WHITE PAPER

Restaurant Security and the Guest Experience

How restaurant operators can use the cloud to increase loyalty and protect their brands
TRENDS AFFECTING RESTAURANT FOOT TRAFFIC

The surging popularity of direct to consumer food services such as third-party food delivery, meal kits and food trucks, coupled with reduced discretionary income, are contributing to a significant decline in restaurant foot traffic. These trends are compelling restaurant operators to embrace new ways to recruit and retain guests. To earn the loyalty of the contemporary diner, operators are having to work hard to create an engaging and more personalized experience across the entire spectrum of the dining journey through such measures as:

- Engaging diners via a modern, app-enhanced hospitality platform to serve as the ultimate destination ambassador
- Creating a secure and effortless experience on kiosks or mobile devices to allow diners to place orders, play games, pay the check, calculate the tip, and add or redeem loyalty points right at the table

These shifting diner dynamics, shaped by digital offerings, begin outside the restaurant and continue within, enhancing the guest experience. To integrate these offerings into their business, operators need tools that enable their deployment.

SHIFTING DYNAMICS IN FOOD SERVICES

- Eating out is flat to declining
- 68% of innovative restaurateurs focus on diner engagement
- 86% of diners pay more for a better customer experience
- 88% of diners prefer to use a self-service option at the table

DRIVING PROFITABILITY

- Personalized dining experiences make the restaurant a memorable experience
- Security and convenience converge in mobile payment systems
- Competitive challenges to already thin profit margins increase with alternative dining options
- Network reliability is critical for a healthy bottom line
- Integrated solutions are preferred over point vendor solutions
- Field level IT/security staff are not an option

SOFTWARE DEFINED-WAN (SD-WAN) PLATFORM RELEVANCE

- Dramatically reduces TCO by up to 90%
- Eliminates security holes associated with complex manual configurations
- Requires no onsite IT/security staff
- Preserves existing and legacy network investments
- Enables rapid augmentation of new dining experiences
- Goes beyond checklist PCI compliance to protect brand and guests
- Improves business continuity and uptime
However, with breaches on the rise, compliance mandates have never been more important to the restaurant industry. As if adapting to changing guest expectations were not challenging enough, operators must also focus on another moving target—maintaining a truly secure network that is not only PCI compliant, but that also protects the brand against breaches. All while the operator is expected to ensure the network is advancing the mantra of a welcoming guest experience. But operating expenses associated with network connectivity and remote site management can lead to cost-cutting measures that threaten diner patronage.

This duality of creating a welcoming, frictionless and yet truly secure network can put IT and security teams on a collision course with marketing departments that are measured on the effectiveness of their customer loyalty and retention programs. Moreover, an operator has to create this secure and yet adaptive network against a backdrop of tight margins.

**USING THE CLOUD TO TURN THE TIDE**

These factors combine to raise questions of how an operator might meet all these requirements. We see three potential approaches:  
1. Invest in in-house IT skills and networking expertise to manage an enterprise private cloud  
2. Outsource IT/security to an experienced Managed Services Provider (MSP) for secure cloud WAN services  
3. Augment in-house expertise with the skills and benefits of an MSP

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Cloud Beginners</th>
<th>Cloud Explorers</th>
<th>Cloud Focused</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>Lack of resources/expertise (38%)</td>
<td>Lack of resources/expertise (34%)</td>
<td>Lack of resources/expertise (26%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Security (35%)</td>
<td>Compliance (34%)</td>
<td>Building a private cloud (19%)</td>
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<td>#3</td>
<td>Compliance (34%)</td>
<td>Managing costs (30%)</td>
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<td>#4</td>
<td>Managing multiple cloud services (30%)</td>
<td>Security (28%)</td>
<td>Managing multiple cloud services (18%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>Governance/ control (29%)</td>
<td>Managing multiple cloud services (30%)</td>
<td>Security (17%)</td>
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Source: RightScale 2016 State of the Cloud Report
Naturally, the optimal choice will be one made within the context of the operator’s business goals, competitive realities, timeframe, budget and IT/security skill constraints. However, a focus on profitable expansion remains a constant across operators. As such, the most appropriate choice might be one that focuses investments on core business competencies rather than diverting them into costly security and IT labor.

In other words, evaluating an MSP that offers a secure cloud and software-defined WAN solution (secure SD-WAN) is a logical option. Until recently, “security concerns” were cited as the biggest obstacle to cloud adoption, but as the market has matured, concerns about security are being diluted by a “lack of resources and expertise.” That being said, restaurants generally lack onsite IT and security staff. Consequently, they remain fertile ground for the types of security breaches that we routinely see in the press due to the volume of cardholder data traversing their networks. An MSP that offers cloud-managed SD-WAN service can be one of the most secure, nimble and cost-effective ways to go beyond mere checklist PCI compliance to protect the brand against breaches and deliver innovative guest experiences.

The guest experience is undergoing a constant re-invention with immersive experiences enabled by new and varied tools for targeting and promoting diner engagement both inside and outside the restaurant. Strategies range from consumer-focused efforts such as digital kiosks, mobile payment, loyalty programs, guest Wi-Fi and IoT, to corporate tools such as big data and geo-targeting with beacons. Frequently, these new applications and devices have no standardized security mechanisms and can open up new security holes if they are not implemented with great care. However, if securely integrated into a continuous dining experience across channels, these new technologies can yield significant competitive advantages and measurable increases in foot traffic, diner loyalty and improved guest sentiment.

Moreover, like restaurant operators, MSPs share a vested interest in assuring no downtime for services.

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS TO FIND THE RIGHT PARTNER

When sifting through the offerings for managed services, it can be difficult to make comparisons due to the variability of the architecture of the solutions. Because of the mission-critical nature of a WAN, the procurement process must drill down to the nuts and bolts of implementation, but the initial stages of evaluation can be streamlined by assuring that the offering includes certain essential attributes.
• **Business agility**—Enables rapid and seamless deployment of new applications
• **Defense-in-depth**—Combines multi-layered security with application segmentation; Segmentation isolates applications into their own virtual networks to prevent lateral breach propagation across applications narrowing the scope and cost of PCI compliance
• **Simplicity**—Reduces or eliminates the need for IT expertise at remote sites
• **Centralized management and automated provisioning**—Maintains centralized, automated policy enforcement to eliminate error-prone manual configuration, enhance application agility, and propagate software and security updates across all sites
• **Investment preservation**—Operates on any existing network, preserving legacy investments while supporting affordable and predictable scalability
• **Business continuity**—Provides high availability of mission-critical operations through automated failover to a wireless network with 24x7x365 monitoring and customer support

A solution that delivers on these elements will result in a measurable reduction in total cost of ownership (TCO) that will contribute directly to increased profit margins while enhancing the quality of your core business.

**THE CYBERA SD-WAN SOLUTION**

By simplifying the distributed network to the point of absolute zero touch provisioning at the remote site, Cybera has helped thousands of customers focus on their core business and reduce network costs without being distracted by IT and security concerns. The solution combines four unique elements:

• A centralized intelligent cloud that manages and automates the provisioning of remote sites at virtually unlimited scale, dramatically reducing TCO
• A simple on premise device that consolidates the functions of alternate and costly, multi-box solutions
• A platform that takes a defense-in-depth posture that goes beyond PCI compliance to safeguard company brands and protect operators and their guests from breaches
• A virtual overlay employing SD-WAN technology that rides on top of existing networks to rapidly enable future applications and quality customer experiences
• World-class services that are 365x24x7 with continuous monitoring and support.

For more information about Cybera, visit [www.cybera.com](http://www.cybera.com).

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