

# Internet First and Broadband Aggregation

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Global demand for Internet transport continues to increase dramatically with ever growing volumes of Internet traffic as well as the greater use of cloud services that don't necessitate backhauling all traffic to your data center. This increase is also being driven by the adoption of the hybrid WAN, and specifically SD-WAN edge solutions, that promise reduced costs, quicker set-up and re-configuration, enhanced network performance and significantly improved visibility of application performance over the network.

"Internet First" strategies rely on much greater use of Internet network transport. This transport can range from dedicated Internet access through to various flavors of broadband services, each with different characteristics that need to be harmonized into an effective overall network strategy.

Picking the right mix of Internet based networking transport to deliver services to the right places in a cost-effective way requires effective strategies both to transition from more traditional transport, such as MPLS, and then to keep services on the leading edge of the market. At one extreme, chasing low-cost Internet circuits can leave the enterprise with many different suppliers, with varying quality in terms of service provision and performance, and can become a stored up problem for the future. At the other, enterprises can slip into expensive, one-stop provision with their existing carrier. Striking the right balance between the extremes and the alternatives in between is critical if an enterprise is to capitalize on the continually falling cost per megabit without, ultimately, leaving its business users exposed to poor service.

This ability to procure more bandwidth at a lower cost per Mbps is a global trend. The pace of bandwidth increases for the same or lower cost will likely continue to accelerate, regardless of whether it's dedicated Internet access circuits with the highest bandwidths – 100's of megabits and upwards – or lower speed business broadband based on consumer-type access technologies. All too frequently, we see order of magnitude variations between what an enterprise is paying and the bandwidth they could get for the same price.

How you move forward is influenced by many factors, including:

- Enterprise geography
- Existing supplier relationships and contractual constraints
- The starting point in terms of networking technologies

- Current and future state bandwidth demands
- Knowledge of the market

Ultimately, the enterprise must get to point where it has the most credible mix of suppliers for its specific needs. It may involve the use of “broadband aggregators” – who front third party circuit providers with varying degrees of standardization and alignment to enterprise class terms for such things as provisioning and performance failure – or more traditional carriers – who could also have something valuable to contribute depending on the type and volumes of transport services required. Much of the potential utility of broadband aggregation will depend on an enterprise’s unique requirements in terms of broadband versus other circuit types and the enterprise’s management and contracting expectations.

We spend significant time helping enterprises navigate these decisions to develop coherent strategies for RFX activity to help optimize Internet first strategies and best make use of broadband aggregation where appropriate. This analysis is an important step in pushing forward a successful Internet first transformation strategy. Then we help our clients execute on the chosen RFX activities for market leading results, applying our strategic sourcing expertise and experience with a deep knowledge of the Internet transport market for excellent results.