

Financial Institutions Need Network Transformation



“Time is money”, so Caribbean financial companies have long been at technology’s forefront. The pandemic forced these enterprises to accelerate movement to remote and flexible working arrangements. The changes also meant that information flows in different patterns across their enterprise networks. Consequently, they must be sure that their networks can support growing transaction volumes, so they not only meet customer expectations but also strict regulatory requirements.

A raft of new game changing technologies, cloud, data analytics, mobile, Internet of Things (IoT) and artificial intelligence, emerged in the last few years. This digital transformation spurred a growing demand for next-gen applications, which are often cloud centric.

The capabilities enable banks to update their portfolios, create new products, and dramatically improve how they deliver their services. The alteration also enabled financial providers to alter how money flowed.

The Network Becomes an Inhibitor

Banks have had trouble keeping pace, in large part because of their network limitations. Traditional systems often rely on cumbersome manual upgrades that are a step or two behind user needs.

Workload volumes constantly increase. Financial companies deploy applications based on containers,

Increasingly virtual interactions replaced traditional face-to-face interactions.

In addition, payments and money transfers are areas that have been greatly impacted. New technology and players emerged as middlemen acting as conduits between suppliers and consumers in the purchasing process.

Finally, there has been movement to mobile devices. Increasingly, transactions, like mortgages, stock trades, insurance purchases, personal and commercial loans, and wealth management, are done with a few swipes from start to finish.

The end result? Their network needs changed significantly. Transactions no longer operate in a linear fashion, starting at a set end point and ending in the company data center. Patterns have become more varied and more dispersed. Information flows in and out of different systems in a hodgepodge manner.

which are simpler for programmers to build and maintain, but generate more network traffic since they break applications into small pieces and dynamically configure them at run time. Networks become more demanding and dynamic as new opportunities emerge. Consequently, application needs create bottlenecks and frustrate users as they sit and wait for their requests to be processed.

Financial companies have trouble scaling and expanding system capabilities. Many enterprises deployed best-of-breed piecemeal solutions and work with multiple suppliers. Managing the disparate pieces on their own becomes overwhelming.

Network management becomes more time consuming and tedious. New systems were deployed in an autonomous fashion, leading to dozens of services that need to be managed. Each responds to its own management solution, forcing technicians to bounce from one to another whenever they troubleshoot system problems. As they struggle, users suffer from poor performance and downtime.

Security challenges increase. Networks become larger, more dispersed, and more difficult to safeguard. These firms must adapt their security policies to cater to a future of constant change and distributed working.

Costs rise as they add more bandwidth and extend their offices and network to new places. They also need to invest more in new devices as their requirements expand.

Like many businesses, financial services companies face intense pressure in trying to find skilled technicians. Often, approved projects remain at a standstill because they do not have the hands needed to complete the work.



The Need to Protect Data

As information flows in and out of the organization regularly, financial suppliers need to take steps to protect their own, customers', and partners' information. They do it not only because it is common sense and good business, but also because of regulatory requirements.

Redundancy and resiliency are top business needs in this industry. Financial companies need secure transmission paths among multiple public, hybrid, and private clouds. In a disaster recovery scenario, for example, if a hosting facility

goes down, other locations running the same applications are needed to deliver network services.

Secure service provisioning is also critical for today's remote workforce. Pre-pandemic, when most organizations relied on employees working from central office buildings, a single point of redundancy sufficed. Today, with employees working out of tens, hundreds, thousands of scattered locations, banks must build network that operate reliability across widely distributed remote locations

What is Required?

Financial services organizations need to simplify back end network system to deliver high-quality, secure, and reliable front-end experiences to employees, customers, and partners. They can no longer buy, spin up, and monitor new hardware as their business changes. Therefore, digitally transforming the network becomes crucial to maintaining business growth. They need to move away from the old to the new, which means more open, seamless, automated, and ideally less costly networks.

New technologies, like SD-WANs, provide financial institutions a path from the old to the new. By upgrading their networks, they gain many benefits.

In the past, financial institutions waited weeks and often many months to establish a new branch location. By upgrading, they add new services via software and do

not need technicians to manually enter configuration data. As a result, the time needed to add network services drops dramatically, in certain cases tenfold.

Networks become more secure. Rather than manually enter settings and security policies, configuration information is centrally orchestrated. A few clicks, and the new settings are invoked. The change also lowers the chances for operators inputting the wrong information and opening up a new security hole.

Financial services corporations often reduce their costs. New network services are based on modern solutions that operate more efficiently than previous generations of equipment. They are much more software based and rely less on hardware, which is often difficult to configure and maintain.



Call in a Network Expert

In sum, network transformation is needed but is not a simple and straightforward process. Increasingly, financial services companies find themselves bogged down in the details of such transitions because so much of the process is new to them.

They need help and Caribbean third parties are available to assist. Not only are these companies experts in new network equipment but they also have practical knowledge, gained as they work with other customers going through a similar change. A win/win for both parties.

Financial services companies are in a high risk/high reward business. They now sit at an intersection where they must move away from how they did business in the past to what they need to be successful in the future. The network sits at the center of this transition. Putting the right pieces in place provides them with the strong foundation needed to thrive.