

Driving Success with SD-WAN: Unleashing Maximum Value and Performance

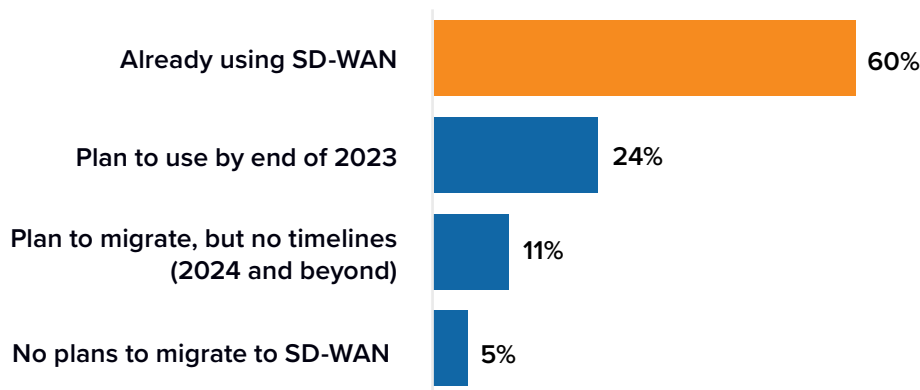


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As businesses look ahead 2024 and beyond, they are now facing the added impacts of inflation and economic uncertainty, regional conflicts, supply chain constraints, and an increasingly mobile workforce. Although these additional forces play a role in affecting ICT investment decisions, IDC data shows that 81% of organizations are still prioritizing their network modernization and software-defined connectivity programs.

Realizing the criticality of networks and connectedness to business success, enterprises are on a journey to transform their networks, and software-defined WAN (SD-WAN) has now become a critical component of this transformation. Over 60% of organizations highlighted that they are currently using SD-WAN, and an additional 24% of organizations are investing in SD-WAN by the end of 2023.

Figure 1:
SD-WAN Adoption in Asia/Pacific



Note: n = 1,200 for Asia/Pacific (including Japan) (APJ);

Source: IDC Asia/Pacific Communications and Collaboration Survey, 2022



“81%

of organizations worldwide highlighted prioritizing their network modernization and software-defined connectivity initiatives”

- IDC Worldwide Future of Connectedness Survey 2022

SD-WAN Can Be More Than Just SD-WAN — Its Ripple Effect on Networks and Broader Business

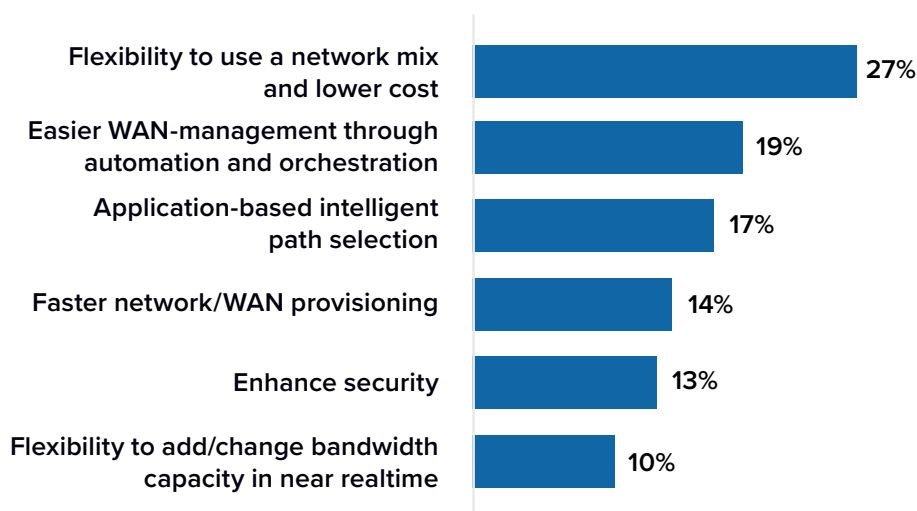
As the SD-WAN market continues to mature, enterprise preferences on key features of a modern, enterprise-grade SD-WAN platform continue to evolve. However, in the past years, enterprises may have deployed SD-WAN in a silo, and increasingly, organizations are looking for integrations of their SD-WAN with other parts of the IT stack, providing them with enhanced security, increased flexibility, and easier network management capabilities.

IDC's 2022 Communications and Networking Survey asked more than 1,200 respondents about the expected benefits of a modern, enterprise-grade SD-WAN platform. In addition to the top response **"flexibility of using a network mix"** by offloading multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) traffic onto the internet, organizations expect SD-WAN to facilitate **"easier LAN/WAN management"** through orchestration and automation. Organizations also expect SD-WAN to provide **"enhanced security"** as well as enable **"faster network provisioning."**



However, organizations need to understand the "real" value of SD-WAN and how it can act as a powerful tool to accelerate their network modernization and enable broader business transformation initiatives.

Figure 2:
Expected Benefits of an SD-WAN Solution



Note: n = 1,200 for APJ

Source: IDC Asia/Pacific Communications and Collaboration Survey, 2022

Exploring the Nuances of SD-WAN Deployment and Management

As enterprise networking environments become increasingly complex to deploy, manage, and scale, vendors are positioning SD-WAN as a technology that simplifies WAN architectures, is easier to manage, and proves to be faster to deploy.

The term zero-touch provisioning is being thrown around loosely by some vendors, implying that SD-WAN can be deployed in a short time and automatically without the need for networking experts. However, the reality is far from it.

As organizations determine their specific requirements, including their preferred architectural approach and deployment model, only the most intrepid and resourceful organizations tend to take a DIY approach, especially if they lack (or might be subject to the loss of) software-defined networking expertise, or if they are uncertain of organizational requirements.

Poor architectural planning and design is often one of the biggest reasons that organizations are unable to get the most out of their network investments.

Need of the Hour: Working with the “Right” SP Partner

Ensuring that the software-defined environment is expertly designed, implemented, and managed will be more critical than ever as applications and workloads are increasingly residing across a broader IT landscape. Network consulting and integration services provide requisite services to enable enterprises to deliver the connectedness strategies required for the business to succeed.

Hence, selecting the “right” SP partner is key to the transformation journey. Keep the following points in mind when selecting a provider for your network transformation journey:

- **Ensure that the SP can conduct effective network assessments**, strategically prioritize, and articulate the value of investments in SD-WAN, its associated processes, and the tools for efficient, secure, and intelligent service delivery.
- **AI/ML-augmented automation, orchestration, and policy management** frameworks will be the key to efficient and optimized network operations.
- **Take a long-term approach to your network investments** and align your network and business road map with the SP’s plan, making sure to understand how the SP can continue to add value not only today but also over the coming years.
- **Selecting an SP that provides enhanced observability and visibility tools** to help manage and measure the progress against preset key performance indicators (KPIs) and service-level agreements (SLAs) is key to this success.
- **Match SPs’ coverage with your own.** Select a partner that can deliver the project that matches your organization’s footprint in a consistent manner.

In summary, **network transformation is not a one-time event but an ongoing journey.** Understanding how SD-WAN can do more than expected and supercharge this journey is crucial for enterprise success.



However, ensuring that you’re getting the most out of your SD-WAN investments, as well as guaranteeing that reality matches with the expected benefits, is often the biggest challenge for an organization.

Message from the Sponsor

TATA COMMUNICATIONS

Tata Communications IZO SDWAN, a platform-based managed service enabling the entire SD-WAN life cycle from design and delivery to ongoing management, provides seamless network transformation with zero-risk delivery and end-to-end managed services across the organization’s size and scale. For more information,

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