

SD WAN IS THE RIGHT PATH FOR BETTER BRANCH NETWORK PERFORMANCE

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For modern businesses, the classic hub and spoke WAN doesn't make sense when they rely heavily on SaaS and cloud applications. At these organizations, an SD WAN-based approach — one that cuts down on unnecessary traffic and helps users to access the applications they need — is often the best strategy.



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What are the applications that your business relies on to get things done?

Are they a bunch of classic, big-client server applications where everyone, no matter where their office is located, connects to a server in a central data center? If yours is like most modern organizations, the answer is almost certainly no.

Like most businesses today, you rely heavily on third-party cloud and SaaS-based applications. Whether it's Microsoft Office 365, Salesforce.com, or a host of other popular platforms, the applications your company uses are coming from the Internet, not a central data center. In many cases, even your customized "internal" applications are being deployed into the cloud.

For these kinds of modern businesses, a classic "hub and spoke" Wide Area Network (WAN) doesn't really make a lot of sense. Forcing your employees in the San Diego and Dallas offices to connect to the main New York office for all of their Internet connectivity and application access isn't just unnecessary, it leads to slow performance, downtime, and hassles that can reduce productivity, employee satisfaction, and revenue potential.

But is the answer to simply disconnect all branch offices, retail outlets, and other distant locations and let them use their own

independent Internet connections for everything? For many organizations the answer is no, as they still have data, documents, access, and security requirements, as well as other needs that make some form of WAN a necessity.

Given these networking realities, it's no surprise that we've recently seen the rise of a new technology, SD WAN, that is designed to meet the needs of modern businesses to keep all of their branches and locations always connected and performing at their best.

SD WAN creates a more dynamic, flexible, and resilient WAN that keeps all locations connected intelligently. It can leverage multiple connections (high-speed business Internet, broadband, wireless, you name it) and smart routing to use the right connections for the right task. And it lets workers connect directly to the Internet for SaaS and cloud applications while still retaining central network connections and traditional WAN levels of visibility and control.

It's even possible to control the usage of all types of applications with SD WAN, so, for example, employees watching YouTube videos or using Facebook don't impact the bandwidth needed for video conferencing, voice communication, and business-critical applications. Given all of these advantages and benefits, it's no surprise that our research shows that Industry Leaders in network and WAN optimization and performance are 2.25 times more likely to take advantage of SD WAN technologies.

Keeping all Locations and Branches Connected

What are some of the drivers that are pushing businesses to adopt technologies like SD WAN?

Well, organizations today are very geographically dispersed and supporting a wide number of locations that require high-speed and reliable internet connectivity. In fact, our research shows that 54% of all organizations supporting more than 10 locations and businesses using SD WAN are 33% more likely than all others to

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have more than ten locations to support. For these organizations, having a fast and reliable connection to these branches, along with good security and visibility, isn't something that is just nice to have — it's a requirement for a successful business.

And by implementing SD WAN technologies, these organizations are seeing a number of key benefits. For example, businesses using SD WAN are:

- ➔ **25% more likely to see a reduction in network and WAN downtime**
- ➔ **33% more likely to report increased security capabilities**
- ➔ **65% more likely to see a reduction in CapEx spending**
- ➔ **Twice as likely to report having optimal WAN and network performance**

With these kinds of benefits, we can easily see that moving to SD WAN to connect all locations and branches isn't about going with a cool new technology. It's about providing meaningful and concrete business advantages for the organizations using SD WAN.

To gain these advantages for themselves, businesses should look at how they are providing connectivity for all of their locations and understand the applications that are being used in these branches. With this knowledge in hand, they can investigate what options are best for ensuring the highest levels of application performance and reliability for their entire organization.

For many modern businesses, the classic hub and spoke approach, tied to costly MPLS and other dedicated connections, doesn't make a lot of sense when they rely heavily on SaaS applications and cloud-based systems. At these organizations of today, a new SD WAN-based approach, that cuts down on unnecessary traffic and helps users to access the applications they need, is often the best strategy.

Everyone understands that the shortest and most efficient path to a goal is best. The same is also true for the networks that connect a business.

By letting their offices, branches, and locations use the best Internet path for their many applications and services, leading organizations are seeing improved performance, high reliability, increased user productivity, and lower IT costs. That sounds like a shortcut that is worth taking.

Author: Jim Rapoza, Senior Research Analyst & Editorial Director
Information Technology



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