MeriTalk
Empowering the Government IT Community

SD-WAN:
The Next Federal Network

Digital transformation efforts are top of mind for Federal IT professionals, but few programs will succeed without the necessary network to support them. The Software-Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN) offers improved application performance, less complexity, and high security at a fraction of the cost of legacy network technology – a potential game changer for distributed agencies looking to modernize.

Failing Federal Networks

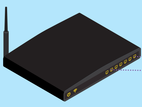
67% of Federal IT pros say their legacy network infrastructure is struggling to keep pace with the changing demands of cloud and hybrid technologies[1]

51% say their agency is failing to prioritize the networking aspect of cloud adoption and overall IT modernization[1]

Universal Networking Needs

IT pros across industries say their top three networking challenges are:[2]

1. #1: Bandwidth costs
2. #2: Equipment maintenance and updates
3. #3: Performance between locations



81% will require more bandwidth in the next three years;

27% will require significantly more[3]

Corralling Costs

32% say replacing multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) with a more affordable alternative with suitable performance will be a primary focus over the next 12 months[2]

And SD-WAN is emerging as the ideal alternative...

42% say SD-WAN deployment has reduced the cost of MPLS services[2]

One government network services manager said going with an SD-WAN product would reduce their monthly MPLS costs by **67%**[4]

Global IT pros estimate their organizations could **save over $1.3 Million on MPLS networking costs** across a 12-month period by deploying SD-WAN[5]

Beyond the Budget

99% of global IT pros who have implemented SD-WAN are experiencing benefits:[5]

57%	Improved network security
56%	Improved overall connectivity
53%	Improved network flexibility and agility
53%	Improved application performance
48%	Reduced overall costs

IDC predicts the SD-WAN market will reach **$4.5 Billion in 2022** as enterprise branch network requirements accelerate[6]

Where Does Government Stand?

While Federal SD-WAN adoption is in the early stages, agencies are working to lay the foundation for modern networks:

29% of IT pros from civilian agencies **&** **32%** from DoD agencies say they've increased virtual networking and/or Software-Defined Networking (SDN) over the past two years[1]

The U.S. Army included SDN in their long-term network strategy –

> "By 2040, the Army expects every chain of command will be able to access its network from any location, and it is looking to SDN to help it achieve that goal"[7]

And Federal IT Pros understand the benefits:

Federal IT pros say reducing network complexity is one of the **top three most critical steps** to enabling their new vision of government IT[1]

69% of Federal decision-makers say they depend on cloud access to complete work assignments[8] and

84% agree network modernization is foundational to managing and improving cloud application performance[1]

SD-WAN is even making its way into Federal mandates. The latest iteration of the Trusted Internet Connection (TIC) initiative supports SD-WAN technology at agency branch offices as an initial common TIC Use Case[10]

Moving Federal SD-WAN Forward

Federal Agencies have a unique opportunity to transform their networks as they transition between the legacy **Network contract** and the **General Services Administration's $50 Billion Enterprise Infrastructure Solutions (EIS) contract**. To take advantage of this potential tipping point for SD-WAN technology:

- Audit current network needs, specifically at branch offices
- Quantify the potential savings of coupling SD-WAN with MPLS services
- Discuss tangible benefits with agency IT leadership
- Consider a managed service provider to increase automation and reduce complexity
- Draft an RFP based on SLA's in a Statement of Objectives, not a pre-designed network in a Statement of Work.

To learn more about how SD-WAN could revitalize the value of your current network investments and lay the groundwork for digital transformation, visit https://government.hughes.com/sdwan

[1] MeriTalk's Cloud Complexity Study
[2] https://go.catonetworks.com/rs/245-RJK-441/images/2018-State-of-the%20Enterprise-Network-by-Cato-Networks.pdf
[3] http://dgcommunications.lookbookhq.com/century-link-networking/ethernet-mpls-and-SD-WAN
[4] https://statetechmagazine.com/article/2018/06/sd-wan-technology-vs-mpls-cutting-costs-road-digital-transformation-perfcon
[5] https://assets.barracuda.com/assets/docs/dms/Barracuda_SDWAN_Global_WP_US.pdf
[6] https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20180808005094/en/SD-WAN-Infrastructure-Market-Poised-Reach-4.5-Billion
[7] https://cbcommunity.comcast.com/browse-all/details/sdn-powering-the-next-generation-of-government-networks
[8] MeriTalk's Reimagining Government IT Study
[9] http://cdn.govexec.com/media/gbc/docs/deloitteCloud2017_1208v2.pdf
[10] https://www.meritalk.com/articles/tic-3-0-draft-removes-barriers-for-emerging-technology/