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# Building a Resilient Network

## 5 SD-WAN Myths

## Introduction

Regardless of industry, modern businesses are constantly striving to improve productivity and reduce costs. Software and commodity internet connections now play a key part in achieving both. Software-Defined Wide Area Networking (SD-WAN) provides a superior way to connect multiple locations securely at scale. Now that many organizations are beginning to adopt SD-WAN because of the benefits it offers in terms of cost savings, better resiliency, and reduced risk, it's time we unpack some of the myths around SD-WAN to push past the early adopters and bring Secure SD-WAN into the mainstream. As the world demands more connection and customers expect instant gratification, it's time that businesses rise to the occasion with superior network technology that delivers on every promise.

A superior Secure SD-WAN solution is here. Native to our Next-Generation Firewall (NGFW), Forcepoint Secure SD-WAN brings together connection and protection at global scale – centrally managed from a single interface – to provide your teams the agility they need to defend your competitive edge.



## Myth #1

### **SD-WAN is just about replacing MPLS to save money**

MPLS services are expensive and they simply aren't as performant as newer technologies built for the cloud era. MPLS services can also be difficult to get rid of, since they are typically bought as part of a long-term contract. But beyond putting a cap on spending, there is a better reason to implement Secure SD-WAN: it's far more versatile than MPLS. Using fast, commodity broadband instead of slower, expensive MPLS not only can save money but also provide a 10x increase in capacity, which means you can scale up without having to worry about sacrificing performance.

Secure SD-WAN also provides better resilience for maintaining business continuity, even in the face of connection challenges, and protects sites from the arch enemy of buried cabling—the backhoe. SD-WAN gives your expanding organization options for how to connect new locations where adding MPLS capacity is cost prohibitive, slow to provision, or may not even be available. Secure SD-WAN does more than save you money - it enables agility and better options, boosts capacity, improves resiliency, and accelerates the time it takes to spin up new locations.

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SD-WAN does more than save you money. It provides agility and options, boosts capacity, improves resiliency, and accelerates new locations.



## Myth #2

### **SD-WAN takes the place of the internet**

Some SD-WAN vendors try to sell their customers proprietary network connections and provide a front-end private network for getting to the internet. Such link-specific solutions are often only available in limited geographies and can be very slow to provision. SD-WAN is about choices, enabling you to mix and match whichever links are most appropriate for each location (e.g., cable, DSL, fiber, 4G/LTE). We even heard from one of our long-time customers that every year, they do an assessment on each of their three connection links, drop the most expensive one, and pick up a new one.

Applying this strategy has allowed them to maintain lower operating costs by providing them a competitive advantage of visibility. Secure SD-WAN provides a way to facilitate and manage connectivity but should never attempt to limit or take the place of any websites or internet applications.

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SD-WAN doesn't replace the internet, but it does facilitate connectivity.



## Myth #3

### **SD-WAN eliminates the need for on-prem hardware**

SD-WAN is frequently used to direct traffic for specific applications across specific links. This is especially important for reducing the latency needed to connect to highly interactive cloud apps, like Microsoft 365, while increasing the available bandwidth. It can be used to enforce techniques like encryption, which provides privacy for accessing cloud apps that aren't already relying on SSL/TLS and helps keep data safe in transit. But even with SD-WAN, you still need on-prem equipment to plug into your various network links. Strong security is an absolute must, no matter where you're attached to the internet.

Leveraging a complete network security solution that offers Secure SD-WAN (a firewall with built-in intrusion, detection, and prevention) and integrating it with robust cloud and remote worker security solutions - such as Remote Browser Isolation (RBI), Zero Trust Content Disarm and Reconstruction (ZTCDR), and Data Loss Prevention (DLP) - means your team can build a comprehensive and complete security stack that provides 360-degree protection for the most advanced, demanding hybrid organizations.

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SD-WAN has some equipment at each location to plug into your ISP links and potentially provide necessary security.



## Myth #4

### All SD-WAN solutions are created equal

SD-WAN has exploded in popularity, but that doesn't mean that all SD-WAN providers have built-in solutions that deliver the same quality of experience and depth of functionality. Some only connect organizations while leaving security up to their customers. Some can only handle a few locations, and therefore have management systems geared towards a relatively small number of sites, which works well for small or medium businesses but can quickly overwhelm network and security teams as they try to scale up. Some vendors may even wrongly assume that all sites use the same types of connections and not build in the ability to custom configure their solution – which often leaves teams stuck trying to fit a square peg into a round hole.

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Look for SD-WAN solutions that have the efficiencies at scale.

### Whether you are looking to replace your current SD-WAN solution or rebuild your network to be ready for what the future brings, make sure to consider the following capabilities:

- › Connects thousands of locations over whatever type of network links are available and appropriate for each site
- › Provides always-on resilience for around-the clock productivity, regardless of connection challenges
- › Tightly integrates security with connectivity to prevent gaps
- › Offers 360° visibility into user behaviors and the flow of data everywhere - from branches to main offices, data centers, and to multiple clouds
- › Enables common policies to be expressed once and reused automatically wherever needed
- › Expresses special requirements for particular locations efficiently without disrupting normal operations
- › Automates connectivity tasks like setting up VPNs among sites so that new sites can be added quickly and reliably
- › Pushes policies to modify how sites are connected or secured
- › Updates networking and security infrastructure without taking sites offline

## Myth #5

### All SD-WAN solutions have security built-in

Many first-generation SD-WAN solutions enforce encryption of traffic over commodity broadband links using Virtual Private Network (VPN) technologies. This keeps data and communications between different sites private, but it doesn't make the sites more secure. The new generation of Secure SD-WAN solutions have been built with a security-first mindset and designed as a solution that is fully distributed, instead of centralized like that of hub-and-spoke network topologies. This innovative design keeps attackers from sneaking into your stores, branches, or remote offices while protecting the use of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) applications. Advanced Secure SD-WAN uses techniques such as "service chaining" to apply security capabilities like web traffic protection and Cloud Access Security Broker (CASB) to automatically secure data transmitted to cloud-based apps. Forcepoint Secure SD-WAN, native to our industry-leading Next-Generation Firewall, is used by organizations around the world to connect and protect highly distributed stores, offices, warehouses, sites, and branches.

Forcepoint eliminates gaps that come from having separate networking and security systems, providing the ability to manage thousands of devices from a single console and simultaneously push updates to every location, with just a few clicks. Our graphical VPN set-up replaces laborious spreadsheets with immediate drag-and-drop functionality to add new sites to even the most complex topologies in minutes. With Forcepoint, it's easy to augment or replace expensive MPLS lines with whatever commodity broadband links are available in each location.



**You need true Secure SD-WAN, with more than simple traffic encryption**

Secure SD-WAN that scales and integrates with a comprehensive security stack will give your team the competitive edge they need to not only compete, but to remain resilient in today's evolving threat landscape.

Ask how Forcepoint Secure SD-WAN can help you achieve your most challenging network goals and prepare your organization for whatever tomorrow brings.

› [Request a Demo](#)



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## About Forcepoint

Forcepoint is the leading user and data protection cybersecurity company, entrusted to safeguard organizations while driving digital transformation and growth. Forcepoint's attuned solutions adapt in real-time to how people interact with data, providing secure access while enabling employees to create value. Based in Austin, Texas, Forcepoint creates safe, trusted environments for thousands of customers worldwide.

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