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Strategic SASE Adoption: Balancing Immediate Benefits with Long-term Transformation

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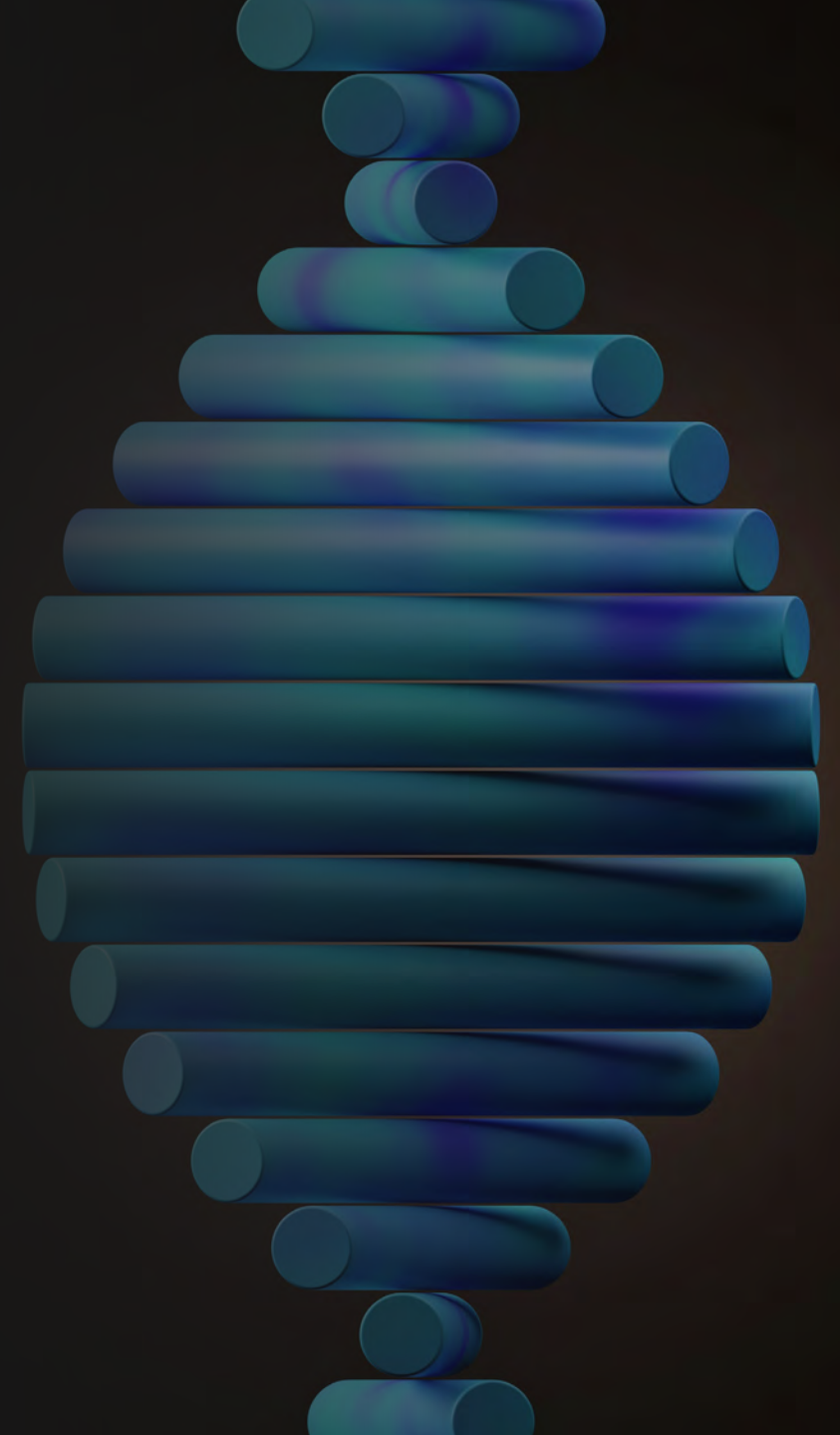
Introduction



The need to protect hybrid workers and ensure quality of services for bandwidth-hungry applications has caused many organisations to begin evaluating if a Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) is right for their needs.

Not only can a SASE modernise an organisation's network and security functions, but efficiency gains also make it affordable. Adopting a SASE in a phased approach ensures many benefits can be realised quickly while transformation takes place over the long term.

This Ecosystem Byte highlights the benefits of SASE adoption and offers guidance on best practices for an organisation's SASE journey.





THE BENEFITS OF SASE

#1 Higher Performance

A SASE uses diverse technologies to enhance network performance, yielding higher bandwidth, lower latency, and reduced jitter.



Dual Circuits

Bandwidth aggregation and load balancing across multiple connections to maintain performance even during network degradation.



Intelligent Steering

Application-aware routing and other intelligent functions to ensure high performance, especially in areas with poor last mile connectivity.



Local Breakout

Avoiding backhauling to a central data centre improving cloud application performance.



“Many of our workers are based in countries with lower performing local networks. Our SASE’s high-performance global backbone means the impact of latency in the last mile is mitigated. The large number of PoPs means that our employees can work from anywhere and still experience good quality of service.”

HEAD OF IT OPERATIONS, SERVICES COMPANY



THE BENEFITS OF SASE

#2 Greater Scalability

Organisations expanding with new branches, cloud services, or hybrid workforces can effortlessly grow using a SASE.

Broadband Connection

Rapidly connecting new branches with available broadband instead of waiting for MPLS circuits.

Cloud Security

Scaling security in the cloud without investing in on-prem firewall, proxy, and VPN infrastructure.

Centralised Management

Simplifying adoption of new cloud services through centralised management rather than configuring each site individually.



“Previously we would have to wait months for an MPLS circuit to be provisioned and that could delay a new branch opening. Now we can connect branches with broadband and onboard them easily. With central control, it’s simple to replicate configurations across all branches.”

DIRECTOR OF IT, LARGE RETAILER



THE BENEFITS OF SASE

#3 Manageability

Organisations can cut costs and focus on higher-value tasks with improved manageability.



Cloud-Based Infrastructure

Eliminating physical infrastructure like VPNs, proxies, and firewalls removing the need for upgrades, updates, and patching.



Central Policy Management

Defining and enforcing policies across the network centrally, avoiding individual site configurations.



Unified Console

Simplifying monitoring and troubleshooting with a single pane of glass, compared to dealing with multiple vendor systems.



“Some of our sites are quite distant so maintenance required significant travel. We now have central control and can manage the network and security remotely. We’re able to troubleshoot issues faster and enforce policies easily. This lets us spend time on other tasks.”

**DIRECTOR OF CYBERSECURITY,
EDUCATION PROVIDER**



THE BENEFITS OF SASE

#4 Improved Security Posture

A SASE can help organisations improve their security posture as they adopt cloud, hybrid working, and IoT.

Unified Security

Central configuration and enforcement to maintain consistent policies across endpoints, sites, and clouds.

Zero Trust Framework

Mitigating lateral attacks and minimising risks associated with granting access to employees, customers, and devices.

Cloud Security

Cloud-based URL filtering and malware protection ensuring continuous security updates to safeguard against emerging threats.



“With SASE, we have a completely homogenous security platform. We have visibility of policies all in one place, centralised management, reporting, and dashboards. Upgrades are simple as we can perform them centrally. All of this has resulted in an improved security posture.”

DIRECTOR OF SECURITY, FINANCIAL SERVICES FIRM



THE BENEFITS OF SASE

#5 Reduced Costs

Adopting SASE reduces infrastructure, labour, and connectivity costs for organisations.



Cost-Effective Transport

Transitioning to transport-agnostic SD-WAN replacing costly MPLS with cheaper broadband connectivity.



Infrastructure Streamlining

Cloud-based security to eliminate expenses related to physical infrastructure, licenses, support, and hardware refreshes.



Resource Efficiency

Increased automation reducing labour costs for configuration, troubleshooting, service desk, and on-site support.



“Managing the network and security is simpler now, which has helped us bring down our labour costs. Running a SASE in the cloud also means we don’t have to invest in on-prem infrastructure for VPNs and proxies. Hardware refreshes are time consuming and costly.”

**IT INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGER,
SOFTWARE SERVICES COMPANY**



THE BENEFITS OF SASE

#6 Increased Reliability

A SASE guarantees five nines network uptime for delivery of digital services to customers and production facilities.

Redundancy

The use of dual circuits with automated failover to reduce the likelihood of network outages.

Remote Support

The ability to troubleshoot remotely allowing network teams to resolve issues faster without visiting sites.

Managed Services

Handing network management off to an experienced partner resulting in fewer outages and faster MTTR.



“We now have dual broadband circuits or a combination of broadband and 5G, which means more reliability. Since we moved to a SASE, we never have outages. It’s given us the confidence to add new cloud services, like VoIP, video surveillance, and CRM.”

IT MANAGER, HEALTHCARE PROVIDER



THE BENEFITS OF SASE

#7 Improved User Experience

A SASE enhances user experience by ensuring high-quality and secure access to applications regardless of their location.



Hybrid Accessibility

Consistent performance and easy access whether in the office, branches, or remote locations.



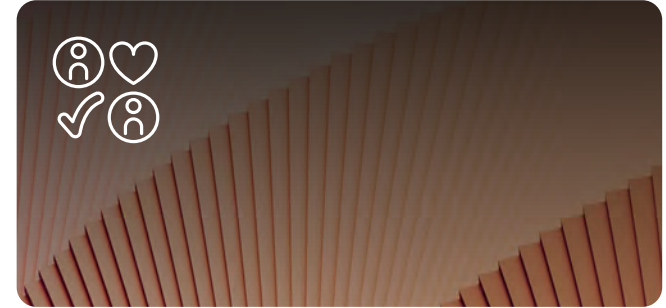
UX Monitoring

Tracking end-user digital experiences across various applications, devices, and networks, enabling optimisation and issue resolution.



User Security

Security measures to prevent users from encountering accidental threats and unsafe content.



“As we added bandwidth hungry cloud services, like video, backhauling to the central data centre was affecting application performance. Now with SASE, users have a better and more consistent experience. This is especially important for our employees working remotely or on-the-go.”

**CIO, MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT
COMPANY**



THE SASE JOURNEY

Which SASE Modules To Implement First

SASE modules can be implemented separately as the need arises or as on-prem licences are set to expire, to realise specific organisational benefits.

SD-WAN



SD-WAN

Many organisations begin their SASE journey with SD-WAN adoption, allowing for separate selection of SD-WAN and SSE vendors.



Network-as-a-Service (NaaS)

Organisations with complex WANs or limited IT resources can streamline network management by pairing SD-WAN with connectivity solutions.

FIREWALL



FWaaS

Organisations may choose FWaaS, while others use their existing on-prem firewall investment.



IPS

IPS is often integrated with a next generation firewall (NGFW) or FWaaS. Selecting an IPS and firewall from the same vendor simplifies management.

SSE



SWG

Migrating from an on-prem proxy to a cloud-based SWG increases scalability and ensures up-to-date protection.



ZTNA

Replacing an on-prem VPN with ZTNA secures workers no matter their location. Lateral attacks can be avoided by relying on a cloud service.



CASB

A CASB streamlines management and minimises human error by centrally defining and enforcing security policies across multiple cloud providers, typically implemented following other SASE modules.



Performance



Reliability



Costs



Manageability



Security



User Experience



Scalability



THE SASE JOURNEY

The SASE Journey is also about Organisational Change

To take advantage of the benefits of SASE, organisations should assess how people and processes can be modified.

1.

Unified Teams

Involve the CIO and CISO in SD-WAN and SSE planning allowing network and security teams to merge.

2.

Vendor Consolidation

Evaluate security vendors' entire SSE portfolios to procure multiple modules from a single provider, ensuring interoperability and simpler management.

3.

Managed Services

Partner with an MSP to leverage their expertise while allowing in-house resources to focus on transformative initiatives.

4.

Security Skill Optimisation

Reskill security operations teams as a SASE provides new insights into user behaviour, application usage, connected devices, and threats.

5.

Use Case Prioritisation

Identify and prioritise use cases such as hybrid work and secure guest access, selecting SASE modules to address priority cases first.



About Ecosystem

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