SD-WAN for UCaaS: Optimizing Bandwidth on Any Network

Enhanced Quality of Service (QoS) for Better
Business Communications

Content:

Introduction

Businesses have been moving their communication workloads to the cloud for about as long as the cloud has been around. But the demands that these real-time communications place on a network—as opposed to the simpler needs of one-way communications, such as email—can be significant. And while the end result is workable, it's not always optimal. Large companies taking communications to the cloud can be faced with brownouts and jitter, unless they're willing to make major investments in private networks to overcome the problem.

Now, with one of the most exciting developments in years—the application of **SD-WAN technology to UCaaS** (unified communications as a service)—the business communication world's movers and shakers are pushing real-time, cloud-based communications toward their true potential and providing a better, smarter, and more efficient service in the process. Take a closer look at what this advancement means for business communications.

V VONAGE

CHAPTER 1:

The Transformative Role of SD-WAN with UCaaS

To properly discuss one of the most exciting network-enabling solutions to date, a brief history of SD-WAN provides a useful backdrop. Many advancements in business are made possible thanks to the simultaneous growth of technologies. In this case, just as SD-WAN (software-defined wide area network) was emerging, the cloud was also evolving rapidly. This may not seem huge on its face, but it's a phenomenal combination in practice. The cloud made many things businesses traditionally did over WAN possible via the internet. This allowed companies to break free from maintaining numerous complex data centers and IT structures, a major change in and of itself.

This is where cloud communication and collaboration come into play. Though the cloud did represent a cheaper and more accessible way for businesses to employ critical network-backed communication tools, there were some definite challenges. Pushing multiple streams of real-time data over the cloud, for example, could compromise quality of service (QoS).

Essential Impact on Network QoS

While there is effectively no end to the benefits cloud-based communication and collaboration offer, any business would want to minimize issues leading to poor quality of experience. This is especially true considering the smartphone revolution and modern employees, who expect a solid, collaborative experience across multiple devices no matter where they work or what they do.

Moving unified communications to the cloud created an interesting scenario, with voice treated similar to any other data coming through. However, this often isn't enough for real-time communications. Now you have to contend with bandwidth and QoS concerns.

Here's where the advancement applies: By bringing SD-WAN capabilities to UCaaS, communication providers are able to elevate QoS.

They're applying technical architecture parameters that allow connections to be provided in a priority bandwidth from Point A to Point B, thus enhancing the overall experience for business communication users.

Two Key Ways the Technology Makes this Happen:

1. **Active, Smart Monitoring:** With technology that constantly searches for the best possible path for real-time communication data to take, communications are properly prioritized. An employee engaging in a video chat, for instance, will get better QoS than the staffer watching Netflix® during lunch.

2. **Abundant Failover:** The best solutions applying SD-WAN to UCaaS allow users to pick from multiple networks. For instance, an organization experiencing problems with its standard WAN connection at a branch location could temporarily switch to a commercial broadband line generally used to manage internal data activity, then switch back when things are on the up-and-up again. This hybrid approach could also include other networking solutions, such as an LTE connection.

With these advancements, a company's IT staff gets all the flexibility of a hybrid communication solution, the intelligence of a managed solution, and the control it needs to make it all come together. That's a big change in the communications arena, where tech staff must sometimes sacrifice the ability to make granular change in the name of cost or flexibility

> **By bringing SD-WAN capabilities to UCaaS, communication providers are able to elevate quality of service.**

Efficient Investment in Bandwidth Optimization

Naturally, this prioritizing and shaping also leads to more efficient bandwidth usage. Think of it this way: By bringing in SD-WAN for UCaaS, it's like taking the $300 you spent on connectivity and squeezing out bandwidth equivalent to (or even greater than) a 3 MB ethernet circuit, which can cost upward of $600 to $700. Companies can "squeeze" that bandwidth out of multiple locations, getting more for what they currently use or saving money by dropping to a more appropriate package.

More, this prioritizing and shaping further ensures the customer receives higher-quality bandwidth, providing an even better bang for their buck. On one hand, they get more efficiency. On the other, they get better, smarter performance for their real-time communication needs, deriving even more benefit from the bandwidth they use. In other words, they simultaneously get better performance from their cloud-based unified communications solutions and save space.

More Customization, Flexibility, and Control

Perhaps best of all, this is still an emerging technology in terms of adoption and overall capability. As provider companies take managed products and essentially stitch them together into one structure, end-user organizations will see an even greater level of customizability, flexibility, and control.

In short, the future is bright for UCaaS thanks to the deft application of SD-WAN technology. Communications companies building these performance enhancements into their existing platforms can provide even better service—and experience—to an existing slate of solutions, all while making the technology less complex and more accessible. In this sense, the capability represents both a natural next step for communications and a milestone improvement for a critical business function.

Whether your organization is looking to modernize an aging communications structure, enhance collaborative ability across a broad number of geographical locations, or simply make better use of the bandwidth it currently pays too much for, there's a lot to love about these advancements.

CHAPTER 2:

4 Ways Businesses are Successfully Using the Technology

With businesses moving an ever-growing number of processes to cloud-based services, the core aspects of the technology—the prioritizing, shaping, and switching network traffic to optimize bandwidth—can turn into numerous reciprocal benefits. For instance, if you want to disengage from a costly MPLS package or integrate Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) despite being stuck with a substandard broadband connection, SD-WAN for UCaaS could be your new best friend.

And that's just the elevator pitch. At a deeper level, the technology is built to thrive in several common business-tech situations, making it highly useful for a broad sample of cloud-era organizations. Whether you're intrigued by this up-and-coming communication technology or you suspect your needs might match its benefits, here are four ways businesses are using the technology to great effect:

1. When Existing Broadband Is a Barrier to Better Communication Quality

Before we delve into the extra benefits, however, it bears repeating that communication quality is still the main benefit of this technology—and its core competency. The beauty's all in its approach. By making smart use of a "dumb" pipe (that is, optimizing traffic to meet the demands of real-time communications), the technology improves QoS without simply throwing more bandwidth at cloud-based communications. A company experiencing jitter and other signs of poor bandwidth prioritization could see a noticeable uptick in digital voice and video quality, all over their current connection.

This isn't to say a company's call quality needs to be disruptively bad for more efficient communication bandwidth to make a difference. Companies that need elevated uptime and experience from their digital communications tend to really need them. The legal firm that routes calls through a specialized billing app can't afford infrequent brownouts any more than a busy call center can bear the occasional outage. If that sounds like you—or if you've avoided moving your communications to the cloud for fear of bandwidth getting in the way—it's worth a look on these grounds alone.

2. To Ensure Consistent Communication Across a Distributed Organization

Many distributed organizations work across a variety of broadband providers and solutions. Because they come from different providers, these solutions offer varying levels of uptime, speed, and quality—and for companies that rely on IP-based communications products such as voice and video calling, this inconsistency can cause major concern. Besides pressing needs such as quality, basic administrative tasks can be a challenge when communications are carried over a variety of networks and network types.

SD-WAN for UCaaS takes a diverse approach to this multifaceted concern. Since it's cloud-based, administrative staff can carry out critical tasks that touch every location from the same centralized post. Applying a universal policy across a variety of network types requires none of the individual-level fiddling and configuration. By the same token, the above-mentioned traffic prioritization and shaping—along with automated network switching, where necessary—ensure communication data takes the best possible path at all times. For instance, the staffer streaming a TV show on his lunch break will receive less priority than a working employee's voice call or video chat. These considerations make the technology a compelling choice for distributed organizations, however far that distribution may reach.

3. When Employing Wireless Connectivity as a Backup or Failover Option

Businesses have placed an increasing amount of faith (and thus a growing number of apps, processes, and workflows) in cloud-based services. Unsurprisingly, the same businesses have invested in secondary and even tertiary wireless internet connections, all in the name of ensuring constant access to their cloud-based assets.

While this focus on failover is a great thing for many cloud-based services, an office full of people calling, video conferencing, and performing other communication over an emergency LTE connection is simply asking for trouble. So what's a business to do when it's forced to move to a wireless backup? The same shaping and prioritizing that make SD-WAN for UCaaS so strong over wired networks work just the same over wireless—and if the connections are running concurrently, the service can utilize them all, creating even more paths to better call quality.

4. If Fiber, Private Circuit, and Other High-End Connectivity Options are Costly or Unobtainable

Of course, wireless isn't only deployed as a second— or third—best choice in business settings. For rural workplaces and other regions where high-end connectivity isn't available, it may be the only option. A lack of true wired connectivity can represent a significant roadblock, slowing workflows and even forcing the business to choose suboptimal technology solutions. The same idea applies where quality wired connectivity comes at too high a premium for the business to purchase, or where metered usage restricts how much data can be used due to cost concerns.

It goes without saying that this technology can shape traffic over wireless bandwidth whether that bandwidth is a primary option or a fallback. This alone gives it value for business that have deployed VoIP or other digital communications over wireless. For example, the company that could set its clock by the dip in quality it suffers during high network usage could enjoy consistent clarity upon implementing the technology.

Then there are the businesses that have been unable to move to cloud communications due to their connectivity woes, or those that fear their metered usage prices would skyrocket upon moving their communications to the cloud. While every company's specific details will naturally differ, SD-WAN for UCaaS makes cloud communication worth a second look at minimum. The efficiencies it introduces can make a drastic difference in terms of bandwidth used and usage dollars spent, opening the door to a new world of communication without again throwing more bandwidth at the problem.

The technology is built to thrive in several common business-tech situations, making it highly useful for a broad sample of cloud-era organizations.

CHAPTER 3:

What to Look for in an SD-WAN Solution for UCaaS

At its core, **SD-WAN** for UCaaS is all about quality and efficiency. The technology routes and prioritizes data over a business's data networks—including private circuits, commercial broadband lines, and even 4G LTE connections—to ensure better communication quality. For instance, a location "stuck" with a commercial broadband account may be able to migrate to cloud-based communication options with the efficiencies this exciting SD-WAN solution introduces, all without jitter or other telltale signs of ineffective use of bandwidth.

Further, though it may be a new technology, there are plenty of differentiators out there on the market. Because of this, taking the time to choose the correct combination of features is one of the smartest moves a company considering the technology can make. At a minimum, be on the lookout for the four following features:

Firewall and Encryption Services

In the business world, regulations often lead to the purchase of third-party firewall appliances, not to mention the added human efforts that come with managing these tools.

Thus, any service that provides protection at the application layer carries value all its own. The app-layer firewall provides administrators with a greater level of control over network protection activities, including the ability to directly authenticate internal users from the firewall itself.

A built-in app-level firewall also appeals to the interlinked benefits of cost, simplicity, and administrative efficiency. Having this capability out of the box could conceivably save the organization from purchasing and maintaining a separate firewall appliance, reducing costs (especially in growing organizations), and eliminating points of failure from the company's larger scheme.

Meanwhile, having a single point of contact for routing, firewall, and communications questions and concerns reduces hassle from IT to accounting and beyond.

Many of the same high-level ideas apply to encryption. Whether it's mandated by law in your industry or simply a best practice, choosing a provider that encrypts your voice and video communications provides an inherent measure of simplicity and keeps sensitive data from reaching the wrong eyes or ears. That it's an added part of an **SD-WAN solution** that already provides so much is just icing on the cake.

Cost-Reduction and Data-Efficiency Capabilities

Video communication uses a tremendous amount of data and requires a degree of prioritization and specialized handling to perform well over a given network. Many businesses have moved their video and voice capabilities—along with countless other mission-critical apps and services—to the cloud. By using the cloud with SD-WAN technology, businesses get the best of both worlds: quality communications with fewer expenses.

A competent SD-WAN solution for UCaaS helps address this issue in numerous ways, solving more than a few secondary concerns in the process. This leads to the idea of data prioritization. Because real-time communications require preferential treatment on the network for the best possible results, the SD-WAN for UCaaS provider you choose should offer a product that does the sorting automatically. In other words, the employee watching a company YouTube video should not see better-quality bandwidth than the one engaged in a teleconference with a client.

Further, this prioritization should be far from a minor feature. If you're already holding voice and video telephony over a private circuit or third-party business broadband, there's a good chance it has a significant impact on your data usage, and thus, data costs. Choosing the right SD-WAN solution for UCaaS, then, can effect major savings per every location using IP communication. Even if you don't trim down your current package, the worst-case scenario—if you can truly call it "worst"—is vastly improved data efficiency. Upon implementing SD-WAN for UCaaS, the company could allocate bandwidth to other important causes without encumbering itself with higher data costs.

Real-Time Monitoring

Turning back to the topic of firewalls, they are a great example of SD-WAN for UCaaS's more-for-less value proposition. For example, if a company purchases a QoS product, it gets a secondary feature with numerous benefits all its own—there's no longer a need to purchase separate firewall appliances at new locations.

It's the same story for SD-WAN for UCaaS products with built-in bandwidth monitoring. Companies using third-party broadband may have limited insight into the specifics of their usage without specialized tools or services. On the other hand, a capable SD-WAN solution brings numerous communication-quality benefits, plus the ability to monitor. Getting a better grasp on usage can enable the company to create and enforce better policy, improve efficiency, and generally gain improved insight into day-to-day broadband activity, all without the need for extra appliances—an "icing" feature that provides far too much value for a simple cake metaphor.

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Single-Provider Accountability

Juggling communication providers across multiple geographical regions can be a monumental chore. For distributed organizations facing this challenge as a matter of course, even simple problems can become a tangled web of finger-pointing, false promises, and confusion so dense it gives even the most stalwart phone-jockey a panic attack every time the line jitters.

In other words, distributed organizations should always look for an SD-WAN for UCaaS provider with a broad selection of communication products and broad regional reach. This makes finding answers, solving problems, and identifying causes easier than you might have imagined possible. Billing questions, technical concerns, and numerous other interactions with your providers becomes a single point of contact with a singular entity—and if you've ever jumped on the not-my-fault circuit between two competing regional communications businesses, you know just how important that simplicity is.

CHAPTER 4:

How the Solution Can Help Your Organization Scale

The burgeoning **SD-WAN** for UCaaS technology is most frequently touted for its core ability to increase digital communication quality while simultaneously slashing the amount of bandwidth those communications require. That aligns very well with the business need for flexibility and scalability in solutions. For instance, if inadequate data connectivity options or data costs are keeping your company from fully realizing cloud-based communications, this technology could open new doors for you. Those are just a few ways the technology can help businesses as the world moves to cloud communications—and cloud everything else, for that matter. Here's a look at how the technology promotes scalability:

Peace Out, Private Circuit

The potential reliance on a private circuit may be one of the best reasons for an organization to consider this technology, especially if the company pays for it at more than one location. Because SD-WAN for UCaaS technology can be deployed in multiple sites (such as across a regional grocery store's half-dozen locations or in numerous cafes run by an area coffee chain), the combined savings grows with every line a company reduces or eliminates. That's the kind of equation that "really adds up," as the accounting types are fond of saying.

However, the advantages can go beyond simple savings in certain business situations. For example, take the midsize organization that wants to move to a more affordable digital communications package across locations, but can't due to a smattering of sites only having access to ill-fitting or substandard internet products. With SD-WAN, the company now has options beyond sticking with its standard PBX solution or overspending for a handful of locations to go on the private circuit.

In all of these situations (and others), the technology promotes scalability because it is scalable and has the capability to link distributed locations across a region, state, or even country.

More, it promotes growth for single-location and distributed businesses alike by giving those businesses more options for the communication and data tools they choose. Not bad for "just" a communications solution.

Consistency in Motion

Other scale-friendly factors come on the administrative side. As any growing organization knows, rapidly opening multiple locations comes with a million intricacies to master and manage in terms of the products and services they need—and once you have the initial ruffles smoothed out, long-term management is still a concern.

Built-in Competence: Though it's a **business communications tool** on its face, the right SD-WAN for UCaaS product can help in areas as far-reaching as hardware. For one example, look at purchasing business-class networking equipment such as firewall appliances and routers. A competent SD-WAN for UCaaS product includes strong firewall capability out of the box. Beyond the short-term savings this represents, having built-in support from the same people who manage your communication QoS can be immensely helpful in the long-term, a perk that only grows as the number of businesses in your stable does.

Quality Across Locations: Then there's the ability to work over numerous data connections. Even small distributed companies in the same city or region must often deal with multiple communications providers. This can result in inconsistent service quality, among other problems that scale alongside the business.

A product that keeps communication quality roughly equivalent at every site, then, can be a big advantage over time. Instead of dealing with that one shop's inability to stay connected, you can feel safe knowing your QoS solution will switch seamlessly to your failover option as your internet provider fixes the problem for the tenth time that month.

> **If inadequate data connectivity options or data costs are keeping your company from fully realizing cloud-based communications, this technology could open new doors for you.**

Administration and Monitoring: Ease of administration and monitoring is also a useful feature in growing organizations, particularly when they've reached the point where they need dedicated IT staff. Worthwhile solutions include deep insight into performance at all linked locations. In turn, this can help tech staff make decisions, perform diagnostics, and carry out other tasks for multiple locations from a central post, thus keeping them from bouncing from location to location and saving the business time, effort, and mileage invoices. As another added benefit for IT teams—as well as their employees and customers—included encryption features bolster privacy at every endpoint location. Besides ensuring the company's hybrid network receives consistent privacy protection at every stop, this mitigates concerns over multiple connection types and reduces the effort and system resources companies must spend to keep a thumb on potentially malicious activity.

CHAPTER 5:

Quality of Experience Across Industry Verticals

SD-WAN has such enormous potential to help organizations in almost every industry squeeze more utility out of their technology investment. This technology sorts and optimizes complex network traffic, allowing organizations to deploy bandwidth-hungry communications solutions over a broader number of networking products. Here are a few specific industry perspectives on how SD-WAN solutions for UCaaS help deliver consistent network bandwidth performance:

RETAIL INDUSTRY:
Consistent Network Optimization Across Locations

Cloud-based solutions have usurped older tools everywhere in retail, an advancement that unifies the organization more than ever but also places greater emphasis on IT resources in the process. Because real-time communications place larger-than-usual demands on a network and require availability and consistency, they provide an excellent example of what SD-WAN can do.

A Case for SD-WAN Solutions: If a retailer operates in a number of urban, suburban, and rural areas, it may use a phone branch exchange (PBX) solution, with each store working with a regional communication provider to obtain service. This is necessary due to inconsistent broadband options among stores. While the urban stores are near consumer—and business—class broadband providers, many of the rural locations are stuck with substandard options.

Because of this, maintaining a consistent phone presence—an important part of the overall experience—is expensive and often complex. Fixing errors in the exchange can result in finger-pointing from the regional providers. Similarly, though certain stores have cutting-edge cloud-based metric reporting and inventory tracking tools, rural stores may not have the bandwidth resources available.

Factors that Reduce Costs: SD-WAN solutions address the above-mentioned concerns in numerous ways. The bandwidth efficiency issue could allow the retailer to shed its regional providers in favor of a singular, centralized cloud communications vendor, paving the way to reduced costs and less complexity. Suddenly, the organization's bookkeepers pay one bill for phone service, while the company's IT team only needs to call one vendor in the event of problems or technical questions.

Taking the idea of savings further, imagine the company previously had many of its locations on a private circuit for data connectivity. Because many SD-WAN solutions check the line for favorable communications conditions and squeeze better performance from Internet bandwidth, the company may be able to move toward commercial broadband products, saving hundreds of dollars per location per month.

SD-WAN tools can also address questions of consistency. With cloud communications, point of sale, and other retail tools requiring constant uptime, solutions that hop between networks to provide a consistent measure of performance are inherently valuable to a distributed model such as retail.

> SD-WAN solutions check the line for favorable communications conditions and squeeze better performance from internet bandwidth.

REAL ESTATE:

Building Connections With an SD-WAN Tool

Geographic distribution is common in real estate, but keeping all those locations in lockstep isn't always easy or cheap. A combination of inconsistent broadband availability and growing technological needs often keep organizations on leased data lines—commonly referred to as "private circuit"—to ensure all locations have the same access and connectivity. SD-WAN technology allows real estate organizations greater networking flexibility at a more efficient price point.

Efficiency, Savings, and Consistency: SD-WAN is quite adept at bridging the real estate industry's technological gaps. Companies can use it to link individual fronts without overspending on premium network connections. Further, the efficiencies it introduces allow real estate companies to use a growing number of cloud tools without the need for more bandwidth. This could help organizations drop expensive private circuit services, saving them considerable monthly amounts at every location, or let them deploy cloud tools they couldn't previously use due to limited data options.

In an industry where deploying dedicated IT staff at every branch is financially unfeasible, these factors are huge. SD-WAN uses encryption to build links between locations, maintaining privacy for customer financial information and other sensitive data. The technology also gives companies enhanced insight into how data is being used on their networks, which lets them make better decisions regarding the solutions they employ.

Beyond Distribution: A location doesn't need to be connected to a larger organization to benefit from SD-WAN. The quality-of-service benefits apply in any office that uses cloud tools. For example, consider an independent real estate office in a rural location. This company wants to use cloud solutions such as Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and video conferencing, but a lack of decent broadband connectivity is holding it back. When much of your job revolves around talking, you can't have connectivity problems hampering your phone chats and video conferences.

The right SD-WAN tool could allow this business to move into the future without sacrificing quality. Even if satellite internet is the best this company can get, the technology allows for great QoS and high availability.

SD-WAN is adept at bridging the real estate industry's technological gaps without overspending on premium network connections.

EDUCATION SECTOR:

How SD-WAN Helps Institutions Warm Up to the Cloud

SD-WAN technology sorts and optimizes complex network traffic, allowing organizations to deploy bandwidth-hungry solutions over a broader number of networking products. For example, a retailer can use an SD-WAN solution to implement cloud communications in all its locations without purchasing costly private-circuit network connectivity for each physical space.

Of course, private-sector businesses aren't the only organizations with a distributed model or a need for efficient technological spending. For schools, universities, and other public and private educational institutions, the ability to do more with less is a trait of successful organizations at best, and a bare-minimum necessity at worst. Getting a handle on a changing technology landscape while maintaining a tenable financial situation is a serious challenge. Whether it's introducing efficiencies or opening doors, SD-WAN can help do both.

Distribution and the Challenges of the Cloud: Cloud technology has grown too useful for educational institutions to ignore. It can be a teaching tool, a study aid, and a method for multiple locations to project a single face all at once. However, increased reliance on **cloud solutions for business** also means increased need for bandwidth. Telecommunications costs can indeed pose a significant hurdle for schools, forcing many to choose one of the following three suboptimal options:

1. Getting the cloud technology they want and overspending for bandwidth to support it

2. Foregoing cloud technology they want to keep their telecom spending low

3. Attempting to shoehorn too many cloud services onto insufficient network resources, resulting in poor performance or even outages

Availability may further restrict a system's ability to introduce cloud tools. Schools serving rural areas may find themselves unable to deploy the same solutions available to locations with more networking options.

> **SD-WAN technology lets schools—and, indeed, entire systems—make more efficient use of their network resources.**

How the Right SD-WAN Tool Can Help: Concerns about cloud services give **SD-WAN** inherent value. By letting schools—and, indeed, entire systems—make more efficient use of their network resources, the technology can open doors previously thought unavailable, ultimately helping educational bodies meet their varied financial and technological needs in the process.

Many of these upsides come from the technology's ability to shape and prioritize traffic. A school that recently replaced its traditional PBX with a fuller-featured, less-expensive cloud communication system could see even better returns on its investment by dropping to a communications package made possible by SD-WAN. Also, individual schools with smaller student bases could use the technology to move away from costly high-end data solutions, allowing them to maintain the cloud-based services their students and staff rely on while drastically cutting costs.

SD-WAN's ease of administration can also be useful to distributed educational organizations. By maintaining a simplified, internet-based network of physical locations with an SD-WAN tool, IT teams for individual schools and their overarching systems have a much easier job keeping everyone connected.

CONTACT CENTERS:

Transformation Via the Right SD-WAN Solution

Contact centers aren't too far from the average business in terms of their enabling dependency on cloud tools. But while a retailer can get out the manual card swipers when the network goes down, a contact center might not be able to place calls, document sales, or carry out other tasks during major downtime, at least until processes are moved to a secondary data connection or similar failover responses are carried out. Other network troubles could come from an unexpected spike in traffic, or continued overuse of network resources may cause problems that affect service quality. Callers may hear echoing or jitter, recording solutions may drop segments, and so on.

Quality, Uptime, and Peace of Mind: In all these events, the right SD-WAN tool can help ensure business goes on as usual. A network with SD-WAN capability sorts and prioritizes traffic, giving certain packets more priority than others. In other words, it knows that your main floor's voice data should get better treatment than someone browsing the web or streaming a movie while on break.

The ability to hop between networks is another critical consideration. Most cloud-reliant contact centers will employ secondary and even tertiary connections as failover options. An SD-WAN tool can check all these concurrent connections for the best possible path, bolstering call quality and providing a safeguard against interruption. If it sees one connection is down or not working at its best, it automatically goes with a better option. These factors come together to provide an extra layer of dependability and performance from all the **business communications solutions** a contact center might use.

> **For fast-growing call companies, being able to expand without a need for a drastic uptick in bandwidth can represent major savings.**

Scaling Better with an SD-WAN Tool: Further, anyone with experience in the contact center world knows that the boom-or-bust nature can result in a need to scale quickly, either up or down. For fast-growing call companies, being able to expand without a need for a drastic uptick in bandwidth can represent major savings. This could be of particular use for centers outside of urban areas, since high-speed, high-bandwidth business connectivity options in rural and even suburban areas tend to be prohibitively expensive or nonexistent.

Adopting an SD-WAN tool can also help companies embrace the growing trend toward multichannel sales and service, a serious consideration for organizations deciding what their contact centers will ultimately look like. Squeezing more performance by optimizing bandwidth can open the door to cloud capabilities beyond calling. For example, an organization looking to add greater support to a complex product by offering video chat could shave data costs and maintain an acceptable level of quality by deploying the technology.

CHAPTER 6:

Technology Overview: SmartWAN from Vonage

An overview for SD-WAN should appropriately start with understanding of how it can help organizations glean better QoS and experience (QoE) from the cloud solutions they depend on. By sorting and shaping the traffic that comes over a company's network, the technology can significantly optimize the bandwidth their critical solutions use.

Vonage offers a robust **SD-WAN for UCaaS** solution and is quickly assuming a leadership role in the technology's sphere. SmartWAN is the latest addition to its suite of tools and services that can help resolve network issues in the era of cloud-everything.

Balancing Bandwidth Needs

How do SD-WAN tools such as SmartWAN help businesses address the top network challenges associated with cloud adoption? The answer comes down to a single word: prioritization. By continually re-analyzing and re-allocating prioritization, the technology constantly puts your communication traffic in proper order, ensuring real-time, two-way traffic and other high-priority data gets treatment reflective of its importance.

That said, the technology does more than hold the velvet rope for your traffic, useful though that feature is on its own. It can route data through multiple modes of connectivity—a combination of multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) and public broadband, for instance—giving companies with more than one data connection even more inroads to quality communication. If a considerable traffic spike or even an outage takes one option down, it simply moves communication traffic over to the next-best option.

A company doesn't need multiple connections, however, to benefit from what SD-WAN has to offer. For some companies, quite the opposite is true: Its ability to optimize and route traffic can allow organizations to move to lower, less expensive broadband packages, a savings that only increases with every branch or satellite they deploy SD-WAN to.

Then there's the idea of administrative simplicity. For companies utilizing an existing suite of one vendor's products (or those interested in switching), choosing a provider that offers an SD-WAN product such as SmartWAN helps you check yet another major business need off the list, all with the assistance of a single provider.

Your Ticket to Better Cloud Communication

As more and more processes move to the cloud, a tool that optimizes bandwidth—despite the business's increasing reliance on traffic-generating solutions—has tremendous value. Throw in the simplicity of dealing with a single provider for a number of your most important services, and it's easy to see why SmartWAN is an increasing presence in businesses nationwide. If bandwidth is an issue at your office(s) or soon will be, give it a look and see what it can do for you.

See how SmartWAN can enhance network quality of service for your organization.

> **SD-WAN tools such as SmartWAN help businesses address the top network challenges associated with cloud adoption.**

VONAGE

Get Started Today

Now is the time to consider enhancing network performance with an efficient SD-WAN for UCaaS solution. Your customers, employees, and organization at large deserve it. Contact a Vonage network specialist today.

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GET STARTED