Making the case for SD-WAN

A practical guide to getting buy-in for your new network
New challenges require a new network

It isn’t just that enterprise IT is changing rapidly — it’s that it’s changing in a number of different ways, all at the same time. The confluence of the cloud, mobile, IoT and big data have made it very clear: these new opportunities demand a new network infrastructure.

The many digital transformation opportunities — and no doubt those that will follow — are asking a lot from CIOs and IT leaders. They’re also asking a lot of your networks; requiring them to carry more data, of a greater variety, at faster speeds, with more reliability and security.

In short: now is the right time to make sure your network is ready.

The SD-WAN advantage

Given the above demands, it’s no surprise that SD-WAN has generated so much excitement. Enterprises are seeing for themselves that this type of network delivers the agile infrastructure ideally suited to the new, data-intensive business world.

If you’re considering SD-WAN today, you’re far from alone. And if you’re looking for greater reliability, simplified management, and improved speed and agility, you’re in the right place.

These benefits can affect every department in your organization, which is why we put together a guide to help you show your colleagues why SD-WAN should be the next step for your network.

In this guide, we’ll cover:

• The challenges your new network can help you overcome
• The costs involved in getting started
• The big benefits for your organization
• How life will change for each role in your business
• The right time to move to SD-WAN

We’re ready when you are.
Network letting you down?
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Taking advantage of the latest technologies and driving innovation requires a network that will help you respond quickly, shift large amounts of data and reduce the complexity of handling new services.

Take a look at how SD-WAN can help you achieve some of your current and future goals, as well as fixing some problems along the way.

“We want to improve network performance across several sites.”

If unexpected spikes in bandwidth use, or having networks spread over various locations are causing you issues, then SD-WAN can help.

This type of network intelligently routes traffic along the best available path, ensuring full bandwidth usage.

And setting up new networks in disparate locations is faster and easier than ever before — it can be done in just a few clicks.

You’ll find your network coping not only with the challenges of today, but with everything you’re planning on throwing at it tomorrow. In fact, enterprises experience 95% fewer outages with SD-WAN.

“We’re looking to move more applications to the cloud or provide easy, reliable access to cloud applications.”

The benefits of the cloud are well publicized, but juggling a variety of on-premises and cloud applications can be a real headache for network managers.

SD-WAN works to solve that headache, by providing a single view of application performance and quality of experience for every application in your organization, on-premises and in the cloud.

So, if you’re just starting to move to the cloud, or want to expand your investment, this kind of network can dramatically simplify the journey.

“We need to adapt to changing business demands and take advantage of new technology trends.”

Your organization needs to react quickly to changing needs — so your network does, too.

SD-WAN’s optimized traffic routing makes your network faster. More important, since it makes it easy to deploy and configure new equipment, you can make changes faster too.

And crucially, it gives you complete visibility into application performance — and makes automated adjustments to keep performance high.

So it’s easier to change. And you’re always moving fast.

Network letting you down?

“We need to find a simpler, more efficient way to handle voice, video and data networks.”

SD-WAN simplifies the way you run your network. You no longer need to juggle different networks for voice and data. Instead, you can consolidate all your traffic and control it from a central platform.

Complete transparency into performance means you’re ahead of the game when it comes to any potential issues, and simple monthly pricing means there are no surprises when it comes to costs. There — easier already.

“We need to gain greater visibility into network performance.”

Having complete, real-time visibility into network and application performance is essential to predicting and preventing issues. But, with several networks based across numerous locations, it can be a real struggle.

With SD-WAN, you gain complete, real-time visibility into everything from a single point of control. You can see what’s demanding the most bandwidth and even optimize performance automatically.

95% of enterprises experience fewer outages with SD-WAN.²

² Nemertes, Cloud and Networking Benchmark, 2018.
A better way to pay for WAN
A better way to pay for WAN

SD-WAN isn’t just a better way to run your network — it’s also a better way to pay for your network.

Once you’re up and running with an SD-WAN, you pay less for your bandwidth, can add capacity inexpensively, reduce staff time managing your network, and spend much, much less time troubleshooting — all of which saves you money.

Tiered pricing

SD-WAN is consumed “as-a-service,” with the amount you pay dictated by the bandwidth required in each branch location.

This can significantly decrease your annual network costs.

Monthly charges

Here’s what your monthly charges are made up of:

- **MRC**
  A Monthly Recurring Charge per site which can cover all software, hardware and maintenance costs.

- **Network management costs**
  Having an SD-WAN vendor take care of the heavy lifting for you is a huge advantage when it comes to reducing management costs and simplifying your day-to-day activities. It does, however, require some initial investment. So factor a network management charge into your calculations.

- **Additional costs**
  In some circumstances, additional costs for things such as the installation of edge devices, or any specific network design needs, may also be incurred.

What you won’t have to pay for

With SD-WAN, there’s no need for a complete network overhaul. You can use new or existing MPLS or broadband internet connectivity, and even use broadband from third-party providers.

In fact, we’ll work with you to design an SD-WAN solution tailored to your business environment, that minimizes your upfront investment by reusing many of your existing connections.
The full impact of SD-WAN
The full impact of SD-WAN

No one’s going to replace their network merely as a cost-cutting exercise. You need to know your new setup will bring performance benefits and long-term advantages for your organization.

Here are some of the biggest benefits of SD-WAN for you to share with your stakeholders.

Provide more reliable services and applications
SD-WAN uses software to route data through your WAN in the most intelligent way possible, optimizing load balancing and ensuring data packets avoid congestion.

It can also recognize latency-sensitive and mission-critical workloads, so the applications you run and the services you provide perform better and more reliably, much more of the time.

Expand your business and explore new opportunities
The things your organization wants to do today might not matter tomorrow, which is why you need a network that can respond to your changing needs.

With SD-WAN you can easily support new types of applications and services — scaling to meet demand and always using only the necessary resources.

So, as new technologies and new ways of doing business emerge, you’re always poised to take advantage.

Free IT to explore innovation
Fully managed SD-WAN requires no manual intervention from your IT teams, which means your experts can focus on driving the business forward instead of fighting fires to keep networks up and running.
The full impact of SD-WAN

**Make the most of the cloud**
If you’re looking to move some or all of your business applications to the cloud, SD-WAN can help. It brings application performance management (both cloud and on-premises) together onto a single platform, making it far easier to manage all your systems and data, wherever they reside.

**Manage costs and stay within budget**
With SD-WAN, it’s easier to design the solution that will work best for your application performance needs and for your budget.

An access-agnostic approach means you can leverage the most cost-effective transport, based on the needs of your individual sites. And simple, transparent monthly payments mean it’s far easier to gain visibility into (and control over) network costs.

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Who benefits from SD-WAN?
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An SD-WAN solution can bring big wins across your organization. Here are some of the standout benefits, so you can sell your business case to everyone from your CIO to your CFO.

**CIO**

First up, a more capable and reliable network provides a platform for driving business growth and supporting new initiatives such as digitalization, IoT and cloud.

With lower costs and less complexity, compared with managing multiple, separate networks, CIOs can also refocus IT resources on more strategic endeavors — rather than wasting valuable time on routine maintenance and troubleshooting.

Overall, CIOs will have renewed confidence in their networks, with better connectivity, simpler security and easier management.

**Finance**

Finance leaders can see a world of change with SD-WAN. They’re replacing their current network investments with predictable, monthly pricing; streamlining operational costs with the consolidation of multiple networks; and saving money by leveraging lower-cost, internet-based network access.

All in all, SD-WAN can drive savings associated with the cost of bandwidth, adding capacity and spinning up new networks, general network management, and troubleshooting and downtime.
Who benefits from SD-WAN?

IT

The major advantage for your IT department is that they can stop worrying about network management altogether. With a fully managed service, your IT teams can instead dedicate their time to driving innovation and exploring new initiatives.

You can still decide to opt for some elements of co-management and maintain control over configurations at the application layer. But a fully managed SD-WAN service has some crucial advantages. For one, your IT teams have complete visibility into network and application performance, and automated bandwidth routing can dramatically simplify what little management is needed.

They can also look forward to consolidating voice, video and data traffic to further simplify the network, and improve troubleshooting with a centralized view of applications.

With greater site resiliency, reduced outages and more bandwidth, IT teams can also easily take advantage of new capabilities that will create value for the business.
Dealing with objections
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As with any relatively new technology, you may find some people in your organization have concerns or objections to SD-WAN. Here’s a quick guide to help you dispel any misconceptions.

SD-WAN is new and unproven
SD-WAN is currently in its infancy, but a recent study showed its adoption is predicted to grow by 90% over the next five years.\(^4\)

What’s more, as SD-WAN is a service that makes your existing network perform more intelligently and efficiently, there’s no rip-and-replace to worry about if you’re thinking of trying it out.

SD-WAN uses the internet, which is “best-effort” and not secure
Although outages with SD-WAN are significantly less likely, the concern about what happens when an internet-dependent network fails is still strong among some doubters.

That’s why, at Sprint Business, we use enterprise-class edge devices, additional security layers, dynamic traffic steering, application-level prioritization and link remediation techniques to ensure a high quality of experience for all critical applications.

All of this is designed to ensure network reliability.

But if you still have your doubts you can always deploy your network in a hybrid-WAN environment.

Dealing with objections

I want to keep management in-house

With Sprint SD-WAN you get all the benefits of a fully managed service. At the same time, you can still control configurations at the application layer.

The choice is yours — and either way you’ll benefit: research shows that with SD-WAN enterprises use 50% less staff time and spend 95% less time troubleshooting.\(^5\)

I’m not sure it’s right for us

There’s no need to jump in head-first. We know there are great benefits when it comes to optimizing costs, automating operations, and improving traffic management and efficiency.

But of course, we don’t just expect you to take our word for it. We can test SD-WAN in your offices, so you can see exactly how it works — and how well it works for you.

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\(^5\) Nemertes, Cloud and Networking Benchmark, 2018.
Your next steps

So, what now? Start by talking to key stakeholders to identify what your business needs from your network — not just for today, but for the future, too.

Based on this, you can estimate how much bandwidth you might need (and if you need us to help with that, we’re only a call away).

Once you’ve done that, you need to decide if you want to manage application-level configurations yourself or leave it to our experts. To get a better sense of whether that works for you or not, it makes sense to start with a short trial period.

This way your team can get to grips with the software and you can start to get a sense of what your new way to work looks like.

**Need any help?**

If you want some help or advice making the right choices for your network, Sprint’s Solution Engineers are available to lend a hand.
Sprint Business SD-WAN

More uptime with 99.9993% network reliability, so whatever services you offer, or depend on, are up and running more of the time.

Improved speed and agility with a business-optimized, 5G-ready, converged network, so your organization can become far more agile, easily reacting to change and pursuing new opportunities.

Great peace of mind with complete integration with the Sprint Business suite of leading security solutions.

Simplified management with a fully managed service that gives you the freedom to make application-level configurations on your own (if you so choose).
Let’s talk

We think there’s a much better way to deliver carrier services to enterprises. A way that’s optimized for agility; that makes it easy to pivot; and that lets big businesses innovate for customers and shareholders as fast as the upstarts.

Find out what SD-WAN can do for you. Contact your local Sprint representative today to learn more. Call 1-866-653-1056 or see more details on sprint.com/sd-wan