Why Every Industry Uses SD-WAN Benefits to Digitally Transform

By ROSE DE FREMERY - **Contributor**

It's official: SD-WAN technology has entered the mainstream. Businesses in industries ranging from retail to education are taking advantage of SD-WAN benefits like network performance optimization and complexity reduction, enabling digital transformation at scale in a far more cost-effective way than was previously possible.

From retail to education to healthcare, SD-WAN benefits businesses in every industry.
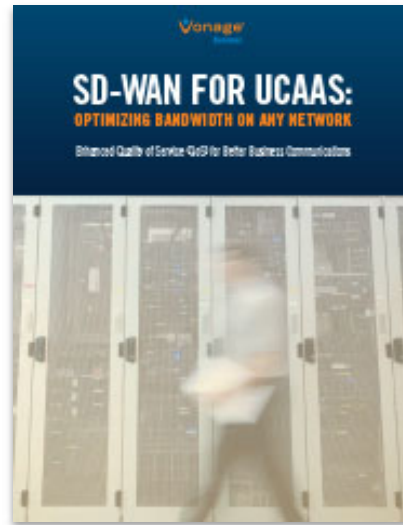
According to research firm IDC, the SD-WAN market will experience a 40.4 percent compound annual growth rate over the next few years, reaching $4.5 billion in revenue by 2022. Here's a look at the business benefits of SD-WAN and why so many companies are using it to streamline their operations, reduce costs, and take advantage of timely technology innovation right now.

SD-WAN Benefits for Retail and Real Estate

Retailers are benefiting from SD-WAN solutions for retail, using it to optimize network traffic and capitalize on the most exciting innovations cloud tools have to offer, including real-time communications. For example, retailers have been using SD-WAN to centralize

communications across multiple stores, including those in rural locations where there isn't reliable access to high-bandwidth connectivity. SD-WAN reduces cost and complexity for the retailer, creating a central point of contact for technical troubleshooting and resulting in a single bill from one provider.

Real estate firms are building connections with SD-WAN in a similar fashion. They, too, often manage multiple offices and often use a hodgepodge of connections ranging from wireless access to commercial internet providers. Firms can bring these various services under one umbrella with SD-WAN. They can streamline IT administration and ensure the high quality of service necessary to successfully use performance-sensitive cloud tools such as video conferencing, through which realtors now offer virtual home tours to prospective buyers. Thanks to SD-WAN, real estate companies can now use the cloud tools that will enable their future success without having to make costly upfront investments in private circuits.

Optimizing Bandwidth on Any Network

A strong network is an essential component of a UCaaS solution. Here's how SD-WAN can work for you.

SD-WAN Benefits for Finance and Education

Long considered a tech-forward industry, the financial sector loves SD-WAN technology as well. Banks, credit unions, and financial institutions are capitalizing on SD-WAN to optimize network performance as they digitally transform, bringing bandwidth-intensive cloud services aboard at a rapid clip. Financial institutions also have a strong need for 24/7 availability, using SD-WAN's built-in failover capabilities to stay connected and automatically roll over to the next best source in the event of an outage. Self-provisioning and automation features make it possible for financial institutions with distributed locations to view and manage their WAN as a single entity, simplifying administration and maintenance.

Campuses are deploying SD-WAN solutions to halt the troublesome network congestion that arises when a student body full of digital natives consumes bandwidth-intensive services and pushes the campus network to its limits. Students expect campus Wi-Fi to be ever-present and plentiful, viewing their digital devices as essential educational resources. They are also likely to enjoy everything from streaming television before class to avid network gaming in their dorm rooms at night. SD-WAN solutions improve bandwidth

management, allowing campus network administrators to implement network policy with ease across a complex, segmented network environment. Network administrators also gain enhanced insight into what's using their bandwidth, which helps them make informed decisions about policy and network architecture.

No Longer Just for Early Adopters: SD-WAN Hits the Mainstream

As the business benefits of SD-WAN become increasingly clear, companies in a wide array of verticals are identifying one SD-WAN use case after another. According to HealthTech, healthcare organizations are using SD-WAN to improve network reliability while streamlining administration tasks, more effectively investing lean IT resources to ensure continuous uptime and better security. Meanwhile, hoteliers are deploying SD-WAN across multiple locations, boosting network performance while increasing bandwidth so they can deliver best-in-class guest experiences.

Law firms are tapping SD-WAN to achieve greater reliability and network redundancy across multiple offices, cost-effectively using their existing network connections to provide better client service. And insurance companies are maximizing SD-WAN benefits to achieve greater agility amid a cresting wave of digital transformation, modernizing their WANs to become future-ready. In doing so, they can now accommodate innovative cloud-based technologies that enable speedier claims processing while better supporting remote offices.

SD-WAN was once considered a niche technology, but that's no longer the case. As IDC noted, "The emergence of SD-WAN technology has been one of the fastest industry transformations we have seen in years. Organizations of all sizes are modernizing their Wide Area Networks to provide improved user experience for a range of cloud-enabled applications." Businesses are increasingly realizing that SD-WAN can give them a critical advantage in the age of digital transformation. If your company hasn't yet considered how SD-WAN could support your future growth, now is an excellent time to discover what it could help you accomplish.