Configuring the DTIM Period

DTIM Period

In the 802.11 networks, lightweight access points broadcast a beacon at regular intervals, which coincides with the Delivery Traffic Indication Map (DTIM). After the access point broadcasts the beacon, it transmits any buffered broadcast and multicast frames based on the value set for the DTIM period. This feature allows power-saving clients to wake up at the appropriate time if they are expecting broadcast or multicast data.

Typically, the DTIM value is set to 1 (to transmit broadcast and multicast frames after every beacon) or 2 (to transmit broadcast and multicast frames after every other beacon). For instance, if the beacon period of the 802.11 network is 100 ms and the DTIM value is set to 1, the access point transmits buffered broadcast and multicast frames for 10 times every second. If the beacon period is 100 ms and the DTIM value is set to 2, the access point transmits buffered broadcast and multicast frames for 5 times every second. Either of these settings are suitable for applications, including Voice Over IP (VoIP), that expect frequent broadcast and multicast frames.

However, the DTIM value can be set as high as 255 (to transmit broadcast and multicast frames after every 255th beacon). The only recommended DTIM values are 1 and 2; higher DTIM values will likely cause communications problems.

Note   A beacon period, which is specified in milliseconds on the , is converted internally by the software to 802.11 Time Units (TUs), where 1 TU = 1.024 milliseconds. Depending on the AP model, the actual beacon period may vary slightly; for example, a beacon period of 100 ms may in practice equate to 104.448 ms.

You can configure the DTIM period for the 802.11 radio networks on specific WLANs. For example, you might want to set different DTIM values for voice and data WLANs.

This section contains the following subsections:

Configuring the DTIM Period (GUI)

Step 1 Choose **WLANs** to open the WLANs page.

Step 2 Click the ID number of the WLAN for which you want to configure the DTIM period.

Step 3 Unselect the **Status** check box to disable the WLAN.

Step 4 Click **Apply**.

Step 5 Choose the **Advanced** tab to open the WLANs > Edit (Advanced) page.

Step 6 Under DTIM Period, enter a value between 1 and 255 (inclusive) in the 802.11a/n and 802.11b/g/n text boxes. The default value is 1 (transmit broadcast and multicast frames after every beacon).

Step 7 Click **Apply**.

Step 8 Choose the **General** tab to open the WLANs > Edit (General) page.

Step 9 Select the **Status** check box to reenable the WLAN.

Step 10 Click **Save Configuration**.

Configuring the DTIM Period (CLI)

Step 1 Disable the WLAN by entering this command:

config wlan disable *wlan_id*

Step 2 Configure the DTIM period for a 802.11 radio network on a specific WLAN by entering this command:

config wlan dtim {**802.11a** | **802.11b**} *dtim wlan_id*

where *dtim* is a value between 1 and 255 (inclusive). The default value is 1 (transmit broadcast and multicast frames after every beacon).

Step 3 Reenable the WLAN by entering this command:

config wlan enable *wlan_id*

Step 4 Save your changes by entering this command:

save config

Step 5 Verify the DTIM period by entering this command:

show wlan *wlan_id*