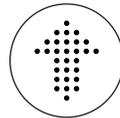**Connected a global workforce to accelerate innovation**

**Segmented networks to align with security requirements and business relationships**

**Established a flexible, repeatable infrastructure model for growth**

**Saved costs and increased network deployment choices**

# AutoPacific Group Brings a Global Organization Together to Innovate

## VMware SD-WAN and Coevolve are the key to the collaboration highway for automotive manufacturer.

How can a growing automotive manufacturer keep its global workforce connected and smoothly working together, to accelerate innovation? For AutoPacific, the network infrastructure is the foundation that empowers employees to collaborate and drive key business processes forward. As the organization evolved and grew, it found that its expensive MPLS WAN circuits could no longer keep pace with the way the business was evolving.

Andy Loughlin, IT Director at AutoPacific Group, says, "In the past, from an IT point of view, there was almost no collaboration. In fact, many of us had never met our colleagues in other parts of the world. That was a real challenge. We had legacy sites in Germany and South Africa that we were actually hosting here in Melbourne on our ERP solution. We also had very high-cost global links."

AutoPacific was also going through organizational changes. Loughlin says, "We were challenged at that time to deploy into about eight sites in Europe, and somehow connect our three utterly different networks globally together, with all the challenges around IP addressing, routing, what traffic should go where, and what sort of traffic should be allowed in and out of various data centers. Then we went through a sale process and were separated from our previous owners, creating new connectivity challenges."

AutoPacific turned to Coevolve, a VMware partner, for expert guidance to keep its expanding, changing global sites connected, secure, and working together.

### ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

AutoPacific Group is an industry-leading designer, manufacturer, and distributor of a wide variety of high-quality, custom-engineered towing, trailering, cargo management and other related accessory products in the Asia Pacific region. The company has approximately 600 employees, with facilities in Australia, New Zealand, and Thailand.

### INDUSTRY

Manufacturing

### HEADQUARTERS

Keysborough, Victoria, Australia

### ABOUT THE PARTNER

Coevolve enables global enterprises to deliver on their digital transformation initiatives. The Coevolve team helps clients adopt next-generation technologies like telco-independent SD-WAN, SASE, multi-cloud and collaboration solutions, with 100% focus on delivering an outstanding client experience. Coevolve manages services in more than 78 countries, and our client networks use more than 450 telcos and ISPs. Website: coevolve.com

### VMWARE FOOTPRINT

VMware SD-WAN

## VMware SD-WAN provides a secure, flexible foundation

AutoPacific had initially partnered with Coevolve when evaluating alternatives to replace its expensive MPLS circuits in Thailand, Germany, and South Africa. Coevolve recommended migrating these sites to VMware SD-WAN™, to simplify management and replace its costly MPLS links. As the organization grew and acquired new sites, its SD-WAN continued to expand.

Following the AutoPacific spinoff in 2019, Loughlin and his team needed to separate traffic between parts of the network. VMware SD-WAN Orchestrator made it easy for AutoPacific to segment its network to align with its security and business relationships. Loughlin says, "We were able to put particular sites into separate segments. For example, one site in Europe only needed to connect within their own region; we didn't want them to see our network sites at all in Asia Pacific. Some sites have dual access; they can see our data center and the data center in the U.S that belongs to our previous parent company. Following the sale, we were able to separate this network in about a week, so only the right information was delivered to the right place."



AutoPacific recently finished migrating all its sites to its cloud-based Orchestrator based in Sydney, Australia, to fully complete its separation from the previous company. Loughlin says, "We didn't have to drop in other routers and boxes. It was all done remotely, with no IT staff onsite at all. We had an accountant plug in a box, then we remotely configured it and brought it up into the WAN." Throughout the process, deployment has been smooth and simple, and VMware partner Coevolve plays an essential role.

On the partnership with Coevolve, Loughlin noted that he was impressed from the start. "They took the time to understand our business needs before going straight to 'solution mode.' Coevolve are always prepared to present different technologies and even providers, and then work with us to benchmark those various approaches where required. Over the years it has been refreshing to deal with a fairly consistent core team of account management, deployment and technical staff."

Daniel Urbina, Coevolve Managing Director, Asia Pacific, returned the compliment, calling the project a "fantastic experience." He added that "With such a dynamic set of requirements such as global sites and corporate M&A activity, the teams have been able to quickly deploy a sophisticated solution that has consistently been able to adapt to the needs of the business."

## Boosting business agility with change management

With the VMware SD-WAN solution, AutoPacific gains dramatically improved control and visibility. Instead of depending on a carrier for change management of MPLS links, the organization can take responsibility for network visibility and day-to-day operations with its in-house team. Loughlin says, "We don't have a specialized WAN router expert, so it's really our normal server infrastructure team that are maintaining this.

"Since migrating to VMware SD-WAN, the performance of our Internet links has gotten better and better, and the bang for the buck has improved. In the past, we often felt that we all needed our own dedicated bandwidth, because we didn't trust the Internet to carry our business-critical traffic. We don't see an issue at all now."

ANDY LOUGHLIN,
IT DIRECTOR, AUTOPACIFIC GROUP

We can make changes on the fly to things like firewall rules, business policies that control how traffic is sent around the network, whether it breaks out directly from a site or we want it to go out through a gateway. All of that would have previously been a ticket into our MPLS provider, requiring time and expense to get changes made."

The flexible SD-WAN architecture helps AutoPacific save money by choosing the carrier services that best align to its business needs. Loughlin says, "We've got the ability to shop around, and we have definitely saved money dramatically compared to four years ago when we were purely an MPLS organization. Ongoing change management would be the biggest saving. We're not paying for network changes anymore because we can do 99 percent of them ourselves."

Because they're working in a co-managed model with Coevolve, "AutoPacific is able to leverage their internal skills to manage day to day operations of the network, with the confidence that Coevolve is available at any time along the way," said Urbina.

## Improving performance for business-critical traffic

The SD-WAN environment has also unlocked real benefits in performance, supporting the communication and collaboration applications needed to support nonstop innovation. Loughlin says, "We do voice across all of our circuits, we do ERP critical traffic, and we now have a mixture of how we do Internet breakouts, with the flexibility to make changes to them ourselves. In many cases, the service is better, because we can support fast Internet. For example, we can do CAD drawings and transmit them between Australia and Thailand. That's much faster now than it was over MPLS."



Network traffic filtering that's within the VMware SD-WAN Orchestrator helps the IT team maintain consistent performance, to keep end users productive. According to Loughlin, "The Orchestrator lets us go to the Edge, look at traffic, and we can analyze that right down to the application level through the tools. It's one of the strengths for my team. When someone says they're slow at a site, we can very quickly say 'what is the source of that slowness? Have we got someone there that's streaming music, for example?' We can see all of that."

## Keeping sensitive industrial data safe

Security is essential for every enterprise, and VMware SD-WAN supports a layered approach to help AutoPacific safeguard its communications and intellectual property. "We certainly have done penetration testing against our SD-WAN devices. For web filtering, we're using a breakout in Sydney out of a data center. We've also kept our URL filtering and a traditional firewall solution."

## Looking ahead

Both AutoPacific and Coevolve agree that for companies moving from a traditional network topology to an SD-WAN model, preparation, planning and collaboration are critical to success. Loughlin says, "We've jointly established a SharePoint site where we put all the technical data as we built the network. We got pretty good at designing each site implementation using a template, and that template has become a design that we refer back to all the time. When conditions change, we have a resource that allows us to make the changes we need collaboratively."

Together, the companies have established a flexible yet repeatable infrastructure model that can expand and evolve to go where its business goes—and continue to scale for the future.