

CASE STUDY

Leading Global Provider of Packaging Solutions Enhances Operational Efficiency Through Secure SD-WAN Architecture

With origins dating back 170 years to a small workshop providing mechanical equipment to the local farmers of Parma in Italy, Sidel has become one of the world's leading providers of equipment, services, and complete solutions for packaging liquids, foods, and home and personal care products using plastic (polyethylene terephthalate, or PET), aluminum (cans), glass, and other materials.

Continual innovation and focus on business value have enabled Sidel to deliver solutions that not only outperform the competition in speed, efficiency, and product value, but also consume less energy and raw materials in production.

Sidel currently operates in 50 locations worldwide and is one of the three industry groups of Tetra Laval.

Managing Complexity in a Distributed, Multivendor Environment

To remain at the forefront of packaging innovation, Sidel relies on fast, stable communications between each of its 50 global sites as well as with multiple business partners and customers. Having grown both organically and through multiple mergers and acquisitions, a complex mix of differing technology and solutions from multiple vendors—interconnected via a combination of multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) and virtual private network (VPN) tunnels—comprised the network and security infrastructure supporting these communications.

For Simone Castellucci, Manager for End User Services at Sidel, this presented several challenges. “We lacked a single overall view of network health and connectivity,” he explains, “so if a location went offline, for example, we first had to isolate the fault, diagnose the problem, and then work out how to resolve it—all of which used up valuable time and resources.”

As well as dealing with connectivity issues, Castellucci had concerns regarding the organization's security. Sidel was in the process of consolidating an IT services infrastructure that comprised both on-premises applications, such as SAP running in private data centers, as well as an increasing number of cloud-based services running on Microsoft Azure.

The complexity of this environment combined with the lack of overall visibility meant that configuration errors, vulnerabilities, or unauthorized access might go unnoticed, opening the network to potential cyberattacks.



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Details

Customer: Sidel

Industry: Manufacturing

Location: Italy

Secure SD-WAN Locations: 50

The Transition to Secure SD-WAN

The best solution to the company's connectivity challenges, especially given the increasing use of cloud services, was to transition to a Fortinet Secure software-defined wide-area network (SD-WAN) architecture.

By replacing the majority of MPLS links with secure connections over the public internet, Sidel would be able to significantly reduce overall communications costs while simultaneously increasing the resilience and performance of cloud-based services.

But connecting remote sites to the public internet also meant that a portion of the company's data traffic would no longer be subject to the inspection of central firewalls, effectively expanding the attack surface available to malicious actors.

It was crucial for Sidel to choose a solution that extended comprehensive security controls out to the edge of the network.

After evaluating several possible options, Sidel selected Fortinet. "We already had a good experience with FortiGate Next-Generation Firewalls from one of the companies we've recently acquired," recounts Castellucci. "When we realized they also had some of the most advanced SD-WAN capabilities integrated into the very same platform, it seemed an obvious choice."

Rapid Deployment and Simplified Management

To streamline network deployment and simplify ongoing management, analysis, and reporting, Sidel deployed FortiManager and FortiAnalyzer, allowing Castellucci and the team to monitor and control the entire network and security infrastructure from a central location.

Using predefined device-provisioning templates, the zero-touch provisioning function of FortiManager, which can force all new installs and upgrades to use only predetermined firmware versions, Sidel was able to greatly simplify deployment across the group's 50 global locations.

Through FortiManager, the team was also able to set application-centric SD-WAN business policies to fine-tune traffic steering decisions based on performance service-level agreement (SLA) targets for each WAN provider.

Admins could then use the SD-WAN monitoring dashboard to keep an eye on application performance and bandwidth utilization per WAN link with FortiAnalyzer providing enhanced analytics views and SD-WAN assessment reports.

To facilitate the whole transition and ensure the company achieved the best possible return on investment, Sidel turned to FortiCare Professional Services to carry out a thorough three-day analysis of its full networking and security requirements.

"The investment in Fortinet Professional Services ultimately proved to be a game-changer," concludes Castellucci. "It ended up saving us a huge amount of time and money and left us with complete confidence that all our requirements would be met and that nothing would be overlooked."

Business Impact

- Increased business continuity through improved application performance and resilience
- Reduced communications costs by at least 40%
- Enhanced security of complex hybrid services infrastructure
- Supported business growth and operational efficiency through continued innovation and service excellence

Solutions

- FortiGate Next-Generation Firewall
- Fortinet Secure SD-WAN
- FortiManager
- FortiAnalyzer

Services

- Fortinet Professional Services

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By increasing the security, performance, and reliability of the company's WAN, the new SD-WAN architecture has enabled Sidel to increase the levels of service and business value delivered to its customers and partners while simultaneously reducing communication and administration costs.

For Castellucci and the team, the solution has reduced the amount of time spent firefighting, allowing them to focus on supporting Sidel's business growth through continued innovation and service excellence.

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