Global Financial Services Firm Reinvents Their WAN With SD-WAN Platform-as-a-Service Powered by Versa

The dual-role service solution for SD-WAN management and monitoring allows a global financial services firm to choose their areas of control, and which areas to leave in the hands of expert partners.

INDUSTRY

Financial Services

OBJECTIVES

- Application delivery approach that separates uCPE management from the software configuration and monitoring platform control
- Fully utilize all bandwidth and optimize traffic flow within their existing sites
- Direct control of routing at the application level, and encryption of all bank data in transit
- Robust security functions to enable DoS protection of their internal network, and a future proof solution

RESULTS

- **Intelligent path selection** for cloud and on-premise applications
- **Improved** WAN availability and efficiency
- **Reduced** operating costs and complexity
- **Automated**, zero touch deployments
- **Significantly improved** visibility and analytics
- **On-demand** connectivity
- **Optimized** bandwidth utilization
- **Cohesive** multi-layered security
- **Significantly shortened** Time-to-Deploy (TTD) and upgrade
- **Advanced** traffic shaping with application awareness
- **Traffic segmentation** addresses business and security requirements

The FSI firm has a strategic vision for a lean, agile and bold technology-supported business model. Central to their strategy is a 'software first' VNF and SDN focus. To support this initiative, the company needed a unique application delivery approach that would separate the overarching universal CPE (uCPE) management, from the software configuration and monitoring platform control.

The bank's goal was to fully utilize all bandwidth and optimize traffic flow within their existing sites. They wanted direct control of routing at the application level, and encryption of all bank data in transit. They also needed robust and integrated security functions to enable DoS protection for their internal network, and a solution that was future proof; meaning topology, technology vendor and carrier agnostic. Having an automated and fully orchestrated WAN infrastructure that spans the banks dozens of sites was critical, as was the ability to change and upgrade technology, without requiring remote site visits.

To ensure reliable connectivity to all their users, the company required intelligent traffic steering to route around network problems, before users were affected. To ease management, the bank needed a solution that provided centralized management, with templates that would allow them to easily define policies and flexibly support network automation across their global WAN infrastructure.

The Problem

Over many years, the company had accumulated numerous, disparate and purpose-built hardware devices to operate and secure their global enterprise WAN. The management effort and time required to maintain, configure, update and support all of these disjointed devices had become too complex, and put the bank in a reactive position.

The company's network had become too unwieldy to effectively manage, monitor and support. Their network was not meeting their demands to support multiple cloud services, disparate security devices made it difficult to ensure security of data going across the WAN, and manually managing the network was hindering the bank from moving forward on important initiatives.

Below are some of the challenges that confronted the bank:

- Performance and access to cloud apps
- Unreliable site availability
- Bandwidth constraints, and ineffective bandwidth use
- Lack of application awareness
- Traffic segmentation challenges
- Analytics gaps
- Fragmented security
- High costs for circuits and hardware
- Slow site deployments
- Lack of an on-demand solution

The Solution – SD-WAN PaaS powered by the Versa Secure Cloud IP platform

The company wanted a new software-defined and flexible platform that would overlay their existing network infrastructure using diverse virtual network functions (VNFs). They also wanted the ability to bring on new third-party VNFs over time that would be fully supported by the new platform.

The bank chose a telecom MSP's SD-WAN Platform as-a-Service (PaaS), built on Versa's Secure Cloud IP platform. This service platform offers a flexible, dual management approach. The MSP deploys and manages branch office uCPEs, and provides maintenance and monitoring with SLAs, while the FSI firm leverages their core skills in deploying the VNFs, and controlling the configuration, orchestration, and adding of new network functions as needed.

The MSP SD-WAN PaaS for the FSI firm deploys highly scalable and expandable Dell uCPEs at the branch offices. The uCPEs are open standard-based, with the OpenStack cloud operating system that runs multiple VMs. The SD-WAN solution uses Versa Network's Secure Cloud IP platform, with zero touch authentication and secure management, using Versa's full suite of native network and security VNFs. Versa native VNFs available to the bank include routing, connectivity, WiFi, LTE, security, NGFW with UTM functions, rich SD-WAN functions, and robust WAN optimization. The Versa software platform also supports service chained third-party VNFs, with deeply integrated orchestration and high visibility.

By choosing a dual monitoring and management solution, the FSI firm is able to have the MSP SD-WAN PaaS manage local site uCPE deployments, while the FSI firm maintains control of network and device configurations. The company hosts and manages the central Versa Director, Controller and Analytics. uCPE software configuration is automatically performed by the firm's internal IT team, from the Versa Director. This enables the bank with robust security and reliable performance, while keeping configuration and data visibility confined within the organization's IT personnel.

The bank needed a more fluid and secure approach to segmenting their networks for key applications. With the new SD-WAN managed platform, the company can utilize network segmentation for applications, such as retail and investment banking, which helps the bank gain greater control of traffic, and provide greater security, by isolating and limiting traffic, or preventing access between network segments.

On-demand SD-WAN service is enabled using Versa software licenses that are allocated by the MSP to the FSI firm on a pay-as-you-use basis. To ensure reliability and performance, the MSP tests performance and service chaining to ensure platform compatibility.

Below are some of the key Versa Secure Cloud IP Platform advantages:

- **uCPE** - Off the shelf, low cost, open source hardware
- **Open software architecture** – Cloud provides an open and consistent platform for software deployments. uCPE extends that openness and consistency to edge locations
- **Multi-vendor solution** - The value of an open platform is the ability to combine embedded network and security services, and third-party VNFs, to eliminate vendor lock-in
- **Zero touch deployment** - The ability to centrally turn-up or down services, without requiring technicians to travel to each remote location to configure services on the edge device
- **Scalable deployment** – Deploying VNFs centrally, using a broad range of VMs on a single software platform, delivers network and security services that scale from small branch offices to extremely large edge deployments

The Results

The company was able to take advantage of the MSP's network deployment and service management expertise, and Versa's software-defined Secure Cloud IP platform, to optimize and streamline their IT operations, and allow the bank to focus on their core capabilities.

The MSP SD-WAN PaaS powered by Versa's Secure Cloud IP platform gave the FSI firm an innovative platform that transformed their overall WAN management and monitoring capabilities from a complex and manually-driven process, to an automated and highly extensible business-driven network.

The company now has the command and control, agility, and vendor independence they need, while taking advantage of the management and technology expertise of its strategic partners.

The bank achieved its goals of having a topology, carrier, and vendor-independent network. One that is highly scalable, with adaptable and cohesive multi-layered security, and one that supports their on-premises and cloud applications, with an on-demand, automated, agile, and high-performance infrastructure.

About Versa Networks

Versa Networks is the innovator of Secure Cloud IP architecture, a next-generation software platform that delivers integrated cloud, networking and security services. Versa's visionary solution, with an unrivaled depth of features and capabilities, enables enterprises to transition off legacy WANs to achieve business agility, branch modernization, and TCO advantages toward the goal of achieving their digital transformation journeys. Versa has transacted over 200,000 software licenses through service providers, partners and enterprises globally. Versa Networks is privately held and funded by Sequoia Capital, Mayfield, Artis Ventures, Verizon Ventures, Comcast Ventures, and Liberty Global Ventures. For more information, visit https://www.versa-networks.com

VERSA NETWORKS

Versa Networks, Inc, 6001 America Center Dr, 4th floor, Suite 400, San Jose, CA 95002 | Tel: +1 408.385.7660 | Email: info@versa-networks.com | www.versa-networks.com