

Using MikroTik in Docsis Provisioning

Case study showing how
to use a MikroTik router
to provision cable
modems



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Certifications



Overview

In this case study I'll demonstrate how I used a MikroTik router as a provisioning server for cable modems.

ISSUES TO OVERCOME

I needed to be able to deploy high speed internet to a number of apartments over an existing coax cable network.

Total end users would not exceed 200 per location

Rewiring the infrastructure with fiber and copper Ethernet was cost-prohibitive.

Client had an existing coax network which he used to provide local broadcast TV

~~Cost was a major factor~~

SOLUTION

Client added a low cost CMTS (Cable Modem Termination System)
with necessary amplifiers to update coax system

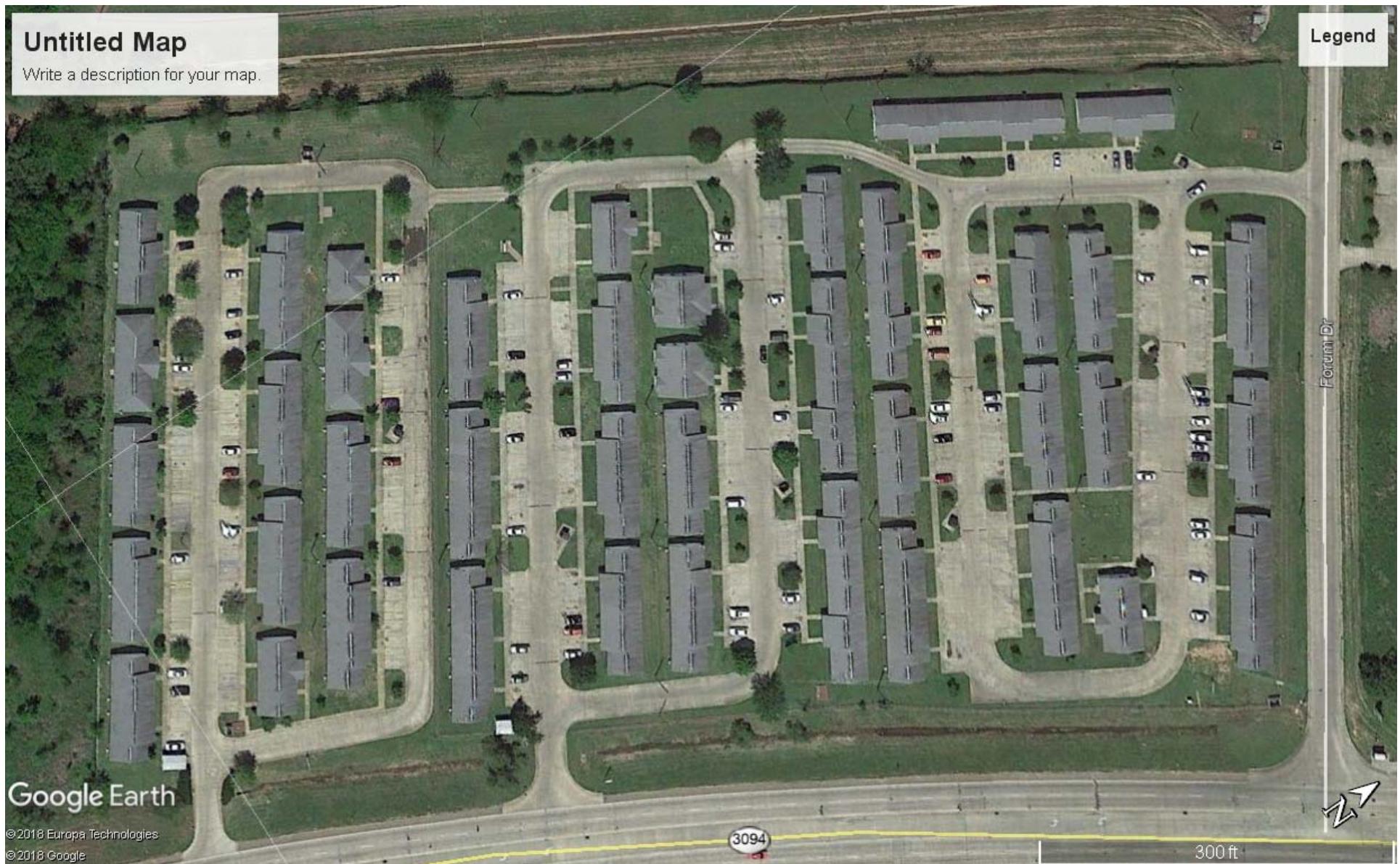
MikroTik CCR router added as edge router

CCR configured to replace the need for additional modem
provisioning servers

Untitled Map

Write a description for your map.

Legend



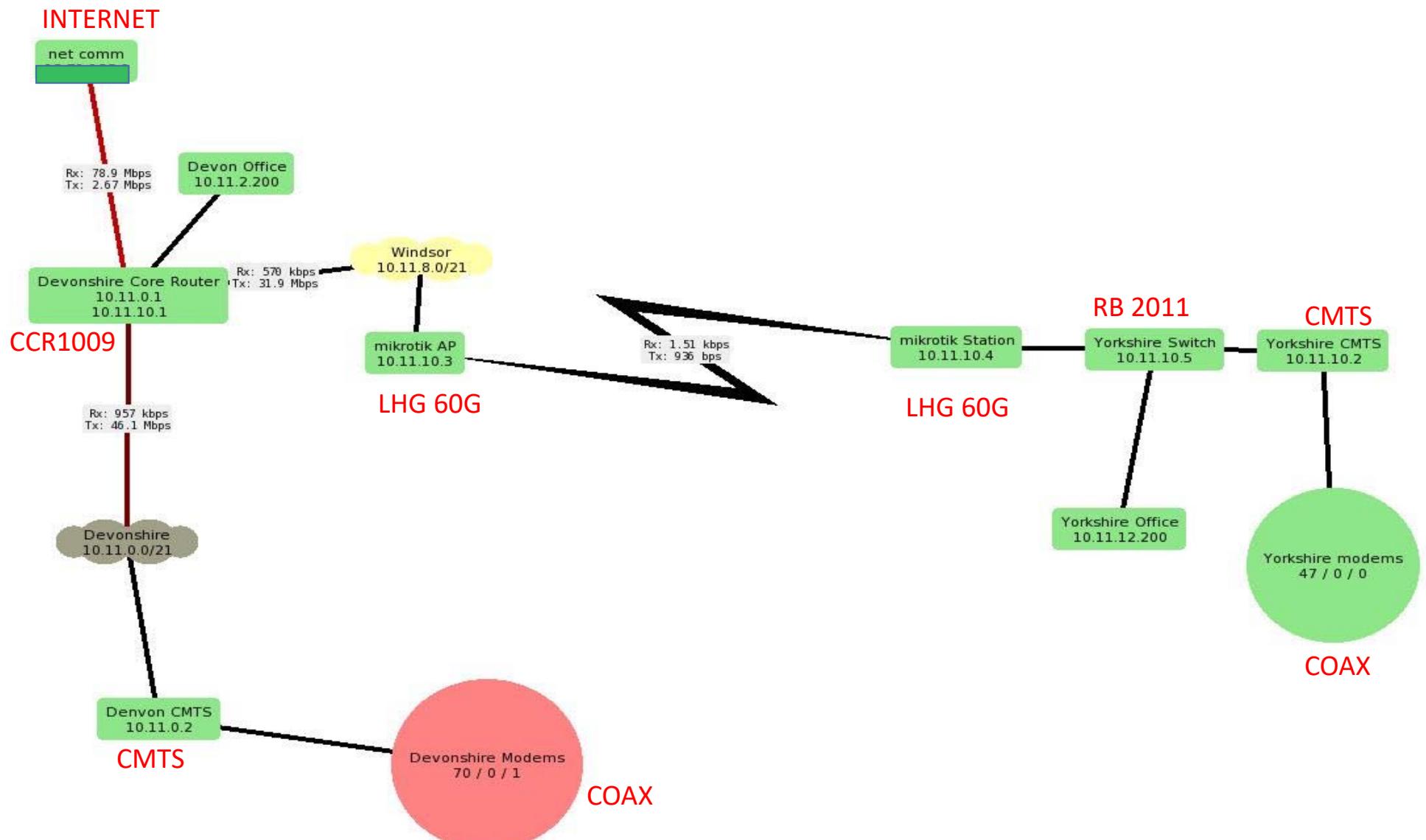
Untitled Map

Write a description for your map.

Legend







CABLE MODEM OPERATION

Four Steps

1. Downstream Channel Search and Lock

Basically layer one establishment over the RF on coax cable

2. DHCP

IP address/mask /gateway

3. TOD (Time of Day)

4. TFTP

Config File Download

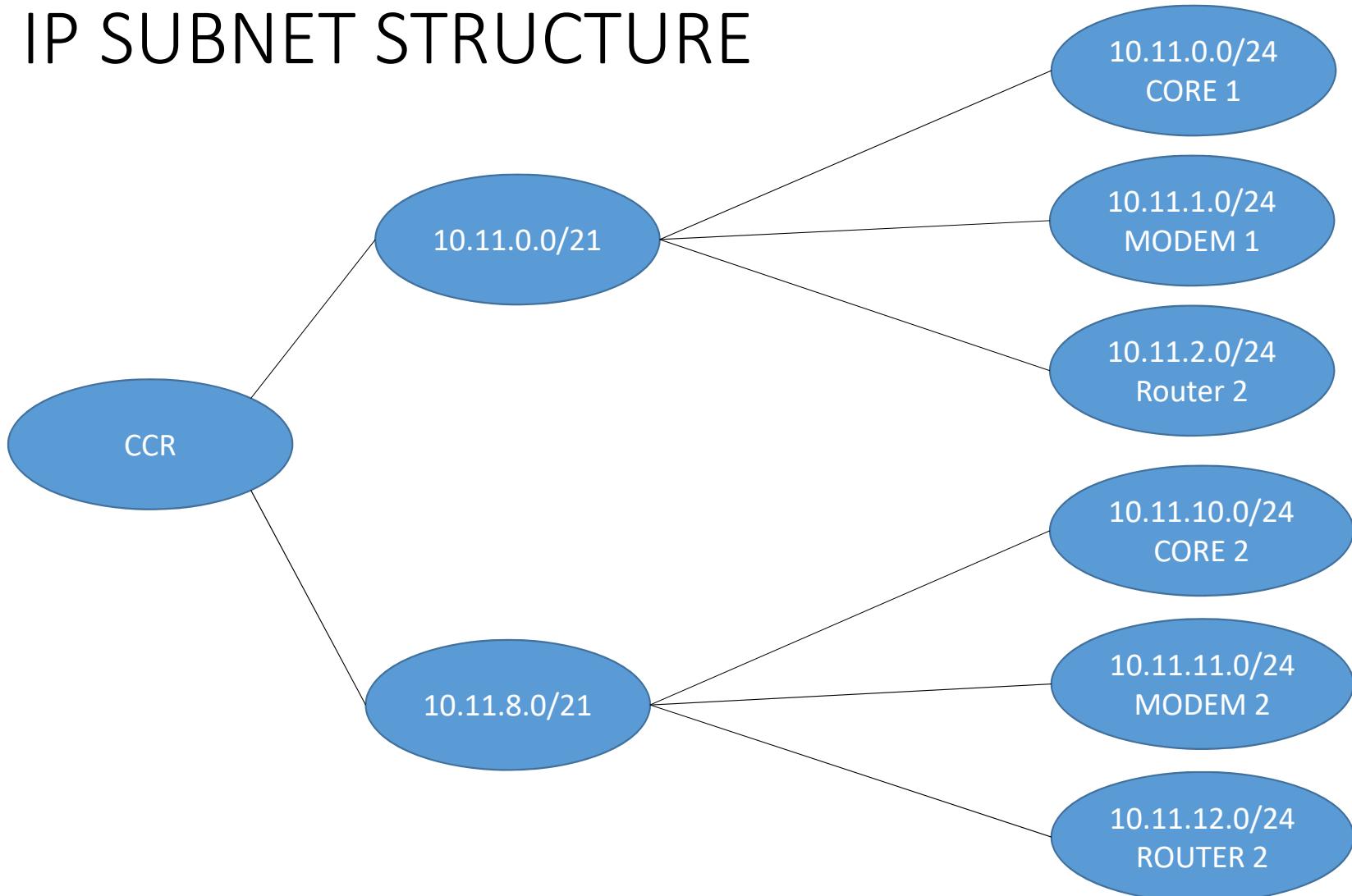
Client Router Operation

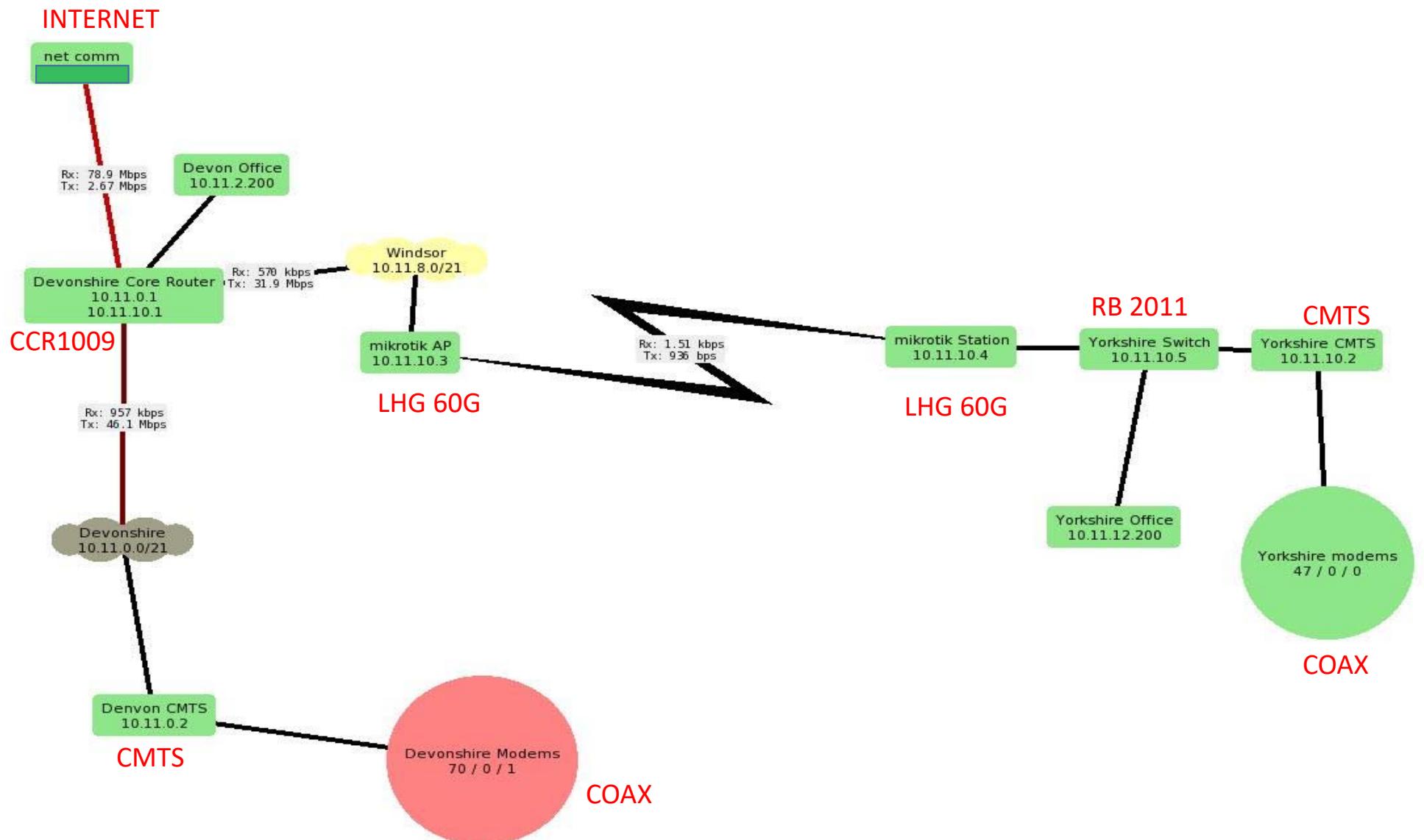
Most “modems” are actually a combination of cable modem and client wifi router

Once Modem “side” is online and operational the router “side” must be given its configuration

We accomplish this with a second ‘DHCP server’ to give out normal IP address, gateway, mask, and DNS server

IP SUBNET STRUCTURE





admin@00:0C:42:FC:F3:25 (DOCSIS) - WinBox v6.44 on CCR1009-8G-1S (tile)

Session Settings Dashboard

Safe Mode Session: 00:0C:42:FC:F3:25

Address List

	Address	Network	Interface	Comment
D	10.11.0.1/24	10.11.0.0	devon/berk/ke...	devon core
D	10.11.1.1/24	10.11.1.0	l...4...e...	devom modem
D	10.11.2.1/24	10.11.2.0	devon/berk/ke...	devon gateway
D	10.11.10.1/24	10.11.10.0	windsor/yorkshire	windsor core
D	10.11.11.1/24	10.11.11.0	...hire	windsor modem
D	10.11.12.1/24	10.11.12.0	windsor/yorkshire	windsor gateway
D	10.101.0.241/...	10.101.0.0	ether1-wan	

RouterOS WinBox

7 items

The screenshot shows a RouterOS WinBox interface. On the left is a sidebar with various management options like Quick Set, CAPsMAN, Interfaces, Wireless, Bridge, PPP, Switch, Mesh, and several network protocols (IP, IPv6, MPLS, OpenFlow, Routing). The main window displays an 'Address List' table with columns for Address, Network, Interface, and Comment. Seven entries are listed, including two that are highlighted with red arrows pointing to them: '10.11.1.1/24' and '10.11.11.1/24'. The 'Comment' column provides context for each entry, such as 'devon core', 'devom modem', 'devon gateway', 'windsor core', 'windsor modem', 'windsor gateway', and 'ether1-wan'.

MikroTik DHCP Server Config

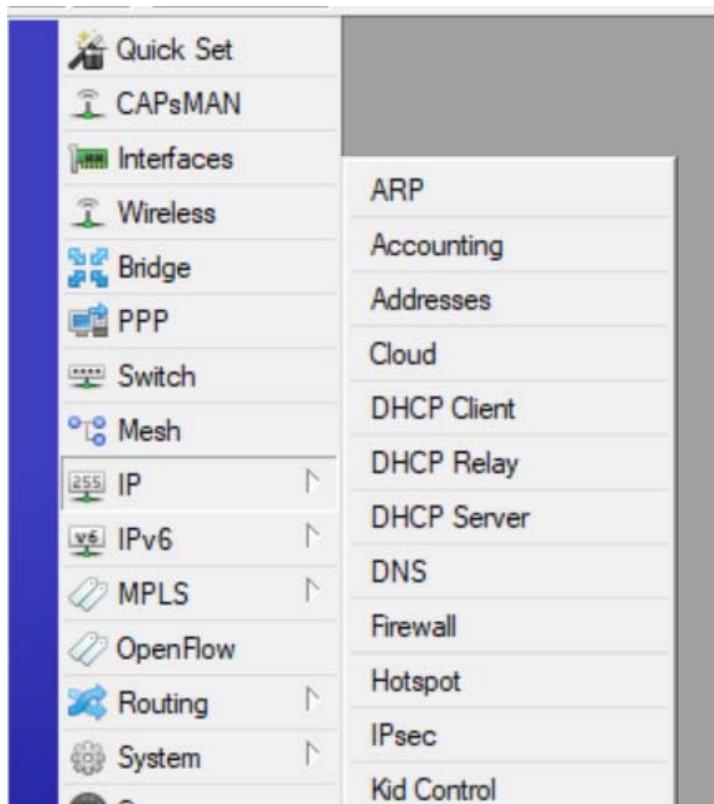
We need to have the MikroTik router provide several parameters to the modem

1. IP address, mask, gateway
2. TFTP server address
3. Boot File Name

We also need to have the MikroTik provide parameters to the router

1. IP address
2. Subnet mask
3. Gateway
4. DNS server

IP DHCP SERVER

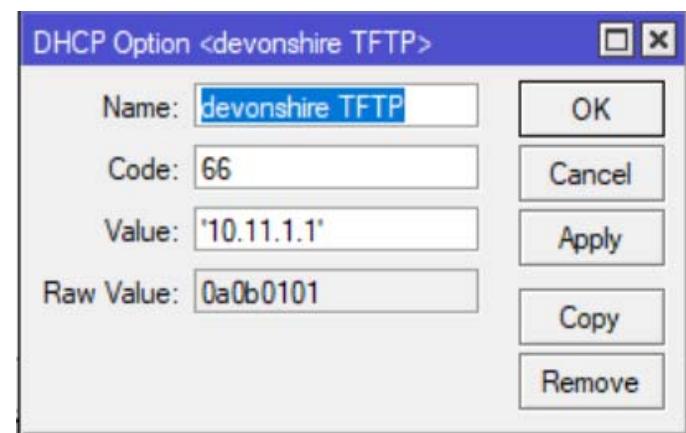


Set DHCP Options

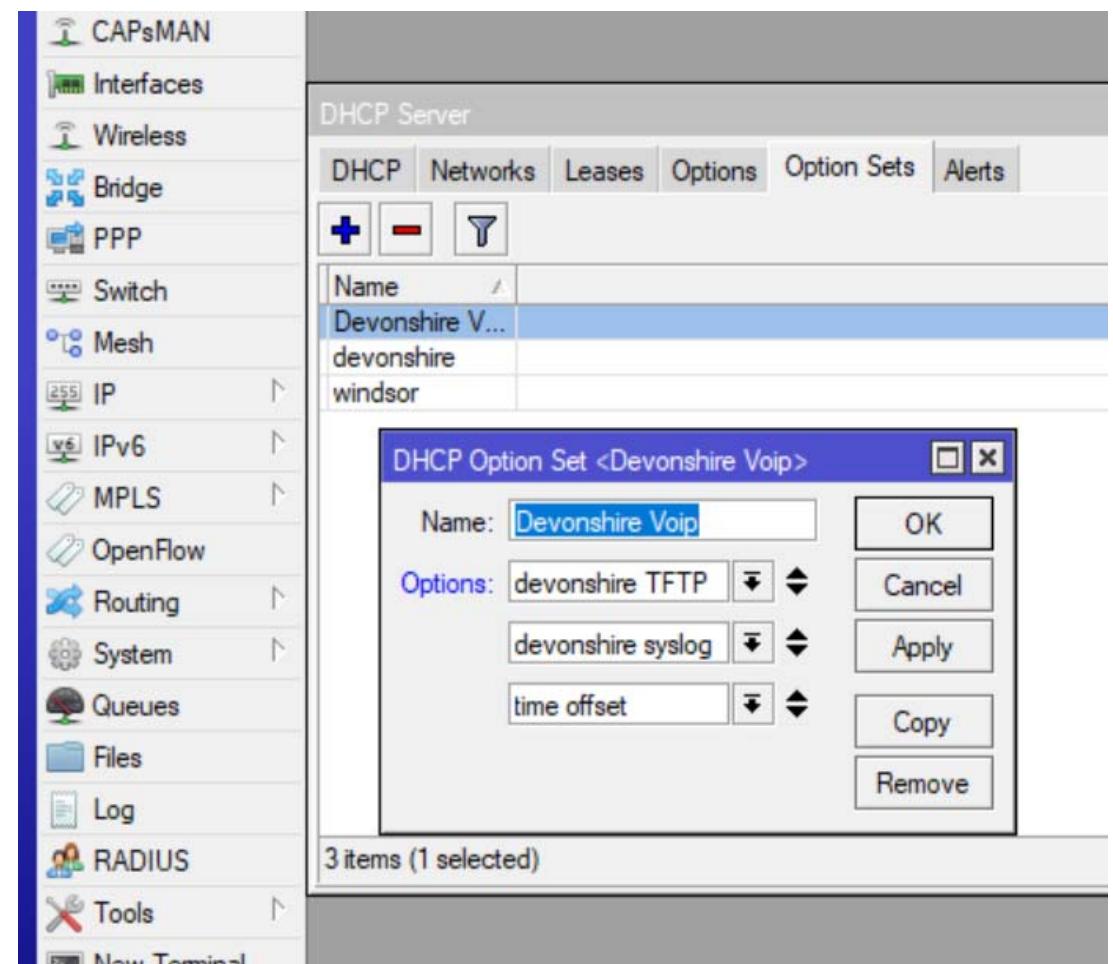
The screenshot shows the Cisco Network Assistant interface with the 'DHCP' tab selected in the top navigation bar. Below the tabs, there are buttons for adding (+), deleting (-), and filtering (F). A table lists five DHCP options:

Name	Code	Value
devonshire T...	66	'10.11.1.1'
devonshire sy...	7	'10.11.1.1'
time offset	2	'-18000'
windsor TFTP	66	'10.11.11.1'
windsor syslog	7	'10.11.11.1'

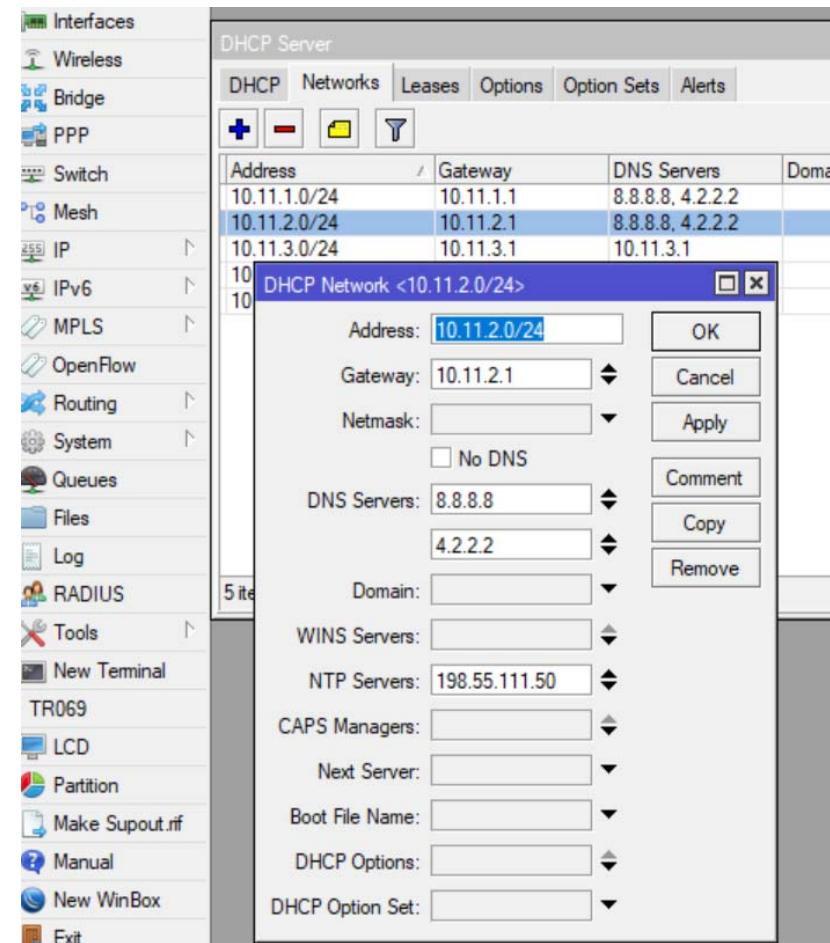
At the bottom of the table, a message states "5 items (1 selected)".



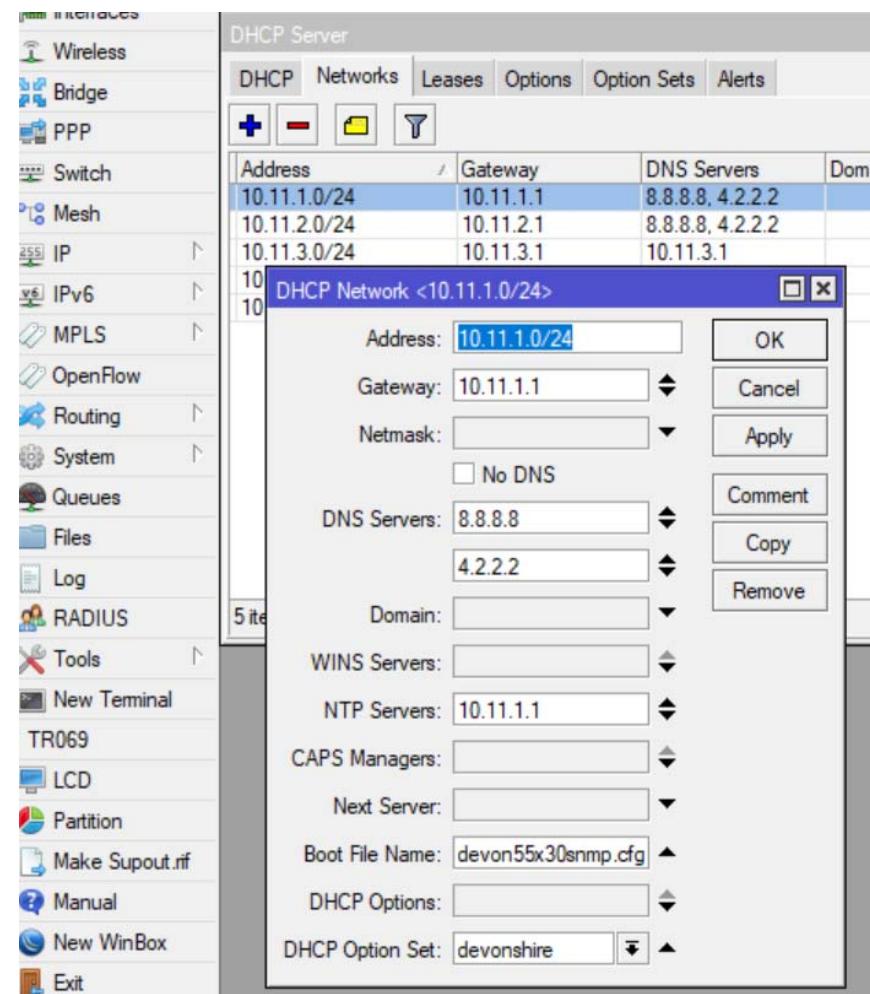
Set DHCP Option Set



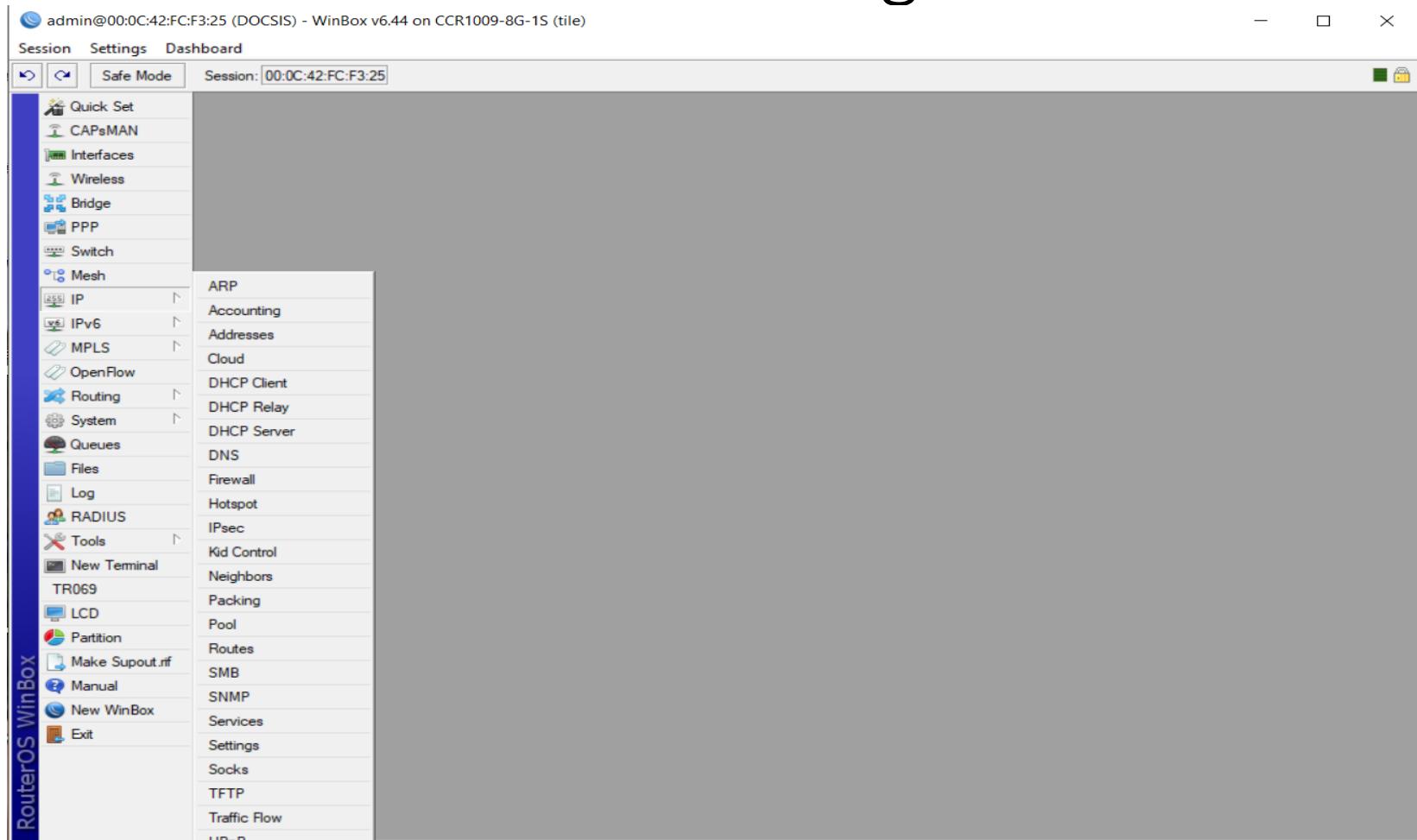
/IP DHCP SERVER/ NETWORK for routers



/IP DHCP SERVER/ NETWORK for modems



MikroTik TFTP SERVER Config



MikroTik IP TFTP Server

admin@00:0C:42:FC:F3:25 (DOCSIS) - WinBox v6.44 on CCR1009-8G-1S (tile)

Session Settings Dashboard

Safe Mode Session: 00:0C:42:FC:F3:25

Quick Set CAPsMAN Interfaces Wireless Bridge PPP Switch Mesh IP IPv6 MPLS OpenFlow Routing System Queues Files Log RADIUS Tools New Terminal

TFTP

#	IP Addresses	Req. Filename	Real Filename	Allow	Read O...	Hits
0	10.11.1.20-10.11.1.254	devon55x30snmp.cfg	devon55x30snmp.cfg	yes	yes	
1	10.11.11.20-10.11.11.254	windsor55x30snmp.cfg	windsor55x30snmp.cfg	yes	yes	

TFTP <10.11.1.20-10.11.1.254>

IP Addresses: 10.11.1.20-10.11.1.254
Req. Filename: devon55x30snmp.cfg
Real Filename: devon55x30snmp.cfg
 Allow
 Read Only
Hits: 0

OK Cancel Apply Disable Copy Remove

enabled

Put Modem Config File in /files

admin@00:0C:42:FC:F3:25 (DOCSIS) - WinBox v6.44 on CCR1009-8G-1S (tile)

Session Settings Dashboard

Safe Mode Session: 00:0C:42:FC:F3:25

The screenshot shows the WinBox interface with the 'File List' window open. The window displays a list of files and directories in the '/files' directory. The columns are 'File Name', 'Type', 'Size', and 'Creation Time'. The 'File Name' column lists items like 'windsor55x30snmp.cfg', 'welsh.backup', 'user-manager', 'um-before-migration.tar', 'skins', 'remote-19700123-1058.backup', 'moss.pub', 'moss bluff.backup', 'morganfield1-15-19.backup', 'jennings.backup', 'hwy14=1=15=19.backup', 'devon55x30snmp.cfg', and 'auto-before-reset backup'. The 'Type' column indicates file types such as '.cfg file', 'backup', 'directory', and '.tar file'. The 'Size' column shows file sizes in bytes, and the 'Creation Time' column shows the date and time each item was created.

File Name	Type	Size	Creation Time
windsor55x30snmp.cfg	.cfg file	127 B	Mar/01/2019 09:35:12
welsh.backup	backup	37.9 kB	Jan/01/1970 18:21:32
user-manager	directory		Mar/01/2019 09:38:50
user-manager/sqldb	file	80.0 kB	Mar/01/2019 09:38:50
user-manager/logsqldb	file	6.0 kB	Mar/01/2019 09:38:49
um-before-migration.tar	.tar file	17.0 kB	Mar/01/2019 09:38:50
skins	directory		Mar/01/2019 09:37:37
remote-19700123-1058.backup	backup	18.1 kB	Jan/23/1970 04:58:07
moss.pub	ssh key	272 B	Jan/16/1970 09:55:27
moss bluff.backup	backup	37.6 kB	Jan/01/1970 18:27:36
morganfield1-15-19.backup	backup	37.2 kB	Jan/01/1970 18:06:36
jennings.backup	backup	42.7 kB	Jan/02/1970 16:48:52
hwy14=1=15=19.backup	backup	35.5 kB	Jan/01/1970 19:12:50
devon55x30snmp.cfg	.cfg file	127 B	Mar/01/2019 09:35:12
auto-before-reset backup	backup	18.1 kB	Jan/23/1970 05:05:45

20 items | 46.5 MiB of 128.0 MiB used | 63% free

Modem Config Files

Docsis config files provide the info needed to configure the cable modem.

The config file we place in /files must be in “Docsis” binary format

You will need a config file editor

<https://www.excentis.com/>

Some basic items would be:

upstream max traffic flow

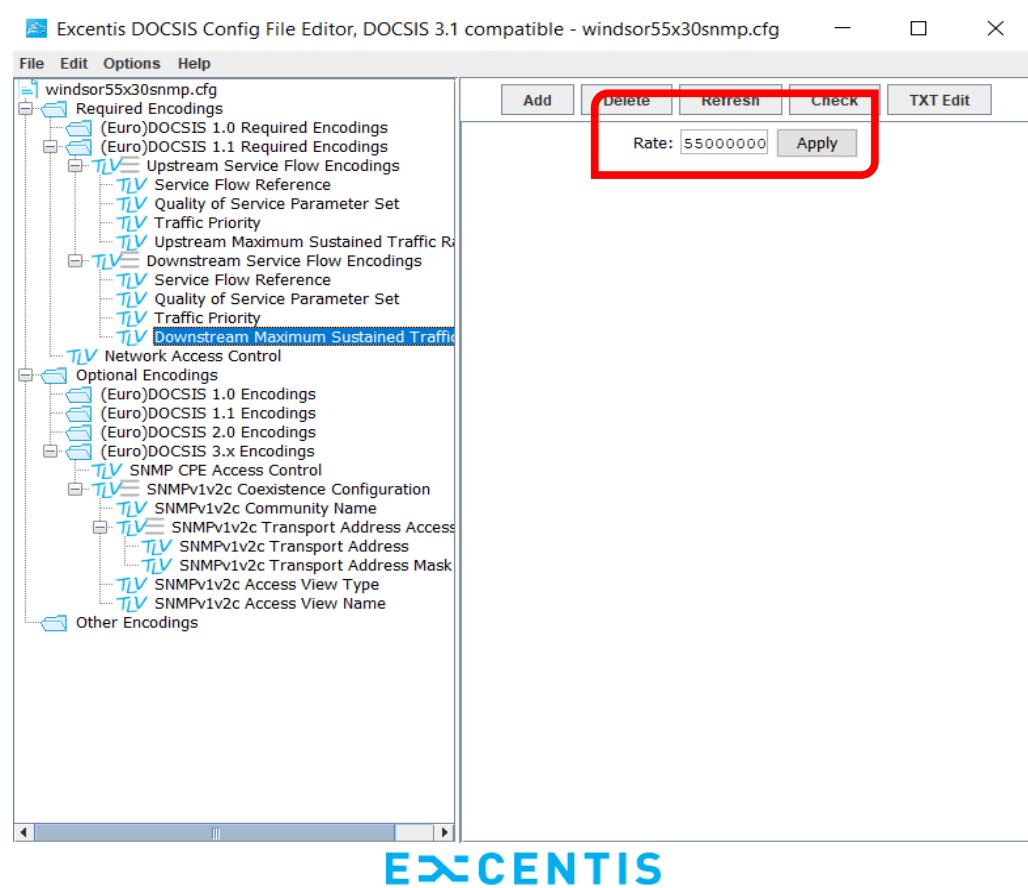
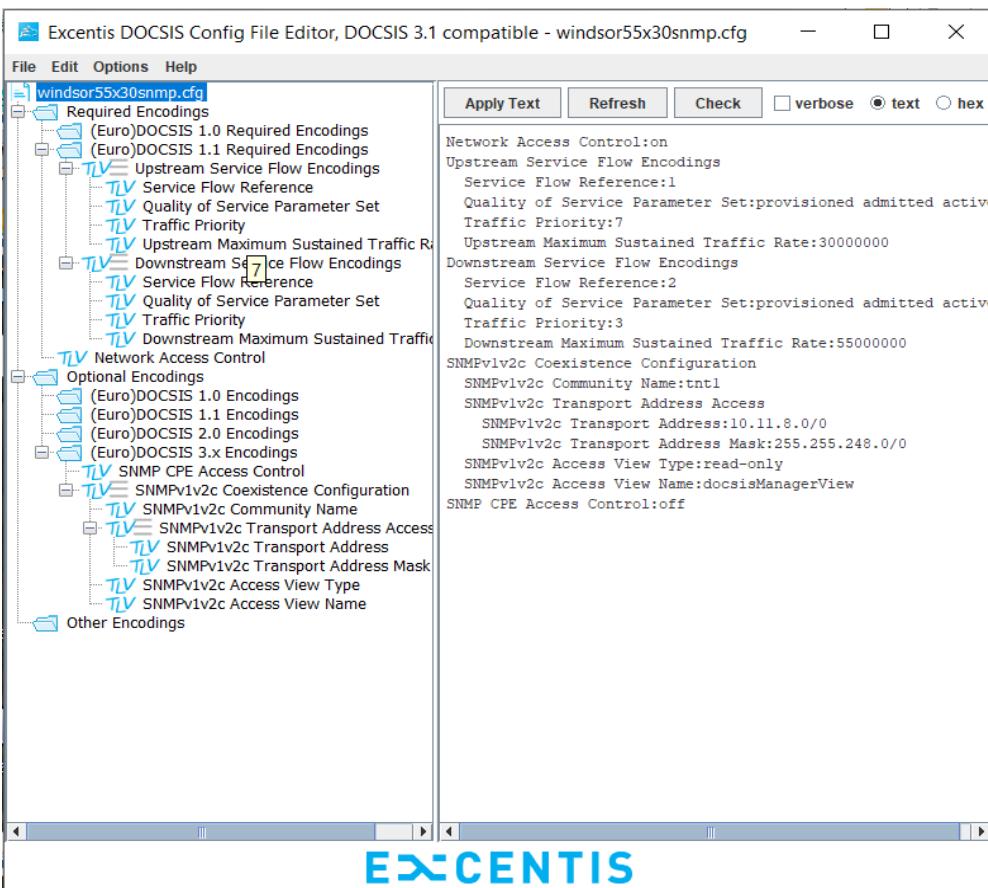
downstream max traffic flow

whether or not customer can access modem

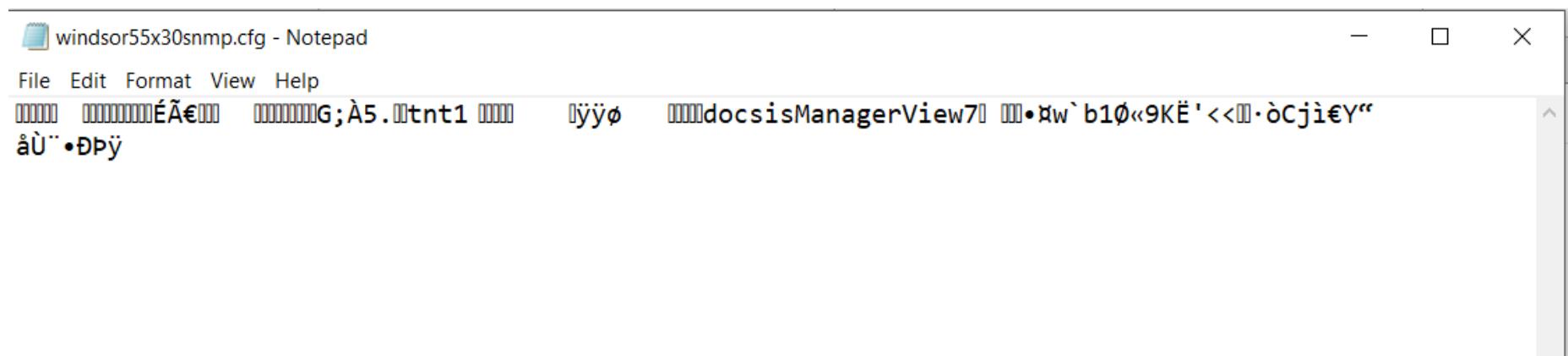
SNMP community names

address of SNMP server

Config file editor



File to upload



One or many config files?

In this case study, one config file is used for all modems with up and download speeds set at just over the maximum limits for the fastest service being sold.

Actual user bandwidth is controlled using address lists containing IP addresses of routers, not modems along with mangle rules and queue tree.

Another approach would be to control bandwidth at the modem with a different config file uploaded to modem for each speed package sold.

Still another would be a different config file for VOIP customers which would prioritize VOIP traffic at the modem.

Note that if you want to change a service by means of a different config file, you must reboot the selected modem for the new config file to be uploaded.

Numerous Deployment Options

ALL Dynamic Assignments

Simple

All same type modems

All same services

Example would be a hotel or student housing
with modems behind Hotspot

Static Leases Assignments

Paid service

Different Speeds and services

Ability to suspend service for non payment

Separate Subnets for devices and services

Under all but the simplest dynamic deployment, you can separate device types and services into separate subnets.

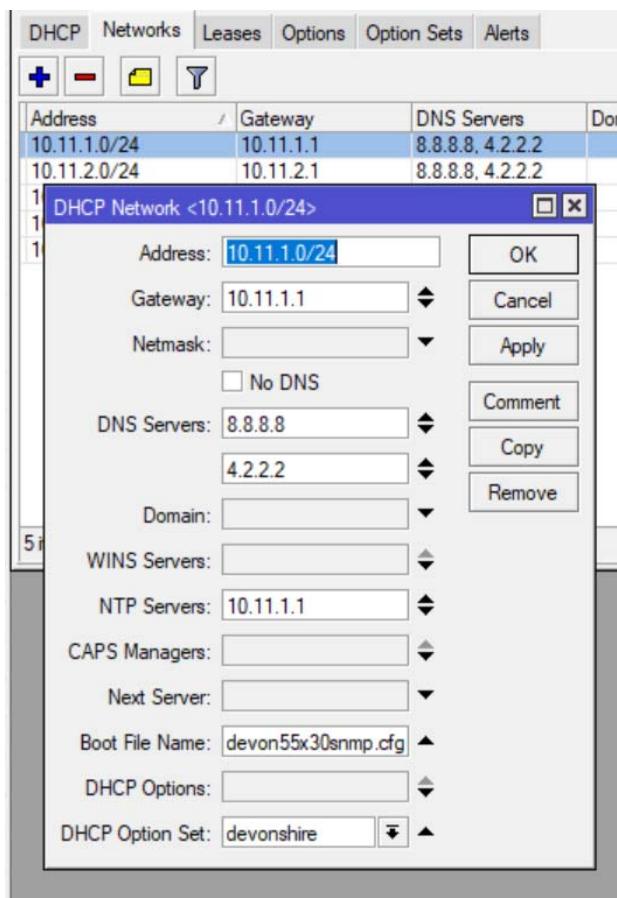
In this case study all modems are placed in subnet 1, and all routers into subnet 2.

You can also separate different service levels into separate subnets by placing all routers with same bandwidth limit into one subnet and others with different bandwidth limit into a second. Or all VOIP customers in same subnet.

The reason for this is to control which modem config file gets delivered to a specific modem. Remember we have only one DHCP server per interface so config files are specified in the DHCP networks section as well as the TFTP server address list. We also need to write static dhcp leases.

It also becomes easier to control traffic flow based on subnet. For example you can block internet access for all modem subnets if not needed, restrict modem access to only what's needed, or Netmap different router subnets to different public IP's.

DHCP network and TFTP server



The screenshot shows a software interface for managing a TFTP server. At the top, there are buttons for adding (+), deleting (-), and filtering (T). A table lists two entries. The first entry has IP Addresses 10.11.1.20-10.11.1.254, Requested Filename devon55x30snmp..., and Real Filename devon55x30snmp... with the Allow checkbox checked. The second entry has IP Addresses 10.11.1.20-10.11.1.254, Requested Filename windsor55x30snmp..., and Real Filename windsor55x30snmp... with the Allow checkbox checked. Below the table, a detailed configuration dialog is open for the entry with IP Addresses 10.11.1.20-10.11.1.254. It shows fields for IP Addresses (10.11.1.20-10.11.1.254), Requested Filename (devon55x30snmp.cfg), Real Filename (devon55x30snmp.cfg), and checkboxes for Allow (checked) and Read Only (checked). Buttons for OK, Cancel, Apply, Disable, Copy, and Remove are present. Below the dialog, the word "enabled" is displayed.

Dynamic Assignment

When all users have the same modems, service levels, bandwidth limitations, etc...

Such as in hotels or student housing then just use IP pools instead of static leases.

The options sets remain the same but the routers will ignore what they don't need. For example the TFTP server address.

In the simplest case, the config file for the modem can rate limit users without the need for queuing on main MikroTik router.

Add IP pool to DHCP server

DHCP Server <devonshire>

Name:	devonshire	OK
Interface:	devon/berk/kening	Cancel
Relay:		Apply
Lease Time:	1d 00:00:00	Disable
Bootp Lease Time:	forever	Copy
Address Pool:	dhcp_pool0	Remove
DHCP Option Set:		
Src. Address:		
Delay Threshold:		
Authoritative:	yes	
Bootp Support:	static	
<input type="checkbox"/> Always Broadcast		
Insert Queue Before:	first	

IP Pool

Pools	Used Addresses	
<input type="button"/> <input type="button"/> <input type="button"/> <input type="button"/>	Find	
Name	Addresses	Next Pool
dhcp_pool0	10.11.100.2-10.11.100.254	none

IP Pool <dhcp_pool0>

Name: dhcp_pool0	OK
Addresses: 10.11.100.2-10.11	Cancel
Next Pool: none	Apply
Comment	
Copy	
Remove	

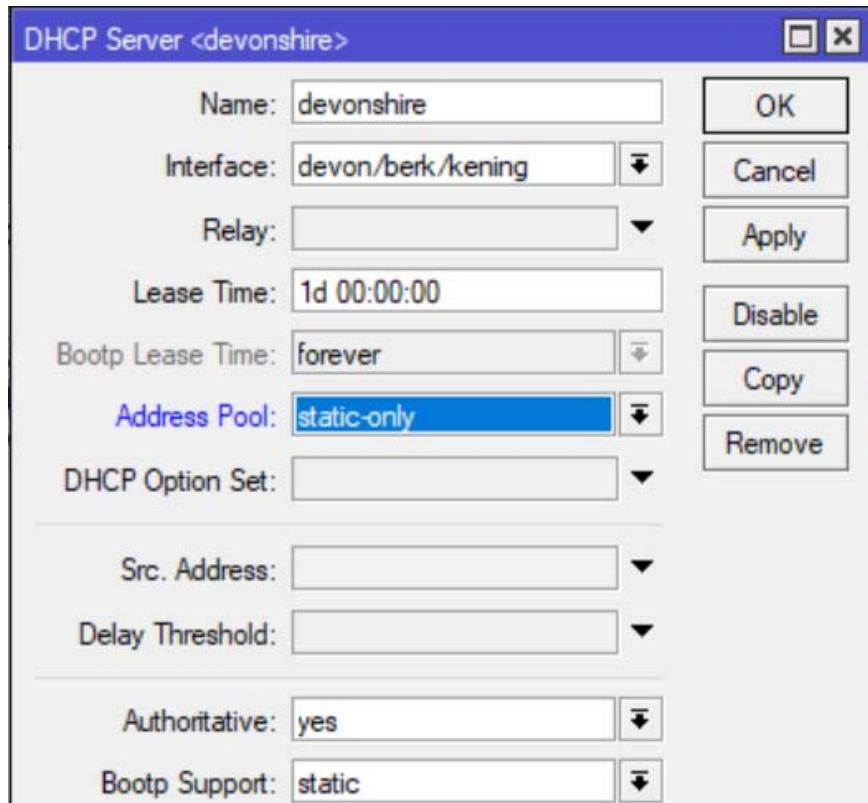
1 item (1 selected)

Static Lease Assignments

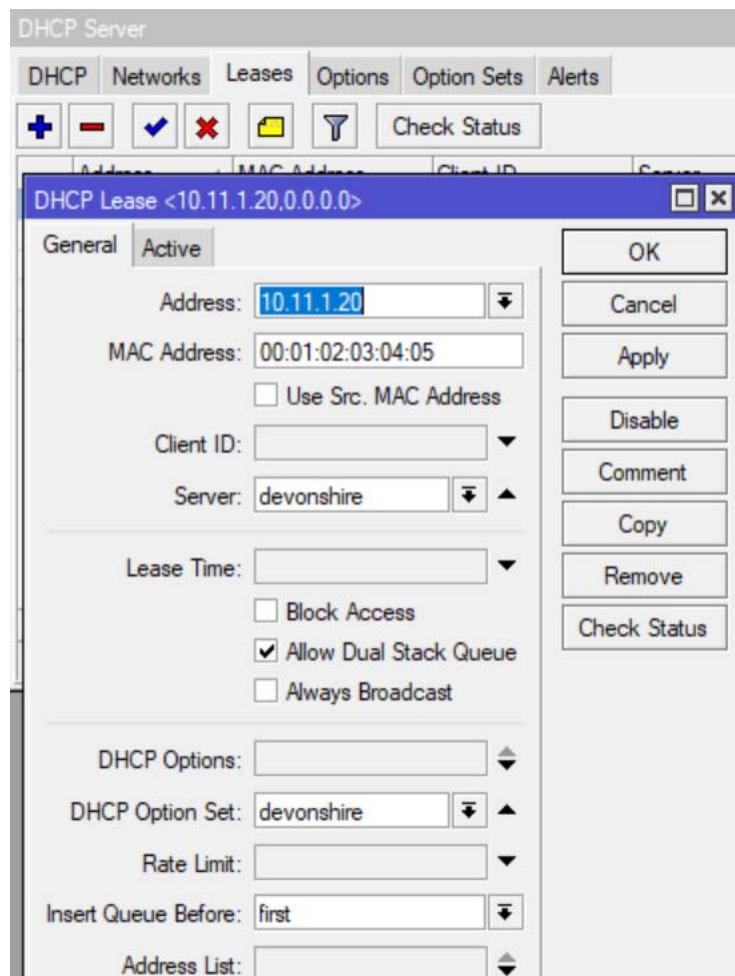
Various ways can be deployed to write static leases:

1. Manually enter the mac and IP address for each both modem and router
2. Integration of third party billing platforms either local, remote, or cloud based
3. Radius server (MikroTik Usermanager)

Write Leases Manually



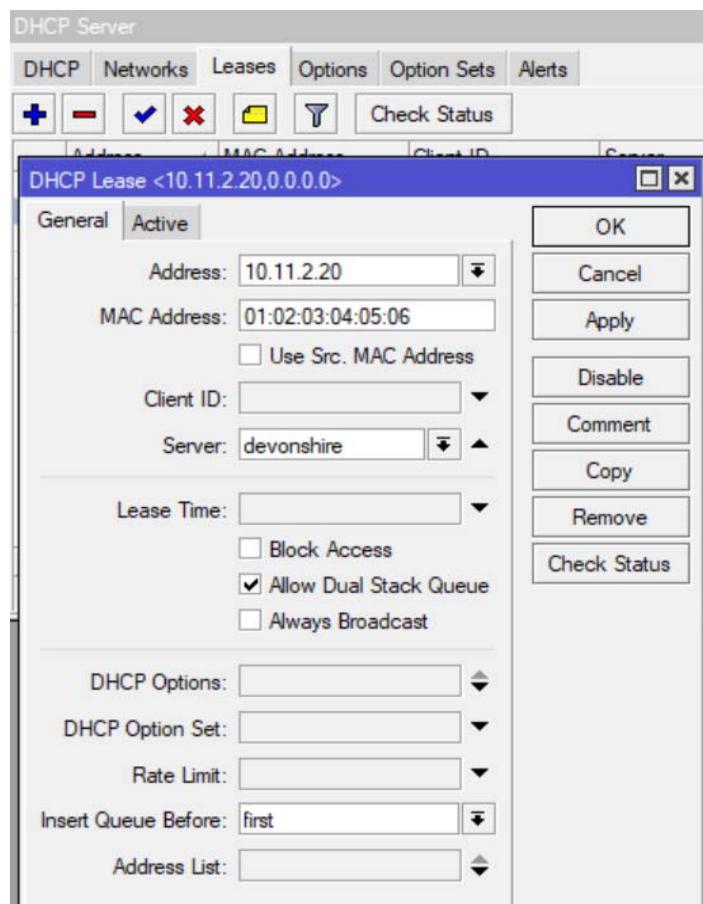
Add Modem



Add first modem's mac address, IP address, and option set

All Modem IP address will be issued from one subnet

Add Router



Add first router's mac address and IP address,
All router IP addresses will be issued from separate subnet

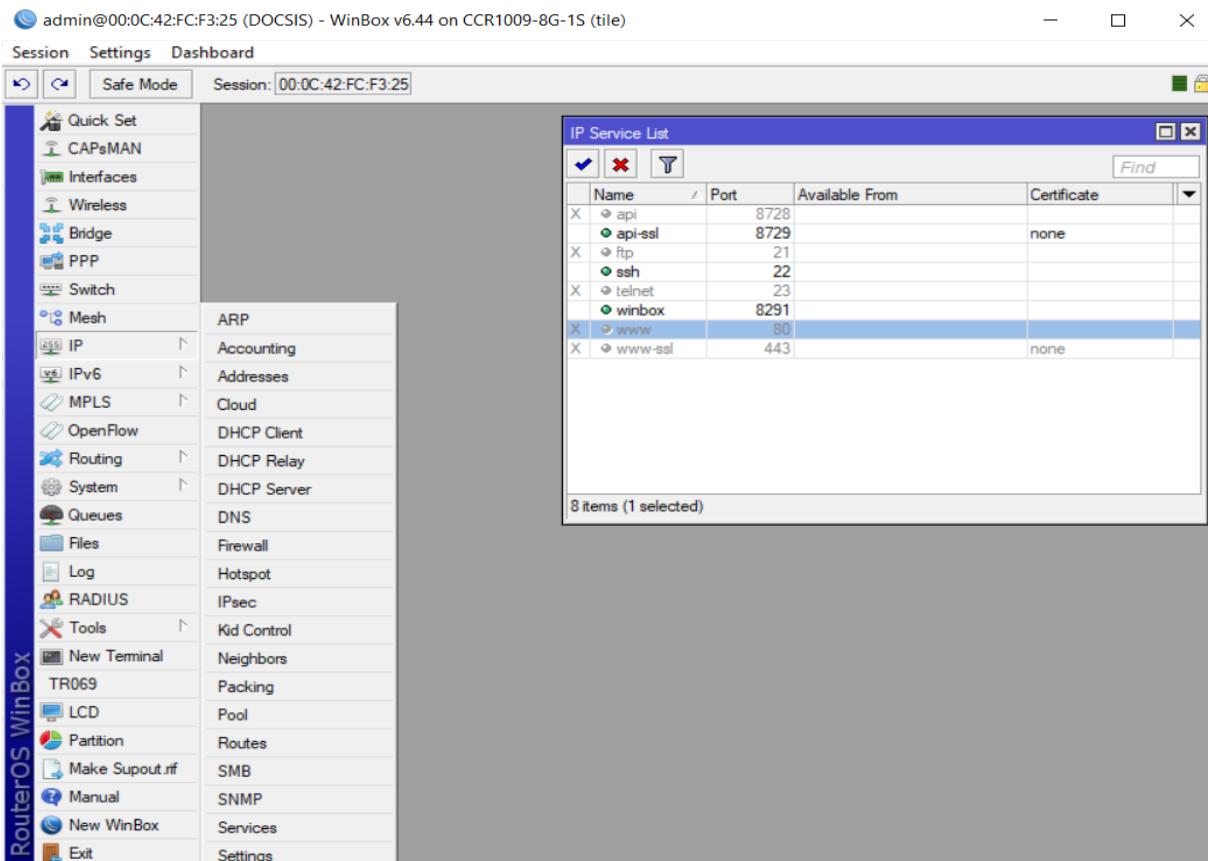
Third party cloud based

Mac addresses for both modem and router are entered and associated with a customer and IP addresses are assigned.

A service is also associated with the customer indicating bandwidth limits

Router is updated via API and static leases are written as well as address list entries

Enable API Service



Enable API service

Make sure to allow access only from authorized IP address and create certificate if using API-SSL

Static Leases written

admin@00:0C:42:FC:F3:25 (DOCSIS) - WinBox v6.44 on CCR1009-8G-1S (tile)

Session Settings Dashboard

Session: 00:0C:42:FC:F3:25

DHCP Server

DHCP Networks Leases Options Option Sets Alerts

Quick Set CAPsMAN Interfaces Wireless Bridge PPP Switch Mesh IP IPv6 MPLS OpenFlow Routing System Queues Files Log RADIUS Tools

New Terminal TR069 LCD Partition Make Supout.rif Manual New WinBox Exit

Address	MAC Address	Client ID	Server	Ac...	A.A.	Expires After	Status	Comment
10.11.1.20	00:01:02:03:04:05		devonshire				waiting	brk 603
10.11.2.20	01:02:03:04:05:06		devonshire				waiting	berk 603
10.11.2.21	A8:11:FC:6F:9A:C1		devonshire				waiting	Kensington 803
10.11.10.2	FC:E8:92:A0:1B:D5		windsor				waiting	
10.11.11.20	04:4E:5A:F6:E0:E2		windsor				waiting	york 1203
10.11.12.20	04:4E:5A:F6:E0:E3		windsor				waiting	york 1203

Find

6 items

RouterOS WinBox

Address list updated

admin@00:0C:42:FC:F3:25 (DOCSIS) - WinBox v6.44 on CCR1009-8G-1S (tile)

Session Settings Dashboard

Session: 00:0C:42:FC:F3:25

Quick Set CAPsMAN Interfaces Wireless Bridge PPP Switch Mesh IP IPv6 MPLS OpenFlow Routing System Queues Files Log RADIUS Tools New Terminal TR069 LCD Partition Make Supout.rf Manual New WinBox

Firewall

Filter Rules NAT Mangle Raw Service Ports Connections Address Lists Layer7 Protocols

Find all

Name	Address	Timeout	Creation Time	Comment
DNS_Accept	8.8.8		Mar/01/2019 08:...	
DNS_Accept	4.2.2.2		Mar/01/2019 08:...	
DNS_Accept	10.11.0.0/21		Mar/01/2019 08:...	
DNS_Accept	10.11.8.0/21		Mar/01/2019 08:...	
Delinquent	10.11.2.26		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Devonshire 604 (74)
Delinquent Whitelist	1.2.3.4		Mar/01/2019 08:...	
Devonshire_25x10	10.11.1.20		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Berkshire 603 (80)
Devonshire_40x20	10.11.2.38		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Devonshire 603 (106)
Devonshire_50x25	10.11.2.200		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Devonshire Office (65)
Devonshire_50x25	10.11.1.34		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Kensington 901 (87)
Inactive	10.11.1.26		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Devonshire 604 (74)
Windsor_25x10	10.11.11.30		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Yorkshire 104 (129)
Windsor_40x20	10.11.12.21		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Yorkshire 1704 (84)
Windsor_40x20	10.11.11.21		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Yorkshire 1704 (84)
Windsor_40x20	10.11.11.28		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Yorkshire 902 (118)
Windsor_50x25	10.11.12.200		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Yorkshire Office (78)

16 items

Mangle and Queue Tree Based on address lists

Two screenshots of WinBox interface showing configuration for Mangle and Queue Tree.

Left Screenshot (Mangle Rule Configuration):

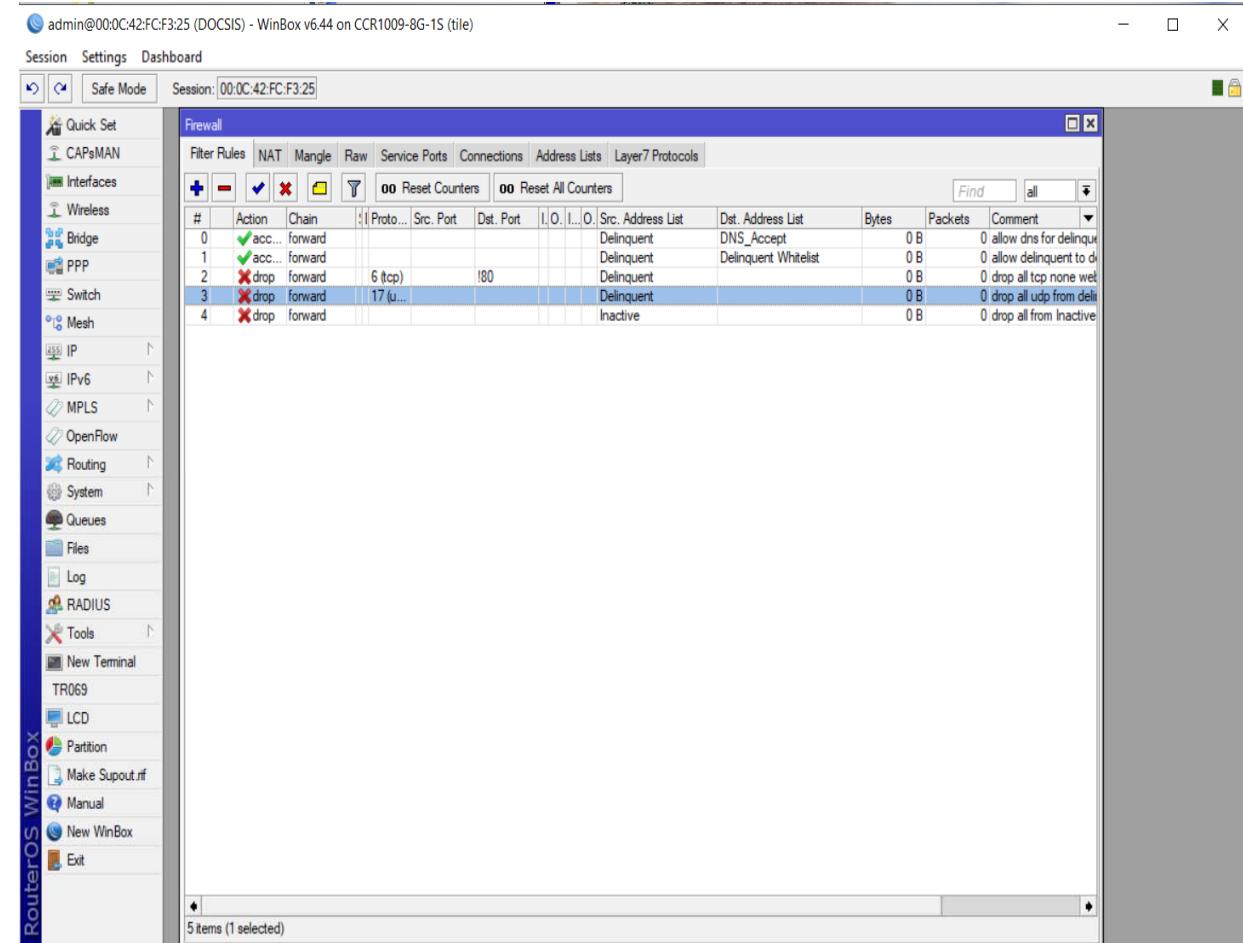
- Session:** admin@00:0C:42:FC:F3:25 (DOCSIS) - WinBox v6.44 on CCR1009-8G-1S (tile)
- Panel:** Firewall > Mangle
- Mangle Rule:**
 - General Tab:** Src. Address List: Windsor_25x10, Action: forward, Chain: 0, Action: mark connection.
 - Advanced Tab:** Layer7 Protocol: [empty], Content: [empty], Connection Bytes: [empty], Connection Rate: [empty].
 - Extra Tab:** Per Connection Classifier: [empty], Src. MAC Address: [empty].
 - Action Tab:** Out. Bridge Port: [empty], In. Bridge Port: [empty].
 - Statistics Tab:** IPsec Policy: [empty], TLS Host: [empty].
 - Buttons:** OK, Cancel, Apply, Disable, Comment, Copy, Remove, Reset Counters, Reset All Counters.

Right Screenshot (Queue List):

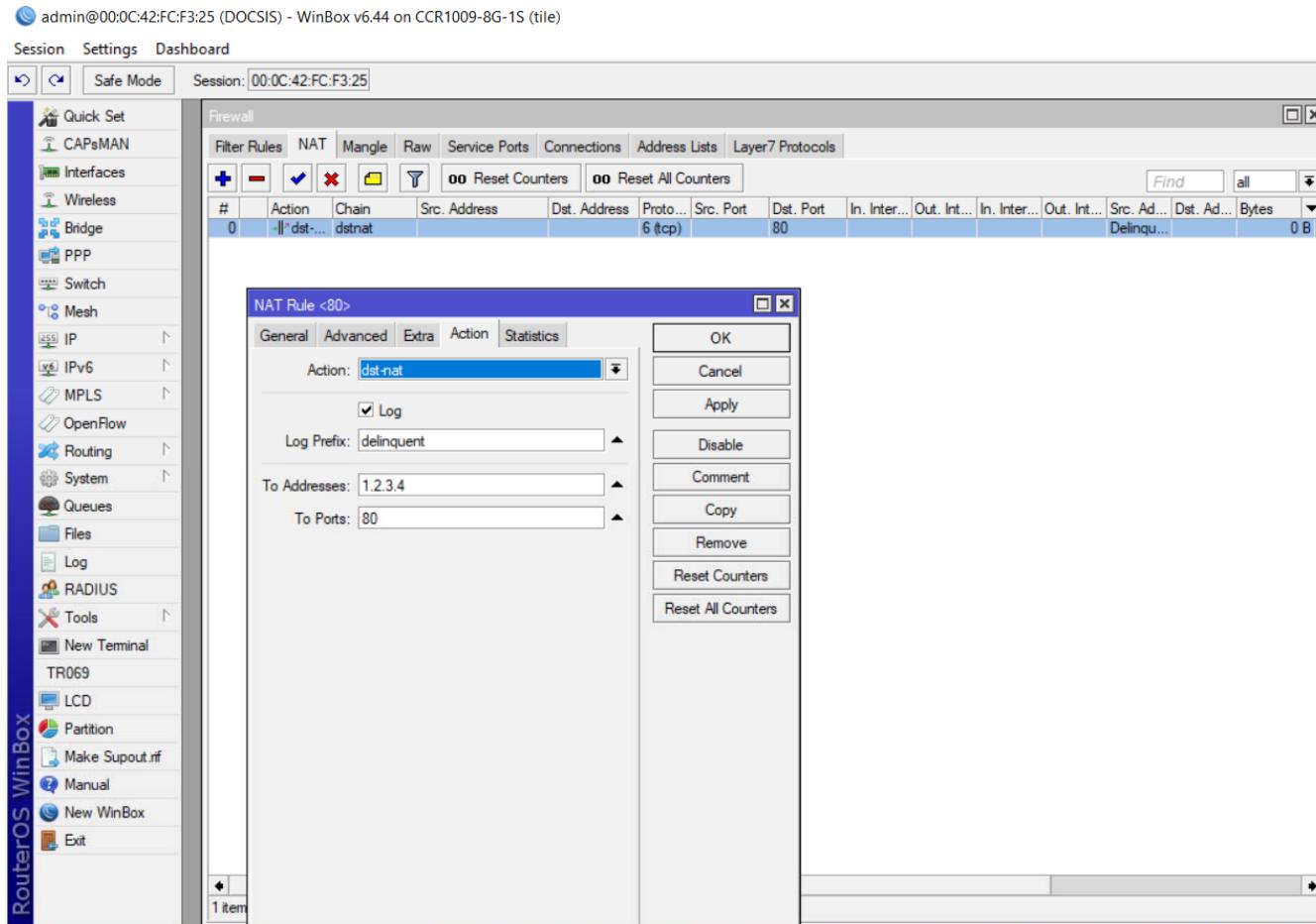
- Session:** admin@00:0C:42:FC:F3:25 (DOCSIS) - WinBox v6.44 on CCR1009-8G-1S (tile)
- Panel:** Queue List
- Queue Tree:**
 - Simple Queues Tab:** Shows 12 items in the Queue List table.
 - Interface Queues Tab:** Shows 12 items in the Queue List table.
 - Queue Tree Tab:** Shows 12 items in the Queue List table.
 - Queue Types Tab:** Shows 12 items in the Queue List table.
- Table Headers:** Name, Parent, Packet ... Limit At (b...), Max Limit ..., Avg. R..., Queued Bytes.
- Table Data:**

Name	Parent	Packet ... Limit At (b...)	Max Limit ...	Avg. R...	Queued Bytes
Devonshire_25x10_download	devon/berk/...	Devon...	0 bps	0 B	
Devonshire_25x10_upload	ether1-wan	Devon...	0 bps	0 B	
Devonshire_40x20_download	devon/berk/...	Devon...	0 bps	0 B	
Devonshire_40x20_upload	ether1-wan	Devon...	0 bps	0 B	
Devonshire_50x25_download	devon/berk/...	Devon...	0 bps	0 B	
Devonshire_50x25_upload	ether1-wan	Devon...	0 bps	0 B	
Windsor_25x10_download	windsor/yorks...	Winds...	0 bps	0 B	
Windsor_25x10_upload	ether1-wan	Winds...	0 bps	0 B	
Windsor_40x10_download	windsor/yorks...	Winds...	0 bps	0 B	
Windsor_40x10_upload	ether1-wan	Winds...	0 bps	0 B	
Windsor_50x25_download	windsor/yorks...	Winds...	0 bps	0 B	
Windsor_50x25_upload	ether1-wan	Winds...	0 bps	0 B	
- Buttons:** Find, Reset Counters, Reset All Counters.

Redirect for non payment



Redirect for non payment



Inactive or Suspended

admin@00:0C:42:FC:F3:25 (DOCSIS) - WinBox v6.44 on CCR1009-8G-1S (tile)

Session Settings Dashboard

Safe Mode Session: 00:0C:42:FC:F3:25

RouterOS WinBox

Firewall

Filter Rules NAT Mangle Raw Service Ports Connections Address Lists Layer7 Protocols

Name	Address	Timeout	Creation Time	Comment
DNS_Accept	8.8.8.8		Mar/01/2019 08:...	
DNS_Accept	4.2.2.2		Mar/01/2019 08:...	
DNS_Accept	10.11.0.0/21		Mar/01/2019 08:...	
DNS_Accept	10.11.8.0/21		Mar/01/2019 08:...	
Delinquent	10.11.2.26		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Devonshire 604 (74)
Delinquent Whitelist	1.2.3.4		Mar/01/2019 08:...	
Devonshire_25x10	10.11.1.20		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Berkshire 603 (80)
Devonshire_40x20	10.11.2.38		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Devonshire 603 (106)
Devonshire_50x25	10.11.2.200		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Devonshire Office (65)
Devonshire_50x25	10.11.1.34		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Kensington 901 (87)
Inactive	10.11.1.26		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Devonshire 604 (74)
Windsor_25x10	10.11.11.30		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Yorkshire 104 (129)
Windsor_40x20	10.11.12.21		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Yorkshire 1704 (84)
Windsor_40x20	10.11.11.21		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Yorkshire 1704 (84)
Windsor_40x20	10.11.11.28		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Yorkshire 902 (118)
Windsor_50x25	10.11.12.200		Mar/01/2019 08:...	Yorkshire Office (78)

16 items

UserManager

We could use the built in Usermanager to write static DHCP leases with mac address as username then add profiles and limitations

Add User

MikroTik
Mikrotik User Manager

Add Edit Generate
1 2 3 4 page 1 of 4

	Last name
	Vanwagner
	Hoffman
	Corbin
	Jones
	Oakley

User details

▲ Main

Username: 12:34:56:78:90:11
Password:
Disabled: Owner: admin

▲ Constraints

IP address: 0.0.0.0
Caller ID: Bind on first use
Shared users: 1

▼ Wireless

▼ Private information

Assign profile: default

19:
20.
16.
36.
12.
636

Userman profile and limitation

The screenshot shows the MikroTik User Manager interface with the 'Profiles' tab selected. A sub-dialog titled 'Profile part' is open, showing settings for a profile named 'dafault'. The 'Period' section includes a list of days (Sunday through Saturday) and a time range from '0:00:00' to '23:59:59'. The 'Limits' section contains buttons for 'New limit', 'Cancel', and 'Add'. To the right, a larger dialog titled 'Limitation details' shows the configuration for the 'dafault' limit. It includes sections for 'Main' (Name: dafault, Owner: admin), 'Limits' (Download: 0B, Upload: 0B, Transfer: 0B, Uptime: blank), 'Rate limits' (Rate limit: Rx Tx, Burst rate: Rx Tx, Burst threshold: Rx Tx, Burst time: Rx Tx, Min rate: Rx Tx), and 'Priority' (Priority: Not specified). An 'Add' button is at the bottom right of the limitation dialog.

MikroTik
Mikrotik User Manager

Routers
Users
Sessions
Customers
Logs
Payments
Profiles
Settings
Reports
7 A sessions
6 A users
Advanced search
Maintenance
Logout

Profiles Limitations

Profile: dafault +
Name: dafault
Name for users:
Owner: admin

Profile part

Period

Days: Sunday
 Monday
 Tuesday
 Wednesday
 Thursday
 Friday
 Saturday

Time: 0:00:00 - 23:59:59

Limits

New limit Cancel Add

Limitation details

Main

Name: dafault
Owner: admin

Limits

Download: 0B
Upload: 0B
Transfer: 0B
Uptime:

Rate limits

Rate limit: Rx Tx
Burst rate: Rx Tx
Burst threshold: Rx Tx
Burst time: Rx Tx
Min rate: Rx Tx

Priority: Not specified

Add

Hotspot

Although not covered here we
could also use Hotspot

SUMMARY

The only real difference between a Docsis based network and an Ethernet or wireless based network other than the physical layer protocols is the need to deliver config files to the modems.

While there is a need for expensive Docsis provisioning software and servers on large complex networks this case study shows how to build a working solution using only a MikroTik edge router.