Intelligent connectivity and SD-WAN

Frequently asked questions

Imagine a network than can imagine the future

The business world is changing. Technology. The way our customers work. And their customers' expectations. With intelligent connectivity, we can make sure their network's ready for whatever the future holds. Helping them stay ahead in this fast-moving, always-on digital world.

Managed SD-WAN better connects our customers' applications, data, devices and people. So they can adapt to real-time business needed. And it's all backed up by our world-class tech and security experts, with a 24/7 UK-based support team.

Want to know more? Before you go to the Props team with your technical questions, read this. It explains how the product works, what managed services we offer with it, how we can migrate their existing set-up to SD-WAN and much more.

Network

Q. Will SD-WAN be able to support customers who have locations or offices not supported by BT Openreach? This includes international areas as well as areas such as Hull, Isle of Man and Ireland.

A. This will be available via the International Reach project later this year. Please refer to the roadmap.

Q. Can we provide 4G as a primary circuit rather than just a failover/RapidSite?

A. Not at launch, 4G is for backup and RapidSite only.

Q. Can we use 5G as a primary or failover option?

A. The initial 5G launch mirrors 4G and is for backup and RapidSite only.

Q. Are there any restrictions in providing the SD-WAN Managed Service on third-party networks?

A. No, although third-party networks require further development and will be available for launch.

Q. Can we support customers who have an Ethernet Connect network?

A. This is not currently supported, preference is to migrate customers from EC to IP Connect. We are looking at this as part of the roadmap for SD-WAN.

Q. Does Cisco SD-WAN support micro-segmentation of connectivity paths within the overall solution? Today VRFs are used across the WAN to separate different security zones and VLANs in the LAN. A future solution could use alternatives technologies.

A. Service VPNs divide the network into different segments. Cisco SD-WAN allows multiple Service VPNs to be isolated from each other, through a single overlay between customer sites across the WAN. Locally, each Service VPN acts a lot like VFR-Lite. With their own routing table.

By default, all customer prefixes are advertised to all other sites in the same Service VPN. In some cases, it may be desirable for a customer to have a Service VPN that is local to each site, without routing between sites. This may be enforced using VPN Membership policy.

For example, a customer may have a Guest VPN at all sites, with locally-provided Direct Internet Access, but no routing between sites. This should be supplied by configuring the same Guest Service VPN at all sites, but excluding it from VPN membership for all sites to prevent distribution of prefixes between sites. If all VPNs are global, then no VPN membership policy is required.

Managed Services

Q. Where is the location of the Managed Service desk?

A. It will be at Thurso for the launch, eventually expanding out to Hatfield, Balborough and Belfast.

Q. Can we have a dedicated contact person for the service desk for when I have questions and for support on opportunities? Like I do with MWAN.

A. We don't have dedicated TDAs for SD-WAN. We offer a Bid Surgery call at the start of the opportunity which gives you access to experts in the business who can give you extra guidance. Technical descriptions and design guides are located on the Experts Forum for technical pre-sales specialists.

Q. Can SD-WAN be sold on it's own without the Managed Service wrap?

A. Not with our standard product. Any variation would be through Winning New Business.

Q. Can customers control their own network? What happens if they want to make changes?

A. No, all changes go via the change process as part of the managed service. There are simple service requests (SSRs) built into the product, these are completed within 4 business hours. SSRs with MS Cloud and the service is more agile than traditional WAN.

Q. Will there be any additional service wrap options?

A. Not from launch. Although we will continue to look at what enhancements we can make to enhance our customers' experience further.

Q. Where are the reporting platforms hosted?

A. Live SP is placed in BT VDCs at Rochdale and Cardiff. SevOne is placed in EC DCs at Reigate and Derby.

Commercials

Q. Is all the equipment based on a retained asset model?

A. No, LAN and wi-fi are available as customer owned.

Q. How do I price and discount the solution? How long will this take?

A. The PSU team in commercials will help support sales teams with discounting customer opportunities. The lead time for turnaround is five business days.

Q. Is SD-WAN on the Government frameworks for launch?

A. We are working with the framework team to make SD-WAN available at launch.

Migrations

CPE

Q. Can customers migrate from existing BT Managed WAN services (Retail Connect, MSfBT & MWAN) to this new Managed Service?

A. Yes, our new Customer Migrations Team is working on the migration mechanism and setting up a specific team to manage it.

Q. Can customers migrate from existing Meraki services (such as BTnet) to the Managed Meraki WAN solution?

A. Not at this time.

Q. High availability / business continuity / resilience characteristics within the following scenarios:

A. Normal operation
High availability for normal operation will depend on the topology selected. There are different options to improve resilience, from dual WAN single CPE to multiple (three+) WAN connections with multiple CPE. There are plenty of options to talk around.

Impact of a routine restart
vEdges do seem to take a while to boot and register with the controllers, I'd say five minutes. cEdges can take a bit longer.

Impact of a software fix
If the control connection to the vManage does not come up within the configured time limit, vManage automatically reverts the device to the previously running software image. The configured time limit for all Cisco SD-WAN devices to come up after a software upgrade is five minutes. Except for vEdge 100 routers, which have a default time of 12 minutes.

Impact of a software upgrade. Impact of solution infrastructure failure.
As above.
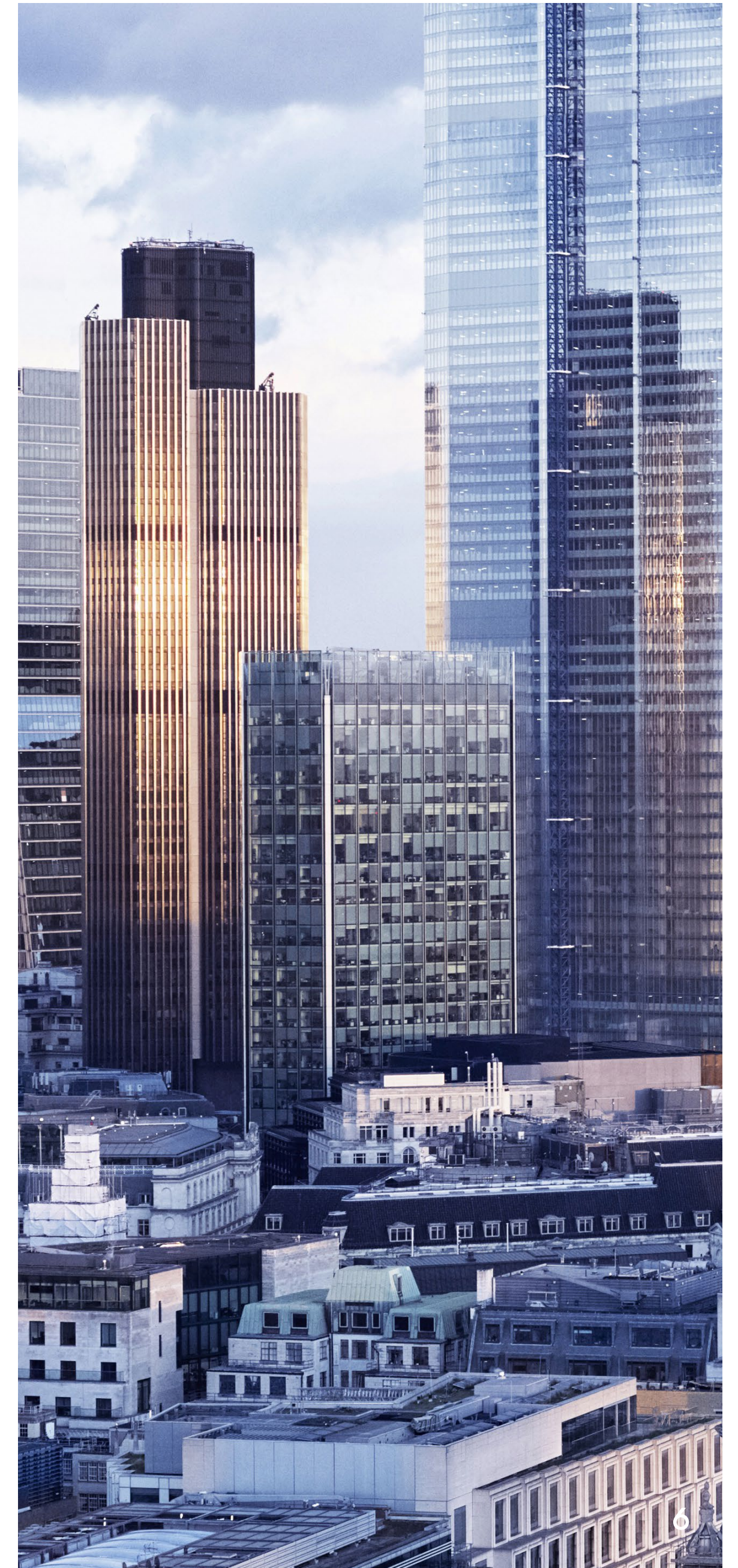
General

Q. Is Meraki not part of Cisco? Why are we doing both Meraki and Cisco?

A. Meraki were acquired by Cisco around four years ago – Meraki offers a simpler and more cost effective SD-WAN solution, alongside LAN and W-LAN options all integrated in a single view. The Cisco SD-WAN offering is for more complex requirements and also can be added as a software upgrade to some existing Cisco router estates.

Q. What can I demo to a customer?

A. The Customer Education Centre in London has a comprehensive demo of our SD-WAN capability. We are working on customer demo which you can use but we're not quite there yet.

Q. Is this the same service that Global Services are selling?

A. No, Global Services are not offering a modular Meraki solution with packaged Professional Services and a common managed wrap. Their offering is bespoke per customer.

Q. Where can I get more sales information?

A. All material to support sales activity can be found on the MaPS sales Portal.