

WHAT IS

SD-

WAN?

COMMAND  LINK

Rethinking how networks are  
managed and controlled.

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# What is SD-WAN?

While SD-WAN is designed to simplify your IT environment, the technology is still **complex** and integrates every aspect of your network; as a result, many enterprises **struggle** with a clear view of their SD-WAN infrastructure. While vendors often make lofty claims about their SD-WAN solutions' network and application monitoring prowess, a majority **fall short** in providing comprehensive visibility essential for modern WAN networks.

In fact, a staggering **75%** of IT specialists encounter considerable hurdles using the standard monitoring functions of their SD WAN offerings.

Resolving SD-WAN issues requires **full visibility** into all aspects of your network. In this guide, we will walk you through the various tools and means to gain access to your SD-WAN data in order to address and identify SD-WAN issues more **quickly**.

Furthermore, when transitioning to an SD-WAN infrastructure, it's crucial to set up your monitoring system **prior** to the shift. This enables you to juxtapose performance metrics pre and post-migration.

SD-WAN stands for Software-Defined Wide Area Networking. It is a technology that **simplifies** the management and operation of a wide area network (WAN) *by separating the network hardware from its control mechanism*. Unlike traditional WANs that rely on expensive and proprietary hardware appliances, SD-WAN utilizes software-defined networking principles to **virtualize** and centralize the management of network connectivity.

In an SD-WAN architecture, the control plane and management functions are abstracted from the underlying physical infrastructure and moved into a **centralized software controller**. This controller allows network administrators to define and manage network policies, traffic routing, and quality of service (QoS) parameters in a unified and streamlined manner.

While the centralized software controller is a significant improvement from traditional WAN environments, *it does not go far enough*. The underlying benefits of SD-WAN's centralized management highlight the necessity to further integrate security, bandwidth, voice, analytics, and hardware into a centralized **ITSM**. By consolidating both the management and technology services within a single vendor and proprietary ITSM platform, Command|Link has enabled IT departments to **scale** and manage technology easier than ever before.

### **SD-WAN offers several key features and benefits:**

- **Improved Performance and Bandwidth Utilization:** SD-WAN can *intelligently* route network traffic over multiple paths, including MPLS, broadband internet, 4G/5G, and other connections. By dynamically selecting the optimal path based on factors such as latency, congestion, and link quality, SD-WAN enhances application performance and makes efficient use of available bandwidth.
- **Enhanced Security:** SD-WAN solutions often incorporate advanced security features, such as encryption, firewalling, and threat detection capabilities. Centralized management enables consistent security policies across the entire network, providing better visibility and control over network traffic.
- **Cost Efficiency:** By leveraging affordable internet connections alongside more expensive options like MPLS, SD-WAN helps reduce connectivity costs. It also simplifies network management, potentially lowering operational expenses.
- **Scalability and Agility:** SD-WAN allows organizations to easily scale their networks and adapt to changing business needs. Adding new branches, integrating cloud services, and supporting remote workers become more flexible and straightforward with the centralized management and software-defined nature of SD-WAN.
- **Centralized Management and Orchestration:** The centralized controller in

SD-WAN provides a single interface for managing and configuring the entire network. This simplifies network administration tasks, improves visibility into network performance, and enables quick troubleshooting and policy enforcement.



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