

How do we know if SD-WAN is right for us?



With the pace of change in the IT world, it can sometimes be tough to know if the latest “must have” technology will benefit your business. As the global business world has shifted quickly in the last few years due to a host of challenges, many technology experts tout SD-WAN as a solution for companies struggling to adapt to a dispersed workforce, maximize network performance and address increasing security challenges. But is SD-WAN a solution that will benefit your business?

Below are ten statements to help you evaluate whether it's time to implement an SD-WAN solution in your organization.

Organization

Our workforce is dispersed across multiple branches or remote locations. The more branches and remote workers you have, the more critical SD-WAN becomes.

Our company is on track to grow rapidly over the next few years. As you plan for growth, it's vital to look at whether your network can continue to handle increased traffic. If your current WAN is already showing the strain, it may be time to look at SD-WAN.

We are increasing our use of cloud services at a steady pace. Cloud services continue to grow at a rapid pace, and with every additional app or service, the network has to handle more traffic. Not only that, but additional cloud services add increasing security concerns. If you are rapidly adopting cloud services, an SD-WAN could be right for you.

When we add a new remote location, it takes weeks or months to get adequate network connections up and running. Running a dedicated connection for a new office can sometimes take weeks or even months. With SD-WAN, a new location can be up and running in just a few days.

Security

We have increasing trouble with cyberattacks. Cyberattacks are on the rise, and if your workforce is using public Internet, the risks to your network increase. Including a Firewall with your SD-WAN can give employees a secure connection.

It's challenging to roll out security updates to all network devices in a timely manner. With an SD-WAN, security updates are automatic and seamless to your network.

We have no way to get a clear picture of all devices on our network. Especially as companies increasingly implement "bring your own device" policies, managing control over the devices on the network becomes more and more challenging. An SD-WAN network can give IT better control and management of all devices from one comprehensive dashboard view.

Performance

Our workforce frequently experiences network disruption or connection issues. With the rise in remote work, many employees end up trying to connect via public Internet service or imperfect dedicated connections. Providing remote VPN options with an SD-WAN can help eliminate these disruptions.

We have few or no ways to prioritize our most important network apps or services, such as voice. When apps or services aren't prioritized, everyone from the main office to the remote worker is competing for network bandwidth. An SD-WAN can help ensure that the most critical services stay up and running at all times.

If the Internet connection is disrupted, we have no automatic failover function to maintain business continuity. SD-WAN can provide failover to a standby Internet connection so downtime is avoided, improving the customer experience.

✓ 1 to 3 checkmarks

Chances are good that your network is still functioning well for your current size. As your company grows and adds locations or your workforce begins to work offsite more often, consider re-evaluating your network performance and security.

✓ 4 to 6 checkmarks

You're rapidly approaching a position where SD-WAN could make or break your network. It's probably time to begin investigating an SD-WAN solution.

✓ 7 to 8 checkmarks

Now is a great time to implement an SD-WAN connected network—before performance and security issues cause you to lose business!

Wherever you are in your network journey, Allstream's® experts are here to help. To learn more about Allstream's SD-WAN, powered by Meraki™, call us.

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