SOLUTION BRIEF

Efficient Communication and User Experiences with FortiVoice and Fortinet Secure SD-WAN

The shift to remote and hybrid work increases the adoption of digital workplace technology. Nearly 80% of workers used collaboration tools for work in 2021, a 44% rise since the pandemic began.[1]

Executive Summary

Unified communications (UC) enables organizations to connect distributed employees without incurring the expenses of business travel. By using high-definition voice and conferencing, a UC system increases employee communication and productivity, but it also comes with higher bandwidth requirements. Employees expect a positive experience when using a UC application, regardless of their devices and locations. However, it's challenging for some corporate networks to provide sufficient bandwidth to support quality and uninterrupted communications among offices.

Fortinet is a recognized technology leader, offering secure, high-performance communications by pairing its FortiVoice solution with Secure SD-WAN technology. FortiVoice Unified Communications delivers quality calling, conferencing, chat, fax, and more in a single platform, with flexible deployment options in cloud, hardware, and virtual machines. Organizations can connect their distributed workforces for better team collaboration and operational efficiency with the best choice suitable for their business requirements and budgets. FortiVoice is designed to work seamlessly with Fortinet Secure SD-WAN, which provides a powerful, yet simple, solution to enable smarter quality-of-service (QoS) control. As a result, an organization's corporate network is optimized to eliminate unnecessary congestion while maximizing uptime for FortiVoice voice and conferencing, giving employees better experiences.

## A Perfect Marriage: Unified Communications and SD-WAN

A UC solution enables employees to use the most productive tools for the job—voice, chat, conferencing, etc.—from desktop or mobile devices without changing applications. The innovation of a UC system has had a major impact on business efficiency and success, improving employee productivity and providing an effective environment for communicating and collaborating. These communications applications, however, are sensitive to network latency, jitter, and packet loss. They require high bandwidth and excellent network quality to deliver the best user experience. Network contention or service interruptions can severely impact the performance of UC applications, and, in turn, affect employee productivity and customer satisfaction.

Although traditional WAN technology, relying on dedicated multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) connections, provides direct connections for reliable network traffic flow, it is expensive to manage, time-consuming to configure, and difficult to scale. A software-defined WAN (SD-WAN) provides more benefits to organizations over a traditional WAN, by delivering significant simplification, and faster, more secure application performance to help maximize the use of UC solutions.
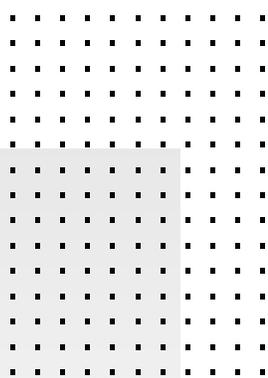
UC and SD-WAN complement one another to deliver better communications to organizations of all sizes. The advantages of using SD-WAN with UC services add up several benefits: scalability, manageability, cost-efficiency, and improved security that are crucial for business communications in today's distributed and hybrid environments.
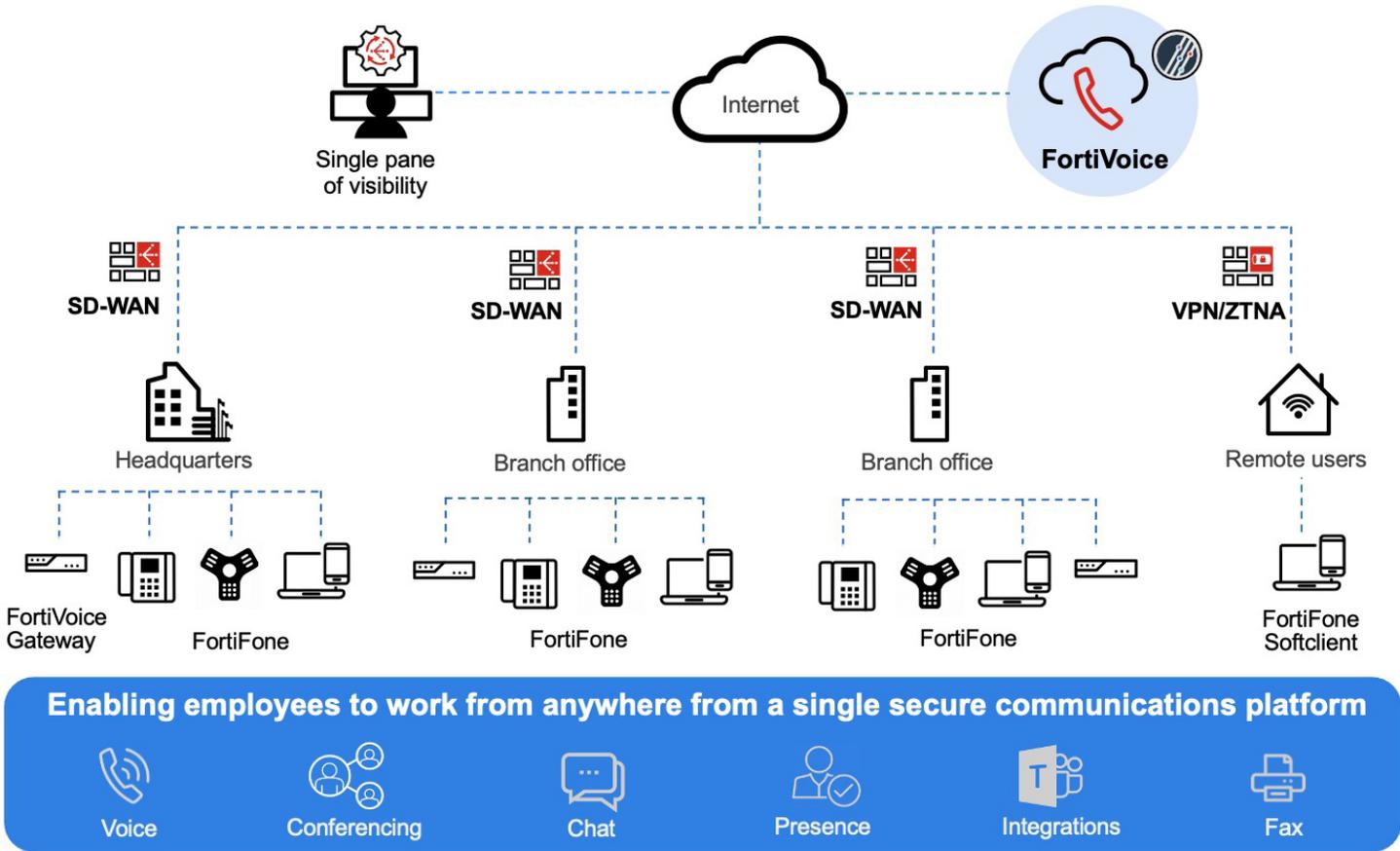
All-inclusive FortiVoice UC Connects Employees

FortiVoice is a feature-rich business communications solution with integrated calling, conferencing, chat, and fax functions for every extension. Its intuitive web portal helps IT simplify configuration and centralize management across locations and devices. Built with Fortinet's leading security technologies, FortiVoice UC gives organizations peace of mind by delivering a reliable and flexible solution for today's hybrid environments, enabling employees to work in the office, at home, or anywhere they prefer. FortiVoice helps users stay connected and enjoy the same quality communications and user experience, regardless of their locations.

Advantages of FortiVoice Unified Communications:

- One communications platform for easy calling, conferencing, chat, and fax
- Enterprise-grade uptime and security protected by the Fortinet ecosystem, without a paid SLA
- Mobile-friendly softphone to connect teams and customers, regardless of location
- Web-based admin portal for quick deployment and simple management across offices, users, and devices
- Better investment value with affordable solution and all-inclusive features

Fortinet SD-WAN Enables Safer and Better Communication Performance

As a security leader recognized by Gartner and many other industry analysts, Fortinet has the industry's only organically developed, purpose-built, and ASIC-powered SD-WAN that enables thin edge and WAN edge to secure all applications, users, and data anywhere. Fortinet Secure SD-WAN technology empowers organizations to evolve their networking from a router-centric, hub-and-spoke architecture dependent on MPLS to a software-defined networking architecture that allows for real-time customization based on changing missions and user requirements. It can determine the optimal path for traffic at any moment in real time, based on the specific application to reduce latency. With Fortinet Secure SD-WAN, users enjoy faster connections and better application performance, especially when using FortiVoice for business-critical calls and conferencing.

Advantages of Fortinet Secure SD-WAN:

- Deliver superior quality of experience at any scale

- Accelerate network and security convergence, and simplify WAN architecture

- Orchestrate consistent network and security policies

- Achieve operational efficiencies through automation, deep analytics, and self-healing

- Provide network-wide visibility, analytics, reporting, and orchestration with a single pane of glass

> By 2023, 65% of global enterprises will employ unified communications solutions that are deployed over SD-WAN, up from less than 10% in 2018.[2]

Enterprise-Grade Communications Made for Businesses

Whether using on-premises or cloud-based communications solutions, reliable and secure connectivity is crucial for organizations of any size. When pairing FortiVoice and Fortinet Secure SD-WAN, your organization can enjoy many benefits from a single, trusted vendor:

- **Better QoS in business communications**

Fortinet Secure SD-WAN helps automate QoS to prioritize FortiVoice traffic and the WAN path quality (latency, jitter, packet loss), and transport the FortiVoice app over any network, leveraging built-in security capabilities. As a member of the Fortinet Security Fabric, FortiVoice works harmoniously with SD-WAN to accelerate FortiVoice performance and improve user experience. With Fortinet Secure SD-WAN, organizations can effectively prioritize traffic, users, and data flows to guarantee FortiVoice performance and ensure better network access and bandwidth during periods of network congestion—without having to reserve or buy more bandwidth.

- **Streamlined management across branch offices**

Collaborative communications among offices is the success of any business. However, resources in branch offices are often constrained to optimize network connectivity for business-critical applications, especially for Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and conferencing requirements. Fortinet Secure SD-WAN enables automated zero-touch provisioning at the branch office, and provides centralized control to help ease any management burdens. Organizations can benefit from the solution's unified orchestration of traffic, security, and policies across branches, which means no downtime for FortiVoice communications.

- **Optimizing communications performance**

A reliable and secure communications solution is needed to support the mission-critical communications needs of every organization. Fortinet Secure SD-WAN offloads large amounts of VoIP, conferencing, and other recreational traffic from the private MPLS network to the most cost-effective public network at the edge for cost-savings, efficiency, and a better FortiVoice experience for users. With mean opinion scoring (MOS) and monitoring of voice and video traffic, MOS-based SLA thresholds allow you to set minimum requirements for a link based on the user experience. Organizations can thereby maximize bandwidth usage and ensure faster and more reliable access to FortiVoice for improved user experience.

Not All Communications Are Created Equal

When it comes time to look for a communications system for business efficiency, it is important to understand that not all are created equal. With today's distributed workforce and networks, organizations need a secure, integrated platform to unify operations across locations for full visibility and maximum uptime.

For over 20 years, Fortinet has been a driving force in the evolution of cybersecurity and the convergence of networking, communications, and security. Our network security solutions are the most deployed, most patented, and among the most validated in the industry. Our broad, complementary portfolio is built from the ground up with integration and automation in mind, enabling more efficient, self-healing operations and a rapid response to known and unknown threats.

FortiVoice delivers secure, all-inclusive communications to get employees connected, regardless of their locations. With Fortinet Secure SD-WAN, organizations can further extend the protection across devices and applications, and enable better QoS control for FortiVoice. As a result, the corporate network is optimized to support real-time traffic while maximizing FortiVoice uptime for calling, conferencing, and more, for better employee productivity and satisfaction.

[1] Gartner, Inc. Digital Worker Experience Survey.

[2] Gartner Inc. Networking Predictions 2020 Edition.

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