# SD-WAN mythbusting: Part II

Jim Fulton

Myth #2: SD-WAN takes the place of the internet

SD-WAN solutions are hot and generating a lot of hype. Some of the noise is valid, such as how **SD-WAN** can help distributed organizations use interactive cloud apps in a more productive and cost-effective way. Yet occasionally this gets misconstrued, creating confusion and distracting from SD-WAN's real value.

There are some people who think SD-WAN takes the place of the internet, or that it can replace previous ways of getting sites online. They have the impression that SD-WAN is a specific type of network connection or a whole separate network. This myth probably stems from people dealing with service providers offering proprietary network connections that act as a front-end private network for getting to the internet. While such link-specific solutions are often faster and less expensive than point-to-point MPLS lines, they often are only available in limited geographies or are time-consuming to provision.

SD-WAN doesn't replace the internet—it improves access to it.

SD-WAN is about choices, enabling you to connect each location directly to the internet in the most effective way possible. It doesn't mandate any single type of link; in fact, it works best when mixing different types of technologies (e.g., cable, DSL, fiber, 4G/LTE, even MPLS lines that are still under contract) and different ISPs. SD-WAN provides a better way to tailor connectivity to each site's needs and local market conditions but should never attempt to limit or take the place of any websites or internet applications. In other words, SD-WAN doesn't replace the internet but *does* facilitate connectivity.
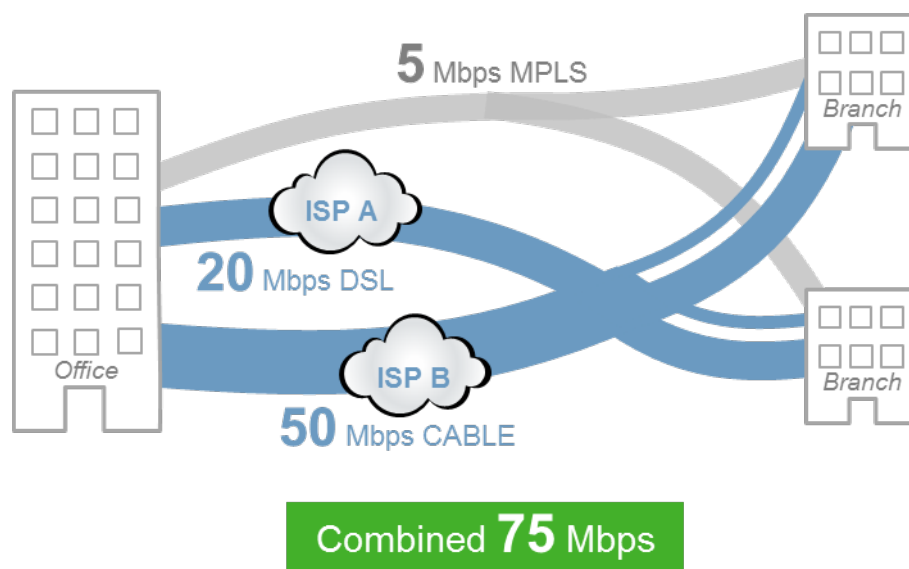
Myth #3: SD-WAN eliminates the need for on-premises hardware

SD-WAN is frequently used to direct traffic for particular applications across specific links. This is especially important when using highly interactive cloud apps like Office 365 that work best over low latency, high-bandwidth connections. It also can enforce use of techniques such as encryption to provide privacy and data transmission security for accessing cloud apps that aren't already relying on SSL/TLS.

But even with SD-WAN, your internet links and local networks are still plugged into on-premises equipment. Fortunately, real SD-WAN solutions automate and centralize the management of such devices, allowing you to deploy new locations without an on-site technician.

Enterprise SD-WAN consolidates networking and security into a single box.

You need strong security wherever you connect to the internet. Gartner now advises organizations to put the same level of security in each branch office that they have at their primary internet gateway. Most "SD-WAN 1.0" services either ignore this or tack on rudimentary firewalls. Modern enterprise SD-WAN solutions integrate full next generation firewall and IPS capabilities to eliminate gaps and provide combined networking and security management for each site.

Watch our recently recorded webcast, "Enterprise SD-WAN in the Real World," to learn how our MSSP partner uses Forcepoint's secure enterprise SD-WAN capabilities to optimize connectivity and security for 400 sites around the world, or check out the eBook "**5 Myths About Enterprise SD-WAN**."

Next week in our final installment, we'll look at Myth 4 "SD-WAN solutions are already enterprise-grade" and Myth 5 "SD-WAN has built-in security."