

SD-WAN Advances Credit Union's Commitment to Members

The client requested a move away from their current expensive and inefficient MPLS. Their goal, to create a Wide Area Network to connect locations back to two Data Centers, increase bandwidth, have services hosted with the Azure Cloud, and reduce costs (including current WAN MRCs). The client had decided well before the project began that everyone would have the same system, a challenge considering the small markets and vast space between locations. We recommended that they migrate their MPLS service over to an SD-WAN solution, as well as moving to a new Tier 3 or Tier 4 Data Center with diverse power feeds, dedicated cabinets, a remote hands team (responsive 24/7/365 support to respond to emergencies, improve equipment uptime, and reduce the overall infrastructure management cost), security (physical, protocol, & technological), and direct access to Azure. This would also help meet their SOC, FISMA, and NIST compliance requirements.

CUSTOMER PROFILE:

- Credit Union
- 40 locations (mostly single seat)
- Midwest and East Coast



OBJECTIVE:

A large multi-state Credit Union manages \$2+ billion in assets while providing financial products and services to more than 72,000 members. With dozens of locations, mostly single-person offices/branches embedded in manufacturer facilities, they used an expensive MPLS network to connect branches to their Headquarters with a makeshift Data Center housed in one of the locations. Their lean IT staff was responsible for managing the WAN which included monitoring the svc and calling the Provider for service when there were issues and/or outages. They also recently acquired another Credit Union, further driving their desire to replace an expensive MPLS service that connected branches to their HQ and Data Center (hosted by their MPLS Provider). The organization wished to have all their facilities on the same network and add Azure access, where they were migrating many of their applications.



DISCOVERY:

The organization is dispersed, with "branches" in small towns with poor connectivity options. During discovery, we found the customer was migrating most (and eventually all) of their data to Azure, and the branches would be accessing that data regularly. We backtracked on our original SD-WAN design of only connecting the two Data Centers to Azure, pitching the idea of letting Branches connect directly to Azure, increasing the connection speed. We also added Security into the SD-WAN CPE, eliminated existing Firewalls at the branches, increased speed for the WAN, simplified Network security (saving time managing and maintaining Firewalls), and reduced the need to add bandwidth into the Data Centers and Azure. The small internal IT team meant a solution with integrated fully realized support was critical. We quoted with five different carriers, covering all the bases with a focus on flexibility.



SOLUTION/ DEPLOYMENT:

The chosen solution is known for the active involvement of Engineers, letting the customer speak to a Tier 2 person, usually the same person, every time! The "discovered" routers let us deploy a hybrid SD-WAN product, utilizing the routers and the new Provider's managed equipment, allowing a single connection instead of two to the internet facility - with branches connecting directly via Azure. The customer is now positioned with a stable, more secure solution, their speed to access time has been reduced significantly, and they're ready to expand their capabilities in the future with new features like bio readers.