

LUMEN

Consolidate. Simplify. Scale.

How to tame sprawling networking
and security across locations and
legacy solutions



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A Complex Landscape in a Competitive World

Work isn't like it used to be. With more organisations operating across multiple globally distributed locations and a surge in hybrid working models, businesses have had to rethink their technology requirements.

The global reach of modern enterprises and the rise of remote working has led to an exponential increase in the use of collaboration tools and cloud-based applications.

With **74% of employers** now offering hybrid working arrangements , growth in the deployment of applications and workloads in the public cloud has been astronomical. Yet many organisations also require access to key legacy applications that live in central datacentres.

Accommodating these new business realities while sustaining legacy investments, often in a reactive, piecemeal manner, presents a range of challenges.

This includes performance issues, security concerns and the complexity of managing multiple solutions and platforms.

Conversely, when delivered effectively, a cloud-first strategy with appropriate infrastructure and networking can unlock the true digital capabilities of an organisation, providing heightened performance and elevated experiences for customers and end users.

This eBook outlines the challenges faced by businesses operating across multiple locations and the opportunities that come from simplifying and enhancing networking and security while consolidating technology vendors.

Common Obstacles on the Journey to Cloud Success

From the monolithic, on-premises systems of the past to today's dynamic cloud platforms, the intervening period has seen many adopt sticking plaster solutions to ensure legacy tools can continue to operate.

With a complex collection of on-premises and cloud-based solutions added to as part of modernisation efforts or acquisitions, the technology landscape for many is sprawling and painfully inefficient, not to mention costly.

It means more complicated billing and contracts, a lack of visibility, increased latency and a heavy support, management and maintenance burden on already overstretched IT teams.

And today's cloud-first, hybrid operating models heap even more issues on top of those existing challenges. Whether it be unpredictable bandwidth by comparison to traditional usage patterns, struggles to protect global infrastructure and a sharp rise in end-points, or inefficient routing of traffic across the network.

For many, it can feel like a toss-up between performance and protection, with traffic routed through business headquarters slowing things down while speedier direct connections to the cloud reduce security oversight.





Rising to the Challenge with a Proactive Approach to Network Management

The key to overcoming these challenges and meeting the rising demands of modern applications, users and businesses is to implement a secure, holistic global networking solution.

A proactive and strategic approach to network management that focuses on optimising performance, improving security, and reducing complexity.

By making the right investments, businesses can stay ahead of the curve and deliver the reliable, high-performance services that they and their customers require.

Lumen SASE (Secure Access Service Edge) with Versa Networks delivers on this requirement, offering cutting-edge, end-to-end networking and security that caters to the dynamic needs of modern business. Integrating best-in-breed SASE technology with cutting-edge connectivity underlay from the Lumen-owned and operated hybrid network, it is the **world's fastest platform for next-gen applications and data facilities.**

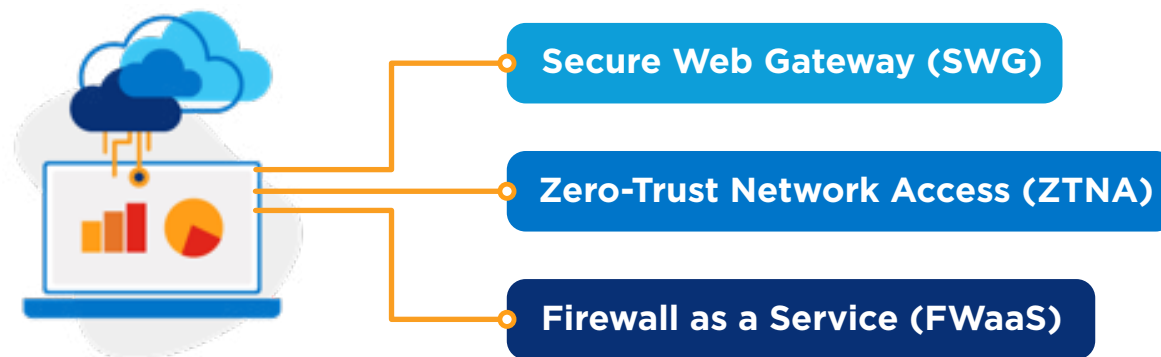
It enables businesses to ensure that individuals, apps, and locations are connected in a secure, scalable way that delivers optimal performance across all locations.

Versa Networks: Unifying Network Security

By bringing together multiple security technologies, Versa provides a powerful, consistent and unified software stack.

Delivering secure, scalable and reliable enterprise-wide security, it provides an Enterprise-class, carrier-grade operating system that operates at exceptional scale.

It features a range of security capabilities, including...



...in a single solution to deliver complete control and visibility.



Versa unlocks the ability for businesses to deploy and manage security functions across the entire network, including mobile devices and remote workers.

However, in order for these capabilities to be fully realised, a best-in-class network underlay is essential.

Lumen Networking – The Backbone of Success

Investing in a robust network underlay is not just a good idea; it is an absolute necessity for businesses operating across multiple locations on a regional or global scale.

Lumen provides the largest and most peered network in the world based on a single backbone with a flat continuous architecture and unparalleled transport quality for both public and private data.

This is a game-changer in the world of networking.

By seamlessly integrating the Versa stack, Lumen's network extends its reach and empowers businesses to achieve new levels of both connectivity and security by way of the planet's strongest internet infrastructure.

With global peering and direct connections to leading Cloud Service Providers (CSPs), it provides a strong foundation for businesses.



With more than 1100 direct connections to CSPs, Lumen provides businesses with fast load times and the ability to handle large volumes of traffic.

It is ideal for applications that require not only scalability but reliability, with Lumen's global reach ensuring adaptability in the face of shifting bandwidth requirements or geographical expansion.



Deliver Complete Visibility and Performance through Lumen SASE with Versa

The combination of Lumen's network backbone and Versa's SASE solution offers streamlining and performance that can't be matched by a multi-vendor approach.

Providing a single pane of glass with a common orchestration plane across networking and security functionality, it offers the complete package of visibility and performance.



As a result, organisations benefit from improved network agility by dynamically routing traffic to ensure that their most important applications are prioritised for optimal user experience.

They also achieve enhanced resiliency via a network designed to withstand many challenges that may come its way. It deploys active/active connectivity that's balanced under normal conditions and is automatically rerouted if one connection goes down.

This means businesses can continue to operate without disruption, regardless of power outages and network failure.

And, with security provided by both Versa and Lumen, data is protected in a way that only a provider that owns and operates its own cloud and network infrastructure can.

As it is transferred globally, traffic in many cases, never leaves the secured platform, protecting it from external threat.



Lumen SASE with Versa Networks use cases:

The benefits of a combined security and networking solution are significant, with a number of use cases that can elevate operations and enhance experiences.



Simplify branch management: Bring multiple global locations under one network umbrella. This means you can set uniform policies and security protocols across all locations to make it easier to manage and secure your network.



Optimise the WAN: Seamlessly integrate public and private transport to effectively utilise bandwidth while eliminating bottlenecks, backhauling and passive connectivity. This means your network traffic can flow smoothly and efficiently without any hiccups.

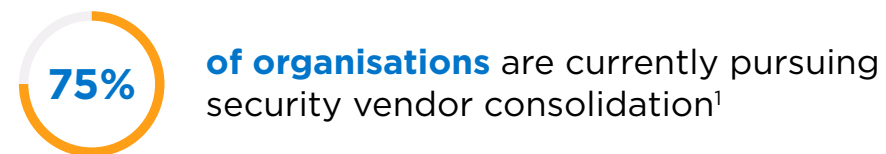


Minimising security risk: With Software-defined security, you can protect your entire enterprise, including branch locations, from a single dashboard. This technology provides visibility and centralised management, so you can easily monitor and control security protocols.

The Benefits of a Simplified Landscape

Lumen SASE with Versa Networks boasts an impeccable record of success, having served clients across a variety of industries with distinction. This type of vendor consolidation is a strategy widely adopted by organisations today.

A survey conducted by Gartner found that:



and also found that by doing so, organisations can expect a



Another study by EMA Research discovered that **organisations utilising a consolidated network infrastructure were able to reduce network downtime by 70%** as a result of simplified management and increased visibility.



Vendor consolidation through Lumen SASE with Versa Networks simplifies complex technology landscapes to ensure organisations can keep pace with the ongoing demands of modernisation, adapt to changes, enhance cost-effectiveness, and provide exceptional customer and employee experiences worldwide.



Eliminate IT Burdens to Drive Success

As the complexity of managing multiple global vendors and IT systems increases, the toll it can have on business resources also rises. It is for this reason that organisations are outsourcing management to expert third-party providers.

By leveraging managed services from Lumen, businesses can offload their day-to-day IT burden, freeing up valuable resources to focus on what matters – innovation and business-critical projects. However, the benefits are not limited to overcoming resource drain.

Managed services from Lumen provide access to expert knowledge and experience, cutting-edge technologies and high-quality support that would be otherwise available in-house.

Whether organisations are looking for full or co-managed services, they can be tailored to meet specific business requirements, providing complete coverage from infrastructure to application management.

Alternatively, a co-managed service can allow a business to augment its internal IT team with a managed service provider.



With managed services from Lumen, organisations benefit from:



Centralised account management.



Unified processes.



Simplified global expansion with full compliance.



Business continuity, no matter what.



Access to cutting-edge technology.



Cost-effective solutions.



Strategic vision far ahead.²

From Complexity to Opportunity

Technology in business can be unforgiving. As it rapidly evolves, organisations must adapt or fall behind. With the way we work fundamentally changing while cost and regulatory pressures continue to rise, businesses can't afford to stand idly by.

With network performance and security at the forefront of their minds, organisations can simplify and future-proof their operations by eliminating the complexities of multiple vendors and outdated legacy systems.

This distinct shift is not only relieving pressures on IT teams and driving cost efficiencies but also boosting networking performance and security that delivers enhanced experiences for employees and customers globally.

By embracing modernisation and seeking competitive advantage, businesses are not only surviving but thriving in this dynamic landscape, with the future belonging to those who have the vision to adapt and the courage to embrace change.



Discover how Lumen SASE with Versa Networks could enhance networking and security for your business across global locations. Contact us to discuss your requirements today.



Sources: 1. Forbes 2. Accace

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