-term architecture blueprint and presents the potential next steps in this evolution.

LEADING CISCO WAAS EXPERTISE

Cisco WAAS architects can help customers plan their WAAS infrastructure and, with their understanding of how applications interact over the WAN, they can help customers optimize applications that uses TCP as their transport protocol. They can help plan a Cisco WAAS infrastructure to address application-specific acceleration, compression, TCP flow optimization, and management. Cisco Advanced Services engineers focus on developing a scalable Cisco WAAS, infrastructure taking into account any specific constraints. They are also instrumental in helping ensure that application performance is optimized through the various features of the Cisco WAAS appliance.

Cisco Wide Area File Services (WAFS) Software and WAAS architects have hands-on experience in every phase of the planning, design, implementation, operation, and optimization of centralized file services infrastructures over a WAN. They hold several industry certifications and have a broad range of experience from working with network operations at several global Fortune 500 companies.

Table 1 summarizes the topics and potential benefits of the Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment.

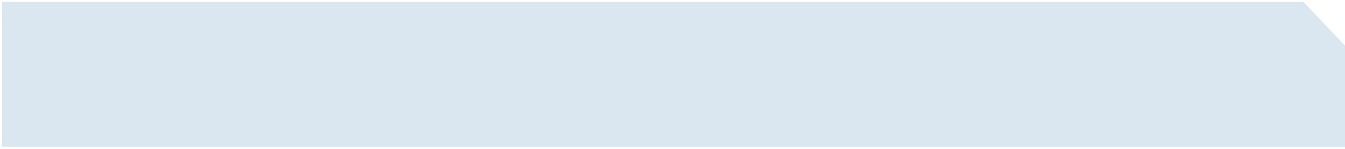
Table 1. Assessment Topics and Benefits

Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment Topics	Potential Benefits
File server architecture	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current file services architecture • New, consolidated file services architecture with Cisco WAFS and WAAS file engines (which should not preclude the ability to address other branch services, such as print services) • Cisco WAFS integration (with existing branch file services) • File security concept (transparent authentication and authorization and multilevel coherency) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the potential effect of Cisco WAAS implementation on file and application management and performance. • Estimate WAN bandwidth cost savings through branch consolidation. • Improve backup and file management efficiency and reliability. • Optimize application performance of file Services and other applications. • Optimize end-user response times. • Increase use of the file server and NAS infrastructures. • Recommend a Cisco WAAS architecture plan and verify the implementation steps. • Analyze WAN security and plan steps to enhance it. • Analyze business continuity requirements and recommend necessary steps. • Improve manageability of the data center infrastructure. • Ensure high availability through failover mechanisms and autorecovery.
WAN optimization	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current WAN architecture • Potential WAN bandwidth savings • Development of new high-level WAN design with Cisco WAAS 	
Application and availability optimization	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimization of end-user response times • Effect on multimedia applications (such as IPTV) • Failover capability between data center devices 	

ASSESSMENT DELIVERY PROCESS

The Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment is delivered in a structured process that consists of the following phases:

1. **Data collection**—Cisco sends the customer a questionnaire to collect baseline data about the customer’s application and WAN infrastructure. The collected data helps Cisco assess what the customer requires and provide an assessment that is very specific and targeted to the customer’s needs. The high-level data collected provides information about the range of applications and operating systems on the branch-office servers, the type of connectivity between branch offices and the main data center, specific latency and throughput requirements, the layout of the data center network, file server clustering, backup and storage requirements, etc.
2. **Branch consolidation workshop**—In this workshop, conducted at the customer site, the Cisco WAAS architect and customer IT team jointly review input from the questionnaire and collect data to determine the status of the file services infrastructure and WAN to outline requirements, constraints, processes, and future deployment strategies.
3. **Analysis**—The Cisco WAAS architect analyzes the collected information and develops an initial draft of the Branch Consolidation Assessment report. The initial draft is created by the Cisco WAAS team in conjunction with several members of the customer IT team. The intent of this report is to solicit feedback from the customer as to whether the draft recommendation meets the customer’s general requirements.

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4. **Completion of the report**—The Cisco WAAS consultant evaluates and incorporates the feedback from the customer and Cisco WAAS architect team and continues to finalize the report. The final Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment report has the following structure:
 - I. Executive Summary
 - II. Current Status of Application and File Infrastructure
 - III. Customer Requirements Analysis
 - IV. Assessment Findings
 - V. New Cisco WAAS Architecture Proposal
 - VI. Cisco WAAS Architecture Evolution
 - VII. Conclusions
 5. **Review and final presentation**—Electronic copies of the Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment Report are sent to the customer for review prior to presentation of the report, in person, to the customer’s management at the customer’s location.

AVAILABILITY

The Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment is available in all Theaters.

SUMMARY

Cisco WAAS offers bandwidth optimization and file services acceleration, and the Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment uses its features to help enterprises design an optimized infrastructure for the end user. Cisco Advanced Services offers recommendations to sustain and enhance the existing performance metrics and helps ensure that these devices integrate into the remaining network at the customer site. A goal of this service is to facilitate a centralized file services model with LAN-like performance at the branch offices of the future.

ORDERING

Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment is a custom service offering and is ordered through a statement of work and purchase order.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Cisco Branch Consolidation Assessment or Cisco Advanced Services, contact your Cisco Systems® representative.



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