

WHITEPAPER

Network Modernization: The Foundation of Business Growth



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No matter what industry they operate in, most organizations have similar goals at the end of the day: sustainable growth and profitability, strong relationships with customers and suppliers, and productive use of human resources and capital. All of these goals are increasingly dependent on technology such as cloud computing, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things, all of which are elevating the importance of having a modern network.

It's hard to know just where the next business opportunity will appear, so today's networks should be ready to add capacity when and where it's needed. To fully understand their available resources, organizations need visibility into their networks and their data traffic. In order to safely and productively work across divisions and to interact with customers and suppliers, organizations need secure, interoperable networks.

The drive to digitize work processes has led many organizations to incorporate new networking technologies, often in response to a short-term need rather than a long-term vision. Moreover, business goals that lead to acquisitions or partnerships may force incompatible networks to coexist, often with frustrating results.

In short, there are many business and technical reasons why networks are increasingly complex. But managing and maintaining them needs to be simple. The digitization of work makes networks more vital than ever before, but the process of network modernization can be overwhelming without the right partner.





TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

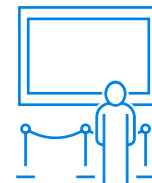
A partner that delivers expertise in cloud, SD-WAN and distributed workforce environments will enable corporate investments in network modernization to pay ongoing dividends. SD-WAN allows for application-aware routing while reducing network complexity and cost. In addition, a secure, private connection from the corporate WAN to cloud environments, like Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Microsoft Azure, gives instant access to cloud-based applications.

Many organizations will evaluate a network partner based on the speeds the network can deliver. That's important, but it's just one piece of the puzzle. Network capacity is also critical, as is access to the cloud and wired/wireless integration to support remote work. In addition, choosing a partner that can offer a broad portfolio of networking technologies creates flexibility, so that existing and future needs can be met with appropriate solutions.

A trusted partner can make the network modernization journey smoother, faster and more efficient, while freeing up an organization's IT resources to focus on strategic business initiatives. A managed network solution allows companies to ensure network performance as well as IT staff availability by offloading day-to-day maintenance, management and operations to network services professionals.



THE BIG PICTURE



Organizations of all sizes can benefit from a relationship with a nationwide network service provider. Choosing a partner that offers multiple connectivity options will provide choice and flexibility to ensure that the ever-evolving needs of the network can be met.

When companies move to managed network services, they reduce complexity and enhance efficiency. Networking equipment is standardized across locations, and becomes an operating expense instead of a capital investment. The service provider handles day-to-day IT tasks, all networking needs are consolidated on a single platform, and private Ethernet connections can be extended seamlessly to the cloud.

Managed networks reduce the risk of becoming locked into legacy technology. As technology evolves, the corporate network evolves with it. Organizations that outsource network management and maintenance to professional service providers allow business and IT teams to stay focused on other priorities.

As new business opportunities arise, a managed network is ready to scale. When end users unexpectedly demand more bandwidth or new applications, a managed service provider can respond quickly.



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION



Agile businesses need compute, storage and connectivity onsite and at strategic locations. Edge computing enables this by bringing the power of the cloud to corporate campuses and end users.

Edge computing is simplified by network management solutions. Secure, scalable connectivity can be easily deployed at single or multiple locations, and bandwidth can be increased as needed.

For any location, a provider should be able to offer customers the right service level agreements and connectivity, whether it is dedicated fiber internet, broadband, LTE, or a combination. And when it comes to your private WAN, many providers support integration with Ethernet, so turning to a network service provider can mean investments in private Ethernet are still leveraged.





MANAGED NETWORK BENEFITS

An experienced managed network service provider will be able to design, build, integrate, update and support the right IT solution for each client's needs, while streamlining the administration of the network through a simplified portal. A scalable platform means that the available suite of services can also scale. Adding internet access, SD-WAN, WiFi, connected cameras, unified communications, or a managed switch becomes frictionless with the right provider.

Network management enables internal IT resources to benefit from consultation with service provider experts. Today's networks are complex, so it makes sense to have a team that includes professionals with exposure to complex networks nationwide.

Managed service providers ensure their clients' security solutions remain up-to-date. Firewalls, malware protection, and content filtering should all be integrated and updated regularly.

The right provider will also offer simplified control and visibility of network resources. Each organization should be able to prioritize traffic and applications based on its unique business needs and should expect instant visibility into usage and performance.

Partnering with a nationwide network service provider does not mean giving up control. While some customers choose a fully managed solution to ease the burden on their limited IT staff, others opt for co-managed networks or choose to maintain complete control.



Different contracts may come with different levels of technical support. A preferred service provider can offer a complete envelope of support for changes, upgrades and maintenance, from solution design that meets specific needs to local technicians and 24/7/365 U.S.-based support, along with continuously monitored network operation centers.

The use cases, workloads and customer interactions that networks need to support today are increasingly complex, and it is hard to predict what will be needed next. More and more organizations are preparing not only for today's challenges but for tomorrow's by committing to network modernization with a trusted partner.

Spectrum Enterprise can guide organizations of all sizes through the complexity of network modernization, from design to deployment to maintenance and management. Reliable network performance becomes the foundation for business growth. With the right partner, questions become answers and challenges become opportunities.



About Spectrum Enterprise

Spectrum Enterprise, a part of Charter Communications, Inc., is a national provider of scalable, fiber technology solutions serving America's largest businesses and communications service providers. The broad Spectrum Enterprise portfolio includes networking and managed services solutions: Internet access, Ethernet access and networks, Voice and TV solutions. Spectrum Enterprise's industry-leading team of experts works closely with clients to achieve greater business success by providing solutions designed to meet their evolving needs.

More information about Spectrum Enterprise Network Modernization can be found at enterprise.spectrum.com/NetworkModernization.

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