

SD-WAN: What Are The Real Driving Factors?

Everyone needs an internet connection, or a WAN, or a way of connecting users to their data repositories and applications. But as we know all too well, technology never stands still. Therefore, every organisation that currently has a WAN, whether MPLS or leased lines, should look at the option of SD-WAN before renewing contracts.

SD-WAN has been with us for several years the technology has evolved and is now cemented in the mainstream as a viable WAN connectivity option for the majority of enterprises and businesses, regardless of size, user base, or number of physical sites.

SD-WAN Explained

To simply describe the fundamental concept of SD-WAN; it is the decoupling of the data plane and control plane functions usually found within your Customer Premises Equipment (CPE) routers. SD-WAN centralises the control plane functionality into a single cloud-based controller, or orchestrator. This allows the policies or 'software' that controls how data is routed around your networks to be programmed in a single pane of glass, rather than having to configure individual routers, on a per-hop basis across the network.

SD-WAN Benefits

There is a wide range of cases and business benefits the technology can unlock; so much so, it is helpful to condense these into the five main factors we see driving the adoption of SD-WAN today. It is important to recognise that most major SD-WAN vendors cannot achieve all five benefits listed below:

- 1 WAN Transport Independence** – the ability to use different access layer technologies (MPLS, LTE, DSL, Ethernet), can help mitigate against the reliance on a single Internet Service Provider (ISP) and expensive MPLS circuits, meaning you can choose the most appropriate access technologies according to individual locations.
- 2 Zero-touch Provisioning** – allows an enterprise to rapidly deploy multiple sites, without the need for experienced engineers visiting each site. The devices are simply connected to the internet and download their configuration from the cloud orchestrator, reducing time and mitigating against human error.
- 3 Flexible Path Selection** – most of the well-known vendors feature dynamic path selection as a feature of SD-WAN, whereby the software can continually monitor all links and determine which is the best path for any given application, based on centrally controlled policies that best suit your business.
- 4 Optimised Connectivity** – some solutions allow for the aggregation of all connected access links to be used at the same time, regardless of medium or whether circuits are owned by different ISPs and telcos. This approach creates a highly resilient, always-on solution that doesn't waste any of the bandwidth you pay for.
- 5 Flexible Security** – as workers become more mobile, the edge of your network moves from office to coffee shop, to home on a daily basis. SD-WAN allows the adoption of security policies, which ensure the privacy once afforded only at HQ, now follows the user and applies wherever they connect.

Choosing Your SD-WAN Provider

The challenge for any business looking to adopt the benefits of SD-WAN is the myriad vendors, ISPs and telcos with an SD-WAN offering of one sort or another. Navigating this new landscape, littered with new acronyms such as SASE, SSE and ZTP, has never been more daunting for those looking to make informed decisions to support SD-WAN adoption. Do you choose a firewall with SD-WAN features? Do you opt instead to deploy a feature rich SD-WAN router to each site? What about NFV options?

Why Forfusion?

To put it simply, we can do it better, much better. We are experts in digital transformation with highly skilled engineers and consultants, accredited with specialisations covering enterprise networking, data centre and cloud, underpinned with workplace security. Our partner Evolving Networks write the software, manufacture the hardware, provide the connectivity, and deliver as a managed service (at the 'back-end') with Forfusion providing the expertise and single point of contact for everything (at the 'front end').

This unique partnership allows for the delivery of the specialist value add; Forfusion is the MSP, bringing significant expertise in the networking and security space, and with appropriate guidance, allows you to overlay one or more vendor security propositions of your choice (where required). Our solution is security agnostic and is capable of aggregating multiple disparate ISPs and circuits, serving as a transport underlay. We provide a fully outsourced SD-WAN solution like no other, bundled with carrier circuits, hardware, software, and service delivery all under one roof.

The final result means connectivity that is intelligent, resilient and that adds significant value to you by flexing and supporting your business. We provide SD-WAN solutions which are often more cost-effective than either MPLS or leased lines, and that offer greater flexibility and user experience, with up to 100% guaranteed uptime.

Connection is everything.
Transform your business today.

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