

# SECURE CONNECT: SD-WAN FOR COLLABORATION CLOUD DEPLOYMENTS

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ConvergeOne recently announced the availability of **ConvergeOne Secure Connect**, our new software-defined wide area network (SD-WAN) managed services offer. In a nutshell, Secure Connect is a subscription-based, fully-managed SD-WAN that connects our customers' networks to ConvergeOne Cloud Experience (C1CX) collaboration solutions. I know what you may be thinking: **What is SD-WAN?** It's one of those terms that we've all heard of before, but few know what it really is, and why it's a hot topic. Let's dive a little deeper into SD-WAN and explore why Secure Connect is such a cool offer.

One of the things customers love about migrating to cloud-based Unified Communications (UC)/Contact Center (CC) is that they believe they no longer have to worry about the technology behind the scenes. They assume they can just subscribe to the experience, and everything will magically work. For me, the worst part about cloud-based UC/CC is that customers believe they no longer have to worry about the technology behind the scenes. Admittedly, they do get to stop worrying about *a lot* of it—but their LAN/WAN is something that they typically *don't* get to stop worrying about.

In most traditional cloud deployments, there's generally a hard network demarcation between what the customer is responsible for and what the provider is responsible for. This can sometimes cause problems, as the traffic is still real-time media. It still requires an end-to-end network—all the way from the cloud to the desk phone or softphone—that has low latency, jitter, and packet loss. Network routing must account for this type of service. When customers have networks that aren't ready for this Real-Time Transport Protocol (RTP) streaming traffic, we end up having to pump the brakes on the deployment and wait for the customer to resolve this issue.

Of course, ConvergeOne has services that can take care of this for the customer. However, I find that in these scenarios, the issue doesn't boil down to a lack of expertise but the fact that most customers still think of their networks in old-school models, where the focus is on device-oriented IP addressing, subnetting, and routing. Those things don't go away, but you can't think of a network as a series of devices anymore. There are so many things that complicate this model. For example, solutions like wireless and mobility become problematic. You don't really know where those devices will pop up on the network, so you can no longer think of the traditional LAN/WAN architecture as being helpful in defining traffic, bandwidth, and routing. Further, with the proliferation of devices that are not dedicated to just communication (evolving from desk phones to softphones, PCs, tablets, and smartphones), you must separate the streams/sessions and treat them independently.

**The bottom line is that a lot of our customers realize that they need to do a major overhaul of their network to accommodate the new cloud services that they are subscribing to.**

One of the most common ways to resolve this—without doing a complete rip and replace of the existing network infrastructure—is to overlay an SD-WAN solution over the existing infrastructure. This lets the customer keep its OSI Layer 1-3 based network in place, while creating a virtual layer on top of it that can intelligently leverage it, shifting the focus to services and individual sessions. Don't get me wrong: This is no easy task, and many companies lack the internal resources to properly deploy, manage, and maintain SD-WAN. The good news is that this is where ConvergeOne Secure Connect swoops in to save the day!

ConvergeOne recognized that many customers who are deploying collaboration in a subscription- and cloud-based services model would love to extend the network demarcation to the inside of their network, all the way to the end-user's communication device of choice. They'd also love to consume this in the same way that they consume the cloud service: subscription-oriented, and fully managed. This is exactly what ConvergeOne Secure Connect provides—and it does it with RTP services like voice and video in mind.

Unlike other SD-WAN products that use static VPN tunnels (similar to MPLS circuits), Secure Connect uses the same kinds of per-session oriented security, embracing the more modern “zero-trust” models. Individual sessions get identified by “services” that have specific characteristics associated with them, and are routed dynamically across the various virtual paths. Because it is designed with collaboration in mind, we can optimize session routing decisions based on collaboration-oriented metrics like latency, packet loss, jitter, MOS scores, and so on. This gives ConvergeOne the appropriate control of the customer's network, ensuring that we can deliver the best possible experience while leaving the foundation network and security in place.

One of the things I think is pretty cool about our Secure Connect offer is that it provides customers with flexibility: they can use their own existing WAN links or have ConvergeOne provide the WAN connectivity. For customers who have a great foundation to start with for SD-WAN, ConvergeOne can check to see if their existing network is right for Secure Connect and, if necessary, make recommendations. For customers who don't have an ideal network, or perhaps would like to consume their cloud-based UC/CC completely independent from their existing infrastructure and have it fully managed by ConvergeOne, we can provide the WAN carrier services as part of the solution. The latter version of the offer allows us to provide a true end-to-end communications solution for the customer, guaranteeing the best SLAs possible.

The benefits to the customer are innumerable:

- Enhanced reliability of real-time applications
- Rapid deployment of cloud communications to any location, regardless of network transport
- High availability, leveraging multiple carriers and WAN transport technologies
- Enhanced Quality of Service through packet-by-packet route selection
- Reduced costs with less complexity and hardware overhead
- Highly secure, zero-trust security that provides ultimate control and encryption of all sessions
- As-a-service delivery in a single monthly subscription

Secure Connect is a fully market-ready solution that can be deployed with any of our C1CX solutions. If you want to optimize your collaboration cloud solution, it's time to take advantage of SD-WAN's business value.



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**Enjoy a more secure and reliable cloud communications experience at a lower cost. Connect with our experts for a free consultation: [convergeone.com/secureconnect](https://convergeone.com/secureconnect)**

