



Real estate settlement firm enhances quality of end-user experience with business-driven SD-WAN

North American Title improves performance and efficiency of network services with EdgeConnect SD-WAN edge platform

For most people, buying a home is one of the biggest transactions in their lifetimes. Naturally, all buyers want to know with certainty that the property is truly theirs to purchase, with no encumbrances such as a lien or claim from another party. That's where title settlement services and title insurance play a vital role.

North American Title Company (NATC) is one of the largest real estate title services companies in the United States. To settle real estate transactions, NATC employees work with title and escrow software

running in a central data center, accessed remotely via terminal services across an MPLS-based wide area network (WAN). However, sharing large digital files between offices and outside service providers was tapping out available WAN bandwidth.

Rick Davidson, NATC's national systems manager, explains, "Buying a house involves a giant stack of closing documents, which today are electronic and huge. One 10-megabyte file shared with 10 people is suddenly 100 megabytes, and our 3-megabyte MPLS circuit had a hard time handling it."



ENHANCED
NETWORK AGILITY



INCREASED
BANDWIDTH 30X



SAVED UP TO \$30K
PER MONTH

SD-WAN brings more bandwidth at much lower cost

When a company-wide satisfaction survey revealed that employees' number one complaint was slow email and poor application responsiveness, Davidson explored ways to address the issue. With MPLS services costing NATC about \$120,000 per month, he wanted to find a more economical way to get extra bandwidth. After researching SD-WAN, he discovered he could get all that, and with Silver Peak, much more.



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— Rick Davidson, National Systems Manager,
North American Title Company

“I learned about SD-WAN in my daily reading and quickly came across Silver Peak,” Davidson notes. “It became obvious right away that SD-WAN could increase our available bandwidth exponentially using inexpensive broadband. I looked into a number of SD-WAN vendors, but none of them compared to what Silver Peak offered. The extensive application identification that Silver Peak provides

is especially appealing. Having a complete, unified platform with built-in routing and firewall capabilities, plus the option for WAN optimization—that was huge.”

NATC engaged partner, CDW, to manage the rollout of the Silver Peak [Unity EdgeConnect™](#) SD-WAN edge platform. In a little over four weeks, the team had the EdgeConnect SD-WAN platform deployed across 104 sites, including branch offices, physical data centers, and an infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) environment in Microsoft Azure. When complete, the SD-WAN will span approximately 120 locations, with Chicago-based [ignyte](#) providing ongoing SD-WAN managed services.

Having decommissioned MPLS, NATC now terminates the EdgeConnect platform with dual broadband links, or in some larger locations, a Dedicated Internet Access (DIA) circuit paired with commercial broadband. Some sites also have a tertiary LTE connection for backup. This provides most locations with 100 Mbps of redundant bandwidth, and up to 200 Mbps at select sites. Moreover, network costs are substantially lower than the previous MPLS network.



“On a three-year contract with a fully managed service, we’re able to save \$20,000 to \$30,000 per month,” Davidson reports. “That’s with dramatically more bandwidth, plus redundancy, which we didn’t have before.”

Local breakout reduces traffic back to the data center

Using the unified routing interoperability and stateful firewall within the EdgeConnect platform, NATC eliminated the need for separate routers and firewalls at the edge. In addition, the application identification and classification capabilities of EdgeConnect enable users at branch sites to break out locally to trusted SaaS applications like Microsoft Office 365, as well as industry-specific websites such as banks.

“The ability to have local breakout to Office 365 is huge,” says Davidson. “A lot of traffic was email with large attachments being backhauled to our central data center. Almost all user complaints were traced back to email crushing a branch circuit, and that is completely gone now.”

By breaking out document-intensive traffic directly from branches, NATC has also reduced the amount of traffic to its data centers by 60 – 70 percent. Combined with higher available bandwidth and SD-WAN capabilities such as [path conditioning](#), quality of service (QoS), and [dynamic path control](#) on the EdgeConnect platform, end-users now enjoy a much higher quality of experience accessing their title and escrow production applications, as well as voice over IP (VoIP) and general internet services, which pass through a next-generation firewall in the central data center.

To ensure each application receives the network priority it requires, Davidson uses [Unity Orchestrator™](#) to configure business intent overlays with specific QoS policies for different classes of applications. For example, VoIP traffic is prioritized as real time, and terminal services for accessing title and escrow applications are higher priority than general internet traffic.

Enables IT to respond with more agility to business needs

While NATC’s SD-WAN is managed by ignyte, Davidson now has complete visibility of traffic flows through Orchestrator. “I’m in Orchestrator daily,” he acknowledges. “I like to keep an eye on the traffic being backhauled to the data center compared to what’s

broken out locally. While ignyte responds to any circuit outage alarms, we handle trouble tickets, and the visibility we have with Orchestrator really helps get to the root of a problem quickly.”

With the agility of the SD-WAN, and using configuration templates in Orchestrator, Davidson and his team will also be able to respond more quickly when the business wants to open new branches. For example, it could take 60 days to get MPLS circuits into a new site, while broadband can be provisioned in less than two weeks.

“Sometimes we’ll get notice of a new branch opening at the end of the month,” Davidson notes. “With Silver Peak, that’s no problem. We just put in the EdgeConnect appliance, push out the configuration using zero-touch provisioning, and they’re up and running in a matter of minutes.”

Looking toward the future, Davidson is confident that the EdgeConnect platform will continue to meet NATC’s evolving needs, whether that involves using the optional [Unity Boost™](#) WAN optimization performance pack, service chaining with cloud-based security solutions like Zscaler, or further expansion into the public cloud.

Davidson concludes, “I didn’t want to be in a position where sometime in the future we need WAN optimization and have to go out looking for another vendor. I feel that Silver Peak provides us the best future proof pathway for SD-WAN.”

For more information on Silver Peak and our solutions, please visit: silver-peak.com



Customer

North American Title Company (NATC) is among the largest real estate settlement service providers in the United States, with more than 1,000 associates and a network of branches from coast to coast. Established in 1953 in California, NATC operates in 19 states, and is affiliated with North American Title Insurance Company (NATIC), one of the largest title insurance underwriters in the United States. NATC's parent company is States Title Holding, Inc., headquartered in San Francisco, California.

Challenge

NATC's employees share very large real estate settlement files, typically via email, which oversaturated the company's MPLS network. With MPLS services costing NATC about \$120,000 per month, the company needed a way to increase available bandwidth while lowering WAN expenses.

Solution

Working with partner, CDW, NATC is rolling out the Unity EdgeConnect SD-WAN edge platform to approximately 120 locations, including branch offices, physical data centers, and a Microsoft Azure environment. NATC decommissioned MPLS

and now terminates the EdgeConnect platform with dual broadband links or a combination of DIA and commercial broadband. Chicago-based ignyte provides ongoing SD-WAN managed services, and NATC IT staff use Orchestrator to maintain direct visibility of traffic flows.

Results

- > Increased available bandwidth more than 30X
- > Saved up to \$30,000 per month on network services
- > Enhanced quality of experience for employees
- > Retired traditional routers, consolidating edge for greater efficiency
- > Enabled local breakout, reducing traffic back to data centers by 60 to 70 percent
- > Improved visibility of application traffic flows, simplifying troubleshooting
- > Enhanced network agility to support ongoing business expansion



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