



## Specialty glass manufacturer transforms its business with flexible, high-performance global SD-WAN

The Unity EdgeConnect SD-WAN platform provides Gerresheimer up to 3X faster network speeds with 100 percent uptime while reducing WAN costs substantially

Gerresheimer AG is no ordinary manufacturer of glass and plastic products. This global enterprise specializes in unique packaging solutions for the pharmaceutical and healthcare industries. The company's ongoing success requires continuous innovation, and the utmost attention to quality. Gerresheimer business units around the world must share and analyze quality data to meet manufacturing objectives and customer expectations. However, with a conventional WAN maxed

out at 3 Mbps, connecting users to applications and sharing data became slow and difficult.

Greg Taylor, Gerresheimer's manager of IT infrastructure in North America, describes the situation: "We had regional data centers for each of our business units so applications and data could be close to the point of use. We were hamstrung because of our bandwidth limitations, and couldn't do anything to enhance our users' quality of experience or improve business operations."

**GERRESHEIMER**



INCREASED WAN  
SPEEDS FROM  
3 MBPS TO 200 MBPS



SAVED \$10K  
PER YEAR IN  
WAN COSTS



ASSURED  
100% NETWORK  
UPTIME

## Taking a global approach to SD-WAN

The traditional remedy would have been to simply purchase additional bandwidth. But Taylor wasn't looking for a quick fix. He had to think on a global scale and deploy a WAN edge solution that would not just support Gerresheimer's immediate needs but also carry the company into the future. A tip from his server vendor, Dell, led Taylor to Silver Peak where he discovered the [Unity EdgeConnect™](#) SD-WAN platform. He then contacted value-added



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— Greg Taylor, Manager of IT Infrastructure,  
Gerresheimer AG

reseller, [Zones](#), to evaluate the Silver Peak solution in more depth.

After comparing the Silver Peak offering with options from Cisco Meraki and Riverbed, Taylor decided to conduct an extensive evaluation of the EdgeConnect platform running in Gerresheimer's production WAN. "Silver Peak showed they were willing to work with us and think globally, which is not something you always get with other vendors," he says. "From a technical perspective I found the ease of use and central orchestration of the EdgeConnect platform to be compelling."



He especially liked that EdgeConnect is connectivity agnostic: "Gerresheimer has facilities in some remote areas of the world where MPLS may not even be available. EdgeConnect allowed us to have one truly homogeneous global WAN with the flexibility to use any combination of available transport."

### Fast, easy deployment

In just six brisk months, Taylor and his lean IT staff deployed EdgeConnect across 70 percent of Gerresheimer's 43 global sites, with plans to complete the project within a matter of weeks. Most sites now have a single MPLS connection instead of two, with a secondary connection typically broadband or symmetrical DIA in North America and a mix of radio frequency (RF), satellite or point-to-point protocol over Ethernet (PPPoE) elsewhere in the world as available. In every case, the two links per site are bonded and configured with the full

suite of EdgeConnect SD-WAN capabilities such as path conditioning, quality of service, and intelligent application-based traffic routing.

“The EdgeConnect platform has allowed us to tailor the connectivity in each region to what makes the most sense from a cost and performance perspective,” notes Taylor. “It gives us lots of flexibility, which means we have more leverage to hold carriers accountable.”

Taylor also uses the optional [Unity Boost™](#) WAN optimization performance pack to accelerate application performance and reduce data through deduplication and compression. Boost accelerates critical applications like SAP and email served from Gerresheimer’s central data center in Germany, as well as files and the regional mail server in the U.S., enabling the company to consolidate infrastructure at the edge.

## Higher WAN performance at lower cost

With the EdgeConnect platform, Gerresheimer has increased WAN speed dramatically while lowering annual costs. For example, with more negotiating power, the company now has 10 Mbps MPLS WAN service at the same price it previously paid for 3 Mbps MPLS. Moreover, broadband delivers up to 200 Mbps at some sites at a fraction of the cost of MPLS, providing substantial financial savings year after year.



“By bonding links and applying QoS, the EdgeConnect SD-WAN platform alone gave us a 2X – 3X jump in application performance overall,” reports Taylor. “By leveraging Boost, applications like our SAP manufacturing execution system, email, Citrix environment, and other web-based services run up to ten times faster. For our users this made the world a smaller place. Instead of struggling to move a large engineering file from the U.S. to Europe, users can just drop it on a file share to get a consistent and predictable quality of experience.”

He adds, “For SAP users we’ve seen a 50% – 80% reduction in reporting time. That means instead of waiting for an overnight batch report, users can see quality data straight from the manufacturing line and make critical decisions in near real time, potentially preventing an issue from costing us thousands of dollars in lost product.”

WAN resilience and availability are also much higher. Previously, an MPLS link failure caused significant downtime, and even momentary faults caused voice calls to drop or disrupted SAP transactions. Now, with automated failover of less than one millisecond in the EdgeConnect SD-WAN, link brown-outs and failures are imperceptible to end users.

Taylor says he proved this one day in a dramatic demonstration of the SD-WAN’s resilience. “We tested EdgeConnect by just pulling the plug on one of our connections, and we maintained 100% network uptime. It was completely transparent to our users.”

He concludes simply, “The EdgeConnect SD-WAN platform has truly been transformative for Gerresheimer’s business.”

For more information on Silver Peak and our solutions, please visit: [silver-peak.com](https://silver-peak.com)

## Customer

**Gerresheimer AG** is a leading global manufacturer of specialty glass and plastic products for the pharmaceutical and healthcare industries. These products include insulin pens, inhalers, prefilled syringes, injection vials, ampoules, bottles and containers for liquid and solid medicines with closure and safety systems, as well as packaging for the cosmetics industry. The company has manufacturing operations in Europe, North America, South America and Asia, and generates revenues of approximately EUR 1.4 billion annually.



## Challenge

Improve poor WAN performance and reliability, which impeded business efficiency and prevented IT from implementing enhancements to improve operations

## Solution

Deploy Unity EdgeConnect SD-WAN appliances at 43 global branches, bonding a primary MPLS link with a secondary internet circuit at each site, and leveraging path conditioning, quality of service, and intelligent application-based traffic routing, along with Unity Boost to accelerate business-critical applications

## Results

- Increased WAN speeds from 3 Mbps to as much as 200 Mbps
- Saved \$10,000 per year in WAN costs
- Reduced SAP reporting time by 50% – 80% to accelerate decision-making
- Enabled global access to centralized data, allowing edge consolidation
- Assured 100% network uptime for improved productivity



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