

GTT SD-WAN and Secure Service Edge: Empowering the Digital Enterprise through Network- as-a-Service

September 2024 | BRIEFING NOTES



Table of Contents

Background	01
Briefing Notes	02
Key Takeaways	05
ISG Placements and Recognitions	05
About the Author	07
Summary Facts	08

About ISG Research™

ISG Research™ provides proprietary research, advisory consulting and executive event services focused on market trends and disruptive technologies driving change in business computing. ISG Research™ gives business and technology leaders the insight and guidance they need to accelerate growth and create more value.

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Background

In enterprise networks and software-defined solutions and services, there are many different strategic areas and trends to consider, including technology, business coverage and an enterprise organization and its specific processes. These areas are closely aligned with the global trends of enterprise digitalization, business transformation, advanced and enhanced security, and cloudification. In the long-running [ISG Provider Lens™ Network – Software-Defined Solutions and Services 2024 study](#), ISG has been focusing on analyzing the software-defined networking (SD-networking) market, including managed SD-WAN and related technologies and services such as transformation services, edge technologies (including private enterprise 5G) and secure access service edge (SASE).

Highly advanced offerings with attractive consumption models from a managed service provider (MSP) and the widespread adoption of SD-WAN by traditional service providers and carriers – shifting away from rigid infrastructures – are driving the growth of the global market, which reflects the demand from enterprises. This adoption aligns with the global trends of digitalization and multicloud implementation among enterprises across industries, together with their need to drastically improve the security posture of networks to secure their own and customer data as effectively as possible to prevent breaches or other business disruption events.

Enterprises are now increasingly re-examining their networks and existing SD-WAN implementations, where they exist as part of a complete SASE solution and are often obtaining it as a fully managed service from an MSP and/or adding security service edge (SSE) to their existing SD-WAN to upgrade to an advanced SASE solution.

Security has emerged as a top priority for businesses across most industries. Enterprises are seeking comprehensive and advanced security measures covering the entire network architecture and risk exposure estate. SD-networks provide a flexible but secure foundation to address these requirements, especially in cloud-based and hybrid networks. By adopting SD-WAN, businesses can deploy robust security measures and facilitate simplified full SASE deployments or add SSE to new or existing SD-WAN installations to create a SASE framework and safeguard their networks from threats in real-time. This setup can be further enhanced in circumstances where the overlay service provider also supplies the underlay network, making all security and monitoring available from one platform providing one networking experience rather than involving a multitude of suppliers, technologies and resources.

SD-networks have proven to efficiently assist with security enhancement by reducing complexity and facilitating risk-reduced migration for enterprises to single or multicloud environments. In the last five years, security-integrated networks have been evolving continuously, with the inclusion of components such as proactive detection and response, zero trust networking, and other additional and optional features such as identity-based security and authentication. When added to an existing network, this is often referred to as Secure Service Edge (SSE). Many providers supply a combination of identity-based authentication, SASE, and additional discrete network security to create a holistic, secure-by-design environment for a network. Organizations may also additionally opt to include reactive or proactive network operations centers (NOC), security operations centers (SOCs) or cyber defense centers (CDCs), with human experts and AI-assisted operatives monitoring the global threat posture and latest attack types and vectors.



Briefing Notes

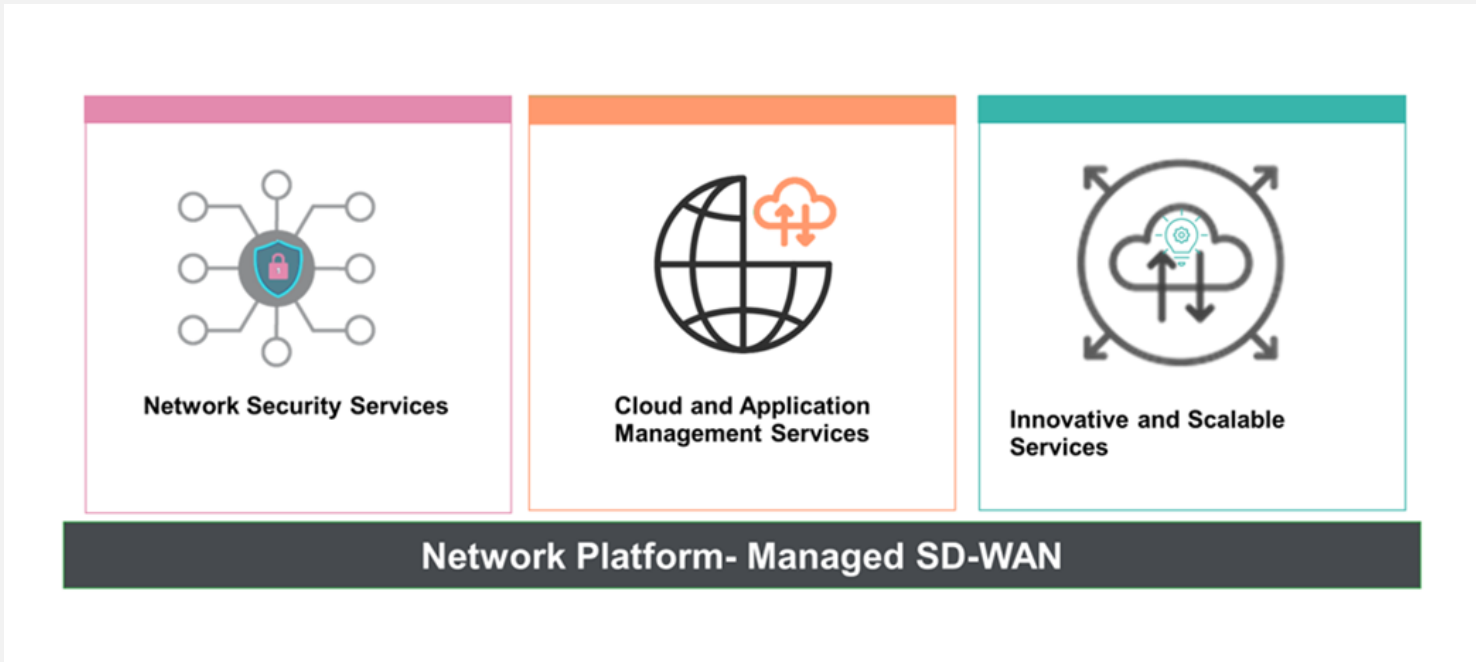
GTT Communications briefed ISG analysts on its security offerings as well as its SD-WAN network offerings and capabilities, specifically giving in-depth information on its Secure Connect solution. The discussion revolved around security, SSE, SASE, network transformation and advanced MNS and consumables such as Network-as-a-Service (NaaS), which will be covered in detail in the upcoming study [ISG Provider Lens™ on MNS](#). Both general and specific vertical examples – and their impact on delivering value to enterprises – were discussed in the context of Secure Connect.

GTT’s strategy combines a modern connectivity

experience with next-generation cybersecurity capabilities and a zero-trust approach to create an agile, secure, and user-friendly experience – all managed by networking and security experts. The company is partnering with recognized brands specializing in the field and, by doing so, has included and launched a plethora of security options in its software-defined and underlay-based network offerings.

Recognizing the global trend and enterprise security needs, the company has enhanced its security offerings to encompass the following:

Figure 1. Security needs built upon managed SD-WAN



Source: GTT Communications

The company has further evolved its security positioning with GTT Secure Connect. This solution is a cloud platform focused on delivering ubiquitous networking and security, where it specifically provides optimization and prioritization of application performance, extends the security perimeter to any network endpoint, and delivers a world-class choice of single or dual vendor SASE solution, where Secure Connect is powered by

Fortinet’ SSE services or the Palo Alto Prisma® Access technology platform. This integrated solution also supports cloud migration, integrated security and networking functionality for any transitioning enterprise by providing a centralized policy control at a site and user level, while improving scalability and efficiency, which, in turn, may increase the total value of ownership for customers across their network estate.



GTT Secure Connect – Extending network security perimeter

GTT Secure Connect solution offers enterprises three distinct groupings of benefits in comparison with legacy systems and partial security add-on options from different vendors. This specifically includes:

Strengthened Security Posture

- Security at the endpoint.
- A dedicated private cloud solution
- Replacement of large CapEx with predictable monthly OpEx
- Ease in meeting customer compliance requirements
- Secure access close to the edge through POPs across the globe
- Access to market-leading partners Fortinet and Palo Alto

Flexibility and Choice

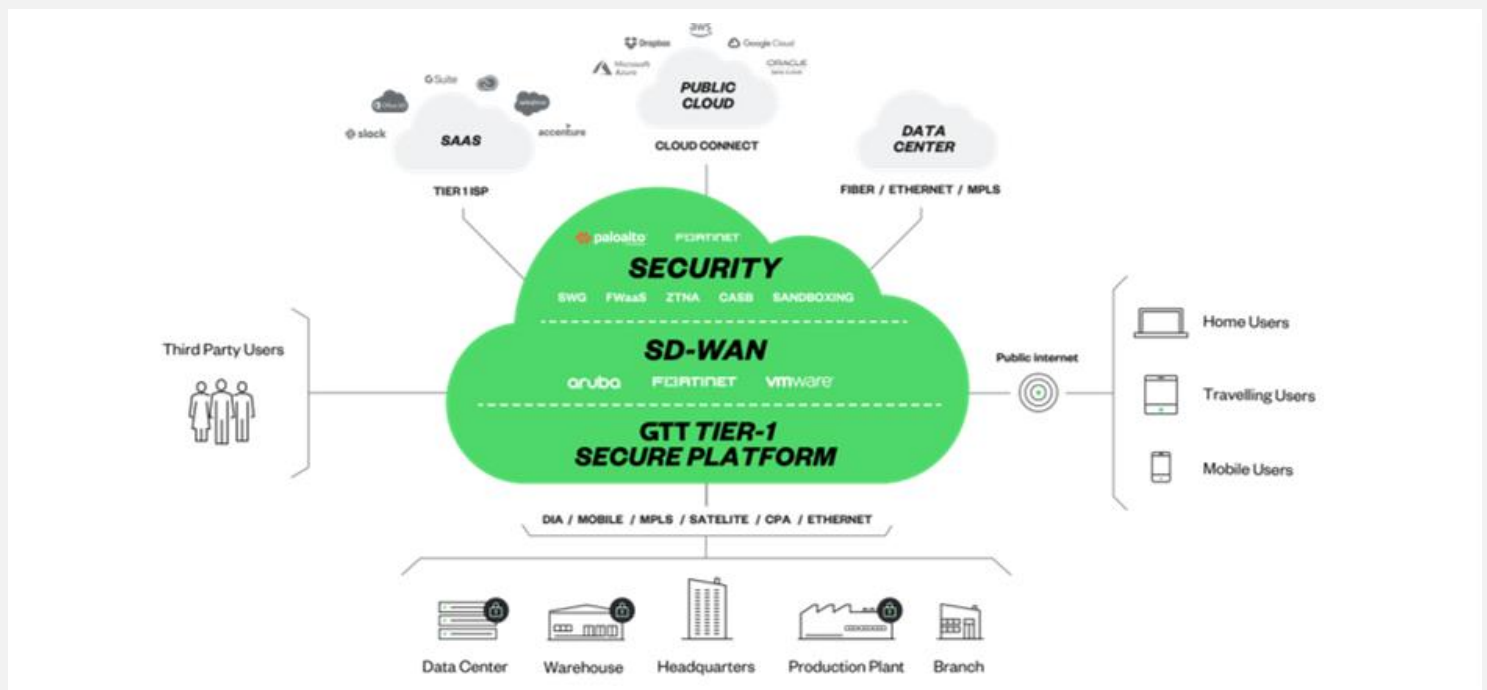
- The portfolio includes both single vendor SASE and best in breed dual-vendor SASE to address enterprise requirements

- Account support, managed services and professional services to reduce complexity and burden of deploying and maintaining global network and security infrastructures
- Easy integration with other GTT Services (MDR, DDoS or SD-WAN) to achieve the benefits of a complete security solution
- Flexibility to add or scale services based on customer needs

Global Reach and Support

- Global 24/7/365 NOC and SOC support
- SOC security analysts that are CREST certified, ISO accredited and have Security Check level security clearance
- Resource Public Key Infrastructure (RPKI) – a mechanism to make Internet routing more secure – and is among the first large global Tier 1 operators to offer this feature across its global Tier 1 IP backbone
- Supports all global compliance standards

Figure 2. Secure Connect GTT's SASE Framework



Source: GTT



Business benefits of GTTs Managed Secure Connect

Utilizing the managed Secure Connect solution should deliver numerous and significant tangible business benefits to the enterprise. These benefits can include;

- Faster, more secure connections to business-critical resources
- Rapid adaptation to constantly shifting users, applications and threats
- Seamless, global SD-WAN service coverage
- Expertise to resolve complexity
- 24/7 network and security uptime assurance
- Provision of a full scalable and flexible secure network solution
- Replacement of large capex expenditures with predictable cost-effective monthly payments
- Provision of local expertise with a global reach
- Complete assistance in meeting compliance requirements
- Offloading of time from customer IT and security teams to allow re-focus on day-to-day core efforts and long-term projects
- Provision of enhanced insights and intelligence to the business

This demonstrates a GTT Secure Connect differentiation in terms of capabilities in comparison to many legacy and partially secure

networks as it provides Service Level Objective choices, (monitored and orchestrated by GTT's EtherVison management portal), dedicated private cloud security, service level agreements regarding change management, security at the endpoint and delivers end-to-end support. In addition, it has all the advantages of being provisioned on one of the most advanced global Tier 1 IP backbones.

Case in point

A manufacturing/retail client with over 2,000 employees in more than 30 locations across 16 countries. Its products are sold in 139 markets around the world.

Client challenge was that the company is continuously undergoing structural change, triggered by organizational growth and work-from-anywhere impacts and with applications increasingly moving to the cloud needing speed and advanced security.

GTT's solution was to provide SD-WAN across 35 global sites with dual links of MPLS primary for all sites and internet secondary for most sites. In addition, GTT provided advanced security around ZTNA (Secure Connect) and delivered in-region support.

Client benefits demonstrated included a fast and problem-free transition to a modern, reliable network, with demonstrably advanced security resulting in secure and fast application usage wherever and whenever required.



Key Takeaways

ISG Analysts have summarized a number of the points concerning GTT's advanced capabilities as presented, and the reference cases delivered.

GTT combines connectivity, networking (SD-WAN) and SSE components for a complete managed solution supported via a digital experience portal i.e., EtherVision. GTT also provides technology agnostic SASE solutions using a range of supported technology platforms including a single-stack offering powered by Fortinet's SSE services, or a multi-technology platform offering supported with Palo Alto Prisma Access which is fully integrated into any of GTT's SD-WAN platforms.

GTT in addition offers DDoS Protection, Managed Detection & Response (MDR), and a range of security management tiers as value-added services as complements to Secure Connect. GTT leverages technology, data analytics and certified experts to provide managed threat detection across the entire attack surface. Using advanced technologies and cloud-based security such as GTT Secure Connect and DDoS Protection, GTT has demonstrated delivery of flexible, robust cyber security that protects endpoint devices in the office, hybrid

cloud models and also for remote workers.

In addition to the SD-WAN and security capabilities, GTT's global Tier-1 IP backbone is used to efficiently transport client traffic between locations worldwide, ensuring low latency and high performance. GTT offers highly experienced and certified solution engineers, design engineers, project managers and a global technical team for on-premises hardware installation and has many references of effective delivery.

Over the next 2 to 3 years, ISG expects GTT Communications to continue to focus on offerings such as Secure Connect, encompassing managed detection and response, distributed denial-of-service (DDoS), and more. As the company increasingly moves toward networking and security-as-a-service solutions, its offerings are expected to become even more targeted and attractive to both midsize and large enterprise groups. ISG's research indicates that customers are looking for a single provider to manage their advanced and secure communications and with GTT's global footprint and rich portfolio, it is expected to be well positioned to attract enterprise customers.

ISG Placement and Recognition

ISG Provider Lens™ positioning: GTT Communications recognized as a Leader in the following recently published reports:

- Network – Software Defined Solutions and Services 2024



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Dr. Kenn Walters is a highly skilled senior executive with over 40 years of experience directing and managing major transformational technology projects, research and development programs, with extensive experience within providers and in global industry research and management consultancies. For ISG, Kenn has written over 100 articles as a distinguished lead analyst for ISG Insights in areas such as digital transformation, cloud managed networks, SD networking, SDN and digital disruptors. He is a lead analyst and author for multiple regions in the Provider Lens™ reports, in such areas as Networks – Software Defined Networking, Managed Network Services, Digital Business Software and Services, Contact Center-as-a-service and CC CX. He holds BSc, MSc and PhD in computer science and communications, is a member of the N.Y. Academy of Sciences and a Fellow of the British Computing Society (FBCS).



Summary Facts



Headquarters

Arlington Virginia, U.S.



Revenue

The company is privately held and no revenue or FTE figures are available publicly.



Service Portfolio

Network Transformation, Managed Network Services, SD-WAN, SASE, Consulting and Business Process Services.



Competitors

GTT competes against global telecoms and solutions providers, consulting firms, and systems integrators.





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