

## Case study.



Intelligent Infrastructure | Hybrid Networks | South Africa

# Bidvest Waltons puts pen to paper and increases bandwidth with managed SD-WAN and broadband internet links

## Client profile

Bidvest Waltons have been providing stationery and office supplies to the South African market since 1949.

They have a national footprint of more than 45 stores and as well as an online store. For the past 24 years they've formed part of the JSE listed Bidvest Group.

## Summary

Bidvest Waltons needed to increase their bandwidth, without prohibitive cost increases, to invest in applications to support product training for their B2B client managers. We implemented an SD-WAN solution, with broadband Internet over a fibre connection, to give the business greater capacity with less risk – and the additional benefit of cost savings. Bidvest Waltons now has the flexibility to increase network capacity when needed, and SD-WAN's built-in Cloud Controller makes the entire solution easy to manage. With a robust network that supports Office 365, with Microsoft Teams, client managers can take full advantage of the collaboration and innovation tools this technology offers.

## Vision

Bidvest Waltons had been using Dimension Data's MPLS network for several years to connect its 50+ retail and distribution sites across South Africa to its corporate applications.

While its stores are a household name in stationery supplies, the company's consumer retail operations comprise just a small portion of the business. The remainder stems from their business clients' bulk purchasing of an extensive range of Office Supplies, including office furniture, filing, consumables, catering, cleaning and technology.

This is a significant portion of their business and its success relies on the knowledge and expertise of the client managers who interact with clients in this portfolio. Product training is therefore extremely important, and Bidvest Waltons wanted to streamline their training by using advanced collaboration tools such as Microsoft Teams.

They soon realised they would need more reliable bandwidth to really take advantage of the full functionality of this application. The company's existing copper-based network would not be able to meet the demands of real-time video streaming, for example, and constant voice calls made over the network were becoming costly.



## Which technologies?

- Cisco Meraki

## Which services?

- Managed SD-WAN
- A fully managed SD-WAN service including underlay connectivity

**'We are extremely satisfied with the SD-WAN solution implemented by Dimension Data, we have increased our bandwidth and resilience while driving down the operating cost of our corporate network.'**

**Jaco Opperman**, Head of IT, Bidvest Waltons

Technology plays a crucial role in driving business outcomes, and as a leading technology partner, we collaborate and co-innovate to help our clients accelerate their digital journey. Find out how our full range of capabilities, together with our world-class strategic partners, enables us to give our people, clients and communities the power to do more.

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## Transformation

### Determining where value lies

Bidvest Waltons needed to increase their bandwidth significantly, without prohibitive cost increases. The company also wanted a flexible approach to networking that would allow them to easily increase capacity based on future requirements.

A number of solutions were proposed, including various bandwidth increase increments; implementing software-defined networking through SD-WAN with 10 times the bandwidth; and an upgraded Firewall with 10 times the bandwidth.

Bidvest Waltons weighed each option to find the perfect balance between increasing bandwidth to support multimedia training tools and reducing costs. The SD-WAN solution was selected as it met both objectives and offered additional ease of management through SD-WAN's Cloud Controller, which enables centralised setup and management of network policies.

The company's corporate network had been running on a copper-based Diginet last mile – which meant limited bandwidth and the risk of downtime in the event of copper theft. By choosing the SD-WAN solution and running broadband Internet over a fibre connection, the business could enjoy the benefits of greater capacity with less risk.

With SD-WAN's built-in Cloud Controller, Bidvest Waltons has a clear view of how the service is being managed, and the option to receive alerts and notifications for various activities. Cloud Controller makes the entire solution easier to manage, ensuring optimal network performance so all employees can connect to business applications such as product catalogues, pricing, and quoting and invoicing systems in a flash. This empowers client managers to tap into the latest product information, provide fast and efficient service to business clients and stay on top of billing.

### Results

#### More capacity for business means more capacity for staff development

Thanks to our implemented solution, Bidvest Waltons could benefit from moving its voice services over to fibre, too. After migrating to the Dimension Data Hosted PBX solution, the business realised immediate savings of 40% on voice calls.

Having freed up budget with the SD-WAN solution (and almost halving the costs of voice calls, and with a robust network in place, the company was able to focus on technology for streamlining their client operations. They invested in Office 365, with Microsoft Teams, so their client managers can take full advantage of the collaboration and innovation tools this technology offers.

By growing their bandwidth, Bidvest Waltons did more than increase business capacity: they increased their teams' ability to transact with confidence as they continue to establish and grow B2B relationships.