**Undoing the Key Misconception Surrounding SD-WAN: What You Need to Know**

SD-WAN, or Software Defined WAN, has become a buzzword in the world of business networking. Everyone is discussing the potential benefits it can bring to their organizations. While there's no denying that SD-WAN can greatly benefit your business, it's important to address what SD-WAN cannot accomplish. There is a prevalent misconception among businesses regarding SD-WAN, fuelled by headlines and marketing hype, that could lead to detrimental shortcuts when implementing SD-WAN.

The Myth: SD-WAN is a magic solution that saves money effortlessly! Like many myths, this one has a grain of truth. SD-WAN can indeed save you money, but not in the way you may have been led to believe. SD-WAN is most definitely a technology with immense potential. It allows you to monitor and manage network performance, centrally control policies, prioritise applications, and more. However, SD-WAN is not a standalone replacement for a robust networking infrastructure.

The perception of SD-WAN as a cost-effective solution stems from the fact that private, business-grade WAN/MPLS can be expensive or at least perceived as such. With headlines promising "Save 40% on your networking with SD-WAN!" it's no wonder that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) find the "SD-WAN is a magic solution!" myth appealing. Unlike larger enterprises with more resources, SMEs are less inclined and able to invest in full SD-WAN integration.

While cost savings are enticing for any organization, SMEs often fall prey to this myth. Some SD-WAN vendors even advise SMEs to forgo expensive MPLS and instead opt for a cheap broadband connection plugged into an SD-WAN box, claiming it will provide similar results. But here's the catch—it sounds too good to be true because it is.

Consider your home broadband router. It may work fine most of the time, but occasionally, it slows down or stops working. You don't panic because the consequences are minimal. Now imagine that same router, not in your home, but at the core of your business network. Suddenly, a red light instead of green becomes a cause for concern. A drop in speed now has significant financial repercussions, and an outage would be even worse.

And then there's the matter of security. While businesses need the internet, relying solely on consumer internet, even if managed through an SD-WAN box, is not advisable. If plugging the internet into SD-WAN made consumer internet as secure as business-grade internet, the latter would become obsolete. However, this is not the case. A pseudo-MPLS service running on the internet can never fully replace a well-established network in terms of security.

It's true that business-grade internet comes at a cost, but it's for a reason. Unlike consumer internet, it is fully managed, with service level agreements (SLAs) in place to ensure minimal latency and packet loss. It is supported by intelligently designed networking infrastructure using cutting-edge technology.

While SD-WAN can compensate for some limitations, it cannot entirely or adequately replace the benefits of a robust business network. Opting for an SD-WAN box over a business network with a reliable physical foundation may yield short-term cost savings, but in the long run, it could end up costing significantly more.

So, how can you truly save money with SD-WAN?

The real potential for long-term cost savings lies in understanding what SD-WAN truly is, beyond the concept of a "magic box." Our approach to SD-WAN involves incorporating it intelligently into a solid network infrastructure. By leveraging SD-WAN technology to enhance network efficiency, we can achieve cost savings and revenue growth while maintaining a strong foundation for your network.