



Leading innovator of bath and beauty products delivers 5-star customer experience with reliable, business-driven SD-WAN

Lush assures performance and uptime for critical payment system and digital apps leveraging the Unity EdgeConnect SD-WAN edge platform

When people want to luxuriate in the bath or shower, many choose Lush brand soaps and shampoos. Known for its fresh, ethically sourced and produced bath and beauty products, Lush has become virtually synonymous with luxurious. Even shopping in one of Lush's stores across the UK and Europe is a 5-star experience. And Lush's Technical Operations Manager, Brad Candy, aims to keep it that way.

Behind every Lush retail shop is a technology infrastructure that enables customer experiences, like a smart app for mobile phones that digitally demonstrates fun products like bath bombs (they are spectacularly fizzy). Customers also expect a smooth experience at the till, or cash register, when they're ready to pay for their merchandise. All this takes fast, reliable connectivity between the stores and applications running in Lush's data centers.

LUSH



OPTIMIZES APP
PERFORMANCE



100% NETWORK
UPTIME



ELEVATES CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCE

The challenge Candy faced was each store had a single MPLS circuit for business traffic. If that circuit went down—which happened too often—the stores could not complete customer transactions or digitally demonstrate their cool products. Candy recalls, “The best we could do was fall back on manual trading, but with the COVID-19 situation, fewer people want to be taking cash. That single point of failure became detrimental to the business.”



The sales staff don't want to worry about the network or back office. This Silver Peak technology has helped hugely. Staff can do what they do best and put more attention to the customers.”

— Brad Candy, Technical Operations Manager, Lush

Self-healing SD-WAN keeps stores up and running

Candy knew that SD-WAN could enable automated circuit failover. But he quickly discovered SD-WAN could bring much more to the business when technology partner, [CDW](#), introduced him to Silver Peak.

“Our account manager, Matt Sharod, from CDW has been a lifeline for me to understand what technologies are available to our business,” Candy says. “When we went through what would be a good fit for us from an SD-WAN perspective, they recommended Silver Peak.”

With Silver Peak, Candy found the automated, sub-millisecond circuit failover he needed to solve the network downtime problems. He also saw how to

further improve network services to the stores and enhance the business with additional capabilities like automation, [path conditioning](#), quality of service, [dynamic path control](#), and application-based traffic prioritization.

“What stood out with Silver Peak is we could get all this additional functionality with zero overhead on the network”, Candy says.

Delivers a high-quality customer experience

Taking advantage of the Silver Peak Assist subscription service to provide technical assistance through the deployment phase, Candy and his team began rolling out the [Unity EdgeConnect™](#) SD-WAN edge platform, starting with 21 store locations in the UK and Germany deployed in just under five weeks. Additional locations, including the company's headquarters and manufacturing operations, will be rolled out over time.



At each store, EdgeConnect is terminated with one MPLS circuit bonded with a second commercial internet circuit. Candy also used the Silver Peak Assist program to help configure business intent overlays to guarantee each class of application the appropriate network resources it needs based on business priority. For example, the in-house-developed point of sale system, Lush Pay, is labelled as “PCI” as there are requirements to comply with payment card industry (PCI) security requirements,

and this application is assured the highest network priority above all others. Another bespoke application for stock management and VoIP services receive the second-highest priority. A third overlay classifies non-critical applications used by store employees and customers, such as Lush's smartphone app—Lush Lens—while guest Wi-Fi is classified with the lowest priority.

After deploying the EdgeConnect platform, Lush saw almost immediate improvements at the stores. The company's Birmingham, England store, which had chronic connectivity problems and sluggish application performance, suddenly had a stable network with payments going through flawlessly. Network downtime became a thing of the past.

"Generally, we see that card payments run faster, and the uptime has been a big improvement," Candy notes. "Recently our Manchester store lost its MPLS connection but the store did not notice there was an issue on the network. The store continued to function as usual during the six weeks of outages. The Silver Peak SD-WAN enables us to provide assurance to the retail business as a whole that this technology makes their lives easier."

Most important, the Silver Peak SD-WAN helps Lush and its sales staff deliver a 5-star shopping experience for customers. "The sales staff don't want to worry about the network or back office. This Silver Peak technology has helped hugely. Staff can do what they do best and put more attention to the customers."

Detailed network observability assures service quality

Leveraging the routing interoperability and stateful zone-based firewall within the unified EdgeConnect platform, Candy also enables each store to break out locally to the internet and connect with cloud applications such as Google G Suite. Candy notes, "I've taken a hybrid view, balancing on-prem with cloud and focusing on dashboard-driven technologies that provide us high visibility into the network to assure service quality for the stores."

This strategy also favored Silver Peak in Candy's view, because the

[Unity Orchestrator™](#)

management interface could provide the Lush technical operations team with centralized observability and control across the SD-WAN through a real-time dashboard. Moreover, Lush's entire digital services team, which supports the company's IT and bespoke applications, has access to Orchestrator. "Orchestrator makes it easy for anyone to monitor what's happening with application traffic on the network, how applications are performing and if there's ever any connectivity loss," Candy points out. "It's a huge time-saver. The visibility we get with Orchestrator is highly granular, which allows us to drill down quickly to see where the fault is and address the issue. It means that stores stay online and can get on with doing their piece, selling our products."

Candy concludes, "We look for the same kind of 5-star service in our vendors that Lush is known for—that attention to detail—and Silver Peak has delivered. The technology is brilliant, and the partnership we have with our account manager, Tony Rowland, at Silver Peak is also key. It's good to know someone is not just selling you a product, they're involved in making sure the solution benefits our business."

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



Customer

Since establishing in 1995 in Poole, Dorset, [Lush](#) has been driven by innovation and its ethics. Creators of pioneering beauty products such as the fizzing bath bomb, shower jellies and solid shampoo bars, Lush places emphasis on fresh ingredients like organic fruits and vegetables, fights tirelessly against animal testing, and leads the cosmetics industry in combating over-packaging with products that can be sold “naked” to the consumer without any packaging.

Challenge

Lush had a single MPLS circuit as primary connectivity for business applications supporting its stores across the UK and Europe. This single point of failure caused store downtime, preventing staff from transacting customer payments and customers from using in-store digital services on their mobile phones. The lack of reliable network service made it difficult for staff to serve customer needs and diminished customers’ overall shopping experience.

Solution

Based on the recommendation of its technology partner, CDW, Lush initially deployed the Silver Peak Unity EdgeConnect SD-WAN edge platform at 21 stores in the UK and Germany. At each store, the EdgeConnect platform is terminated with two bonded circuits—one MPLS and one commercial internet.

Lush also created business intent overlays to ensure each class of application supporting the stores is afforded the appropriate network resources based on business priority. The technical operations team at Lush centrally manages the SD-WAN using Unity Orchestrator.

Results

- Optimizes performance and reliability to support critical payment system and stock management applications for stores
- Enables local internet breakout at stores for more efficient access to Google G Suite
- Secures customer credit card data in compliance with PCI regulations through application traffic segmentation
- Eliminates store downtime due to outages or brownouts of any single WAN circuit
- Allows Lush sales staff to focus on the customer experience instead of worrying about having problems connecting to applications
- Improves network observability, enabling Lush’s technical operations team to identify and address issues more quickly and prevent disruption to store services
- Accelerates bringing new locations online from weeks to days



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