

## SPONSORED Q&amp;A

# SPARKLE ENHANCES SD-WAN WITH MULTI-VENDOR PLAY

**Antonella Sanguineti**, Head of Secure Cloud & Networking Solutions at Sparkle, explains the key insights of SD-WAN and SASE in the post pandemic digital transformation



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## Q | What trends has Sparkle witnessed during the Covid pandemic when it comes to enterprise digital transformation?

During the painful pandemic period companies worldwide have experienced the urgency of setting-up a secure and scalable digital infrastructure able to cope with remote working, while securing business continuity. Reports show that cloud market in 2020 grew 21% compared to the previous year with SaaS (Software as a Service) reaching 46% of yearly increment driven by the needs of getting enterprise ready for a different way of working. The new paradigm and trends require data to be everywhere, both on-premise and in data centers, while work locations must be flexible and spread. Sparkle, as leading service provider and experienced player in the multi-cloud environment, played a key role in ensuring the proper connectivity capacity and accompanying customers in the adoption of cloud, making the journey smooth and sustainable thanks to migration projects, tools and the right level of connectivity at domestic and international level.

## Q | What are the main benefits to customers using Sparkle's SD-WAN offering?

SD-WAN technology fits very well the requirements of the digital transformation, offering a powerful and flexible connectivity approach to cloud, multi-site infrastructure and application-driven routing. SD-WAN has been conceived from the very beginning to address the needs of secure and easy connectivity, able to create an end-to-end overlay layer running over a variety of transport technologies including MPLS, Internet access and LTE. With its centralized control architecture, network updates and policy enforcements become much faster and more dynamic than traditional WANs, which is exactly what is needed by the new digital networks.

With Sparkle as SD-WAN provider, customers can rely on a global company able to manage at global level the whole chain of SD-WAN service elements, including transport connectivity, SD-WAN Overlay including equipment, orchestrator and controllers, turnkey installation, maintenance and support from our NOC and SOC for the best customer experience.

## Q | Please elaborate on Sparkle's recent enhancements by adopting a multi-vendor approach

There are many SD-WAN technologies in the market, all of them pretty advanced and addressing the needs of different business segments such as Retail, Manufacturing Finance and so on. As an international service provider serving many kinds of customers, Sparkle decided for a multi-technology SD-WAN approach in order to cope with the different and evolving business needs. But our role is to save customers from any complexity of the underlying technology and optimize SD-WANs for their specific needs. To this purpose, we provide a complete range of professional services to accompany enterprises on their SD-WAN journey and adapt our solutions step-by-step, following the evolution of customer networks in terms of network sites, network topology,

application based network policies, security features and so on.

## Q | Can you provide a specific example of how your SD-WAN solutions have helped a company's demands?

Most of the SD-WAN requests that we have received are driven by the need for allowing to a multi-point to multi-point enterprise network leveraging a hybrid underlay connectivity, while ensuring the guaranteed quality of service for the different applications. In one of the recent projects, we have used our SD-WAN solution to interconnect different manufacturing sites worldwide, leveraging Internet Access in those countries where connectivity was reliable enough and still deploying MPLS in other regions. Through Sparkle SD-WAN solution and Outsourcing service, customers do not need to handle any complexity, while using the most appropriate underlay option and being able to execute quick changes in the network policy routing, in order to always keep guaranteeing the best path for the business applications.

## Q | How important do you think Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) will become?

According to Gartner, by 2024 40% of companies will consider SASE adoption to their networks' security in a multi-technology environment. SASE allows enterprises to secure and connect their WANs in a simple, performant, and holistic way, thanks to network and security functions converging into a single multi-tenant cloud platform, and security features (such as URL filtering, anti-malware, IPS, and firewalling) being built into the underlying network infrastructure. This means that all edges—from sites, to mobile, to the cloud—receive the same level of protection. Reduced costs are a key factor for a successful network project: SASE allows enterprises to leverage on a cloud-native multi-tenant solution that, in turn, reduces network complexity and optimizes costs, while minimizing IT load and streamlining provisioning times.