

Network as a service: a recipe to save millions of dollars over five years



Challenge

Following the merger of two companies, roll out a harmonized, high-performance corporate WAN that delivers cost savings.

Solution

Network-as-a-Service — a fully managed SD-WAN based on Silver Peak technology.

Results

On track to save millions of dollars over five years, while benefiting from a company-wide network that provides improved performance, security and reliability.

Overnight backups between data centers are now completed in half the time — just four hours instead of eight; and latency on connectivity to the Microsoft Azure cloud has been reduced by 50%.

A leading multinational beverage company chose Xalient to transform its 260-site network with a fully managed SD-WAN solution. The Xalient solution is on course to deliver millions of dollars in savings over the next five years — while improving network performance, security and reliability; enhancing the user experience; and providing the agility to support future business growth.

From two disparate networks...

When two leading hot and cold beverage companies merged into one, they brought together more than 125 brands, over 27,000 people — and two corporate networks from two different providers, whose management posed an immediate challenge for the CIO in terms of cost and resource. Beyond standardizing the disparate networks and technologies, the CIO wanted to seize the chance to:

- Improve network performance
- Deliver a consistent application access experience for users regardless of location
- Ensure sufficient network agility to support future business growth

— all while supporting the CEO's initiative to cut cost from the new business.

One company's network was MPLS, the other was SD-WAN. The CIO knew that rolling out SD-WAN across the merged organization made the most sense. But he was concerned that the existing SD-WAN solution was proving difficult to scale and wasn't delivering the expected savings.

He approached Xalient for a consultancy engagement to evaluate the current SD-WAN technology and develop a proposal for a more flexible and cost-effective solution.

...to a single network, delivered as a service

Xalient provided a report on the merged company's current network state, and how it needed to transform to meet the CIO's stated business drivers. As well as revealing the network's complexity, the report set out:

- Ways to improve performance, resilience and the user experience; and streamline security
- Opportunities to achieve significant cost savings
- The value of enhancing management and governance

Based on the consultancy engagement, the CIO asked Xalient to provide a managed SD-WAN solution to 260 locations. Xalient switched the SD-WAN technology to Silver Peak — increasing flexibility for network expansion over time — and installed new access circuits in all locations.

At 60 or so major sites, where rock-solid, real-time access to apps and services is critical to business operations, Xalient installed dedicated fiber-based internet access circuits. As well as data centers, these sites include manufacturing facilities, where any operational downtime could translate into production downtime, wasted ingredients, financial losses and unhappy customers.

At smaller sites, lower-cost broadband circuits were deployed, procured from trusted aggregators to optimize the balance between price and quality. Xalient also incorporated security at the network edge, an elegant way to protect every site without backhauling to centralized security capabilities.

“ Our customer trusted us to provide them with a Network-as-a-Service that's meeting all their expectations for performance improvements, simplified security, and significant cost savings. The network also supports their cloud-first strategy and can scale easily as they continue to expand their business. ”

Sherry Vaswani
Founder and CEO, Xalient



Savings, performance, security — delivered

With Xalient providing a fully managed SD-WAN, the company benefits from a Network-as-a-Service (NaaS) solution in return for a monthly fee. This releases the CIO and his teams from the network monitoring and management burden, while allowing the company to benefit from a secure, reliable and high-performance solution that's on track to deliver millions of dollars in savings over the five-year contract.

The company's finance team tracks savings by reviewing monthly reports from Xalient. They confirm that the savings target for year one were achieved, and that year two savings are being delivered in line with expectations.

Through network optimization, performance at every site — measured as each one cuts over to the Xalient service — has improved. Overnight backups between data centers are now completed in half the time — just four hours instead of eight; and latency on connectivity to the Microsoft Azure cloud has been cut by 50%.

Efficient connectivity to public clouds is important because, very soon after the merger, the company ramped up its cloud migration. All cloud-ready apps and services were moved from data centers into best-fit public clouds, and data centers were consolidated from dozens to a handful.

This cloud-first strategy led the company to work with Xalient to move from a VPN-based remote access solution to one based on ZScaler's zero trust security solution. This allows the company to do away with multiple PoPs that were implemented to support the company's 15,000 knowledge workers who had to connect via VPN during pandemic-related work-from-home mandates. Within a few months, anyone working remotely will access cloud and SaaS apps directly. Bypassing the corporate network in this way will, reduce risk, enhance security, provide a better user experience, and further reduce costs.



About Xalient

Xalient is an independent, 'born in the cloud' consulting and managed services organisation focused on WAN transformation. We design, build and manage global networks, using software-defined networking, communication, identity management and security solutions for large organisations.

To find out more about Xalient and how we help transform and secure networks for some of the world's top brands, visit us at www.xalient.com or email hello@xalient.com