CHECKLIST

Is Your Business Ready for Return to the Workplace?

Your users are saying their network connection is better at home than in the office. It's time to modernize your network. Whether you're optimizing for new workplace requirements or preparing for a return to the workplace, here's a checklist to ensure you exceed expectations and future proof your investment.

WI-FI CRITERIA

- ☐ **Wi-Fi 6/Wi-Fi 6E:** Your solution should support the latest standards with Wi-Fi 6 and Wi-Fi 6E AP options. Wi-Fi 6 provides greater efficiency and security with capacity for more clients and IoT devices. Wi-Fi 6E extends these capabilities to the 6 GHz band, which can help extend the life of your network by 2+ years.
- ☐ **Wi-Fi Alliance Certification:** Certification ensures that the key requirements of the 802.11ax standard are met and independently validated and guarantees interoperability with previous standards.
- ☐ **RF optimization:** Clients should dynamically connect to the best available AP to avoid sticky client issues and optimize performance. APs should include logic to minimize cellular interference.
- ☐ **Application Quality of Service (QoS):** Enforce application service levels by assigning necessary application priority and bandwidth.
- ☐ **Remote worker support:** IT should be able to easily support remote work with secure, high-performing connectivity without edge appliances.
- ☐ **Indoor location ready:** Rather than deploying an overlay network, APs should support indoor location services. APs can automatically locate themselves and broadcast their location to client devices using a universal reference framework—without compromising security.
- ☐ **Expanded IoT support:** Bluetooth support is essential, but your wireless network should also support 802.14.5/Zigbee and USB port extensions so your APs can act as an IoT platform. In addition, battery life of IoT devices can be extended with the Target Wake Time (TWT) capability available in Wi-Fi 6/6E APs.
- ☐ **Outdoor coverage:** Organizations are taking advantage of outdoor spaces for meetings and more. Make sure you have AP options for outdoor and hazardous locations—backed by a lifetime warranty.
- ☐ **5G/LTE roaming:** More than half of cellular traffic is offloaded to Wi-Fi. To improve the in-building cellular experience, your solution should equip Wi-Fi-enabled devices with SIM credentials from major cellular network operators to automatically connect to enterprise networks.

NETWORK MANAGEMENT CRITERIA

- ☐ **Ease of management:** Look for GUI interfaces that offer novice admins and experts options regardless of skill level. Your network management system should allow for Zero Touch Provisioning, streamline operations, and offer CLI access for power users. Make sure your cloud management solution includes a Live Chat feature as well.
- ☐ **AI and automation:** To improve efficiency, your network management system should provide actionable root cause and troubleshooting tips for network and client issues, plus automated best practices performance insights that proactively eliminate problems, downtime, and help desk calls. AI-based profiling should also be built in.
- ☐ **SASE/Zero Trust:** Increased numbers of client / IoT devices and growth in work from home have led to a corresponding increase in security breaches. SASE and Zero Trust frameworks strengthen your security posture and minimize risk. Orchestration with cloud security vendors like Zscaler add extra protection for remote work.
- ☐ **Unified policy enforcement:** Look for role-based access for all users and client types to securely deliver consistent policy-based control with enhanced scalability and reduced network provisioning overhead. This is preferable to a manual VLAN-based approach.
- ☐ **Cloud and on-premises management options:** Your hardware should support cloud or on-prem management platforms without requiring a rip and replace, allowing you to transition to cloud-managed networking at your own pace.
- ☐ **Scalability:** Greater scalability allows you to manage your entire network footprint with less rework. Optional edge appliances (known as gateways) support greater numbers of APs and firewall sessions, as well as roaming across different VLANs and more.
- ☐ **High availability/Live upgrades:** Wireless networks are mission critical for most organizations and should not necessitate downtime for upgrades or stop functioning if the cloud connection is lost.

aruba
a Hewlett Packard Enterprise company

Aruba helps modernize the network with cloud-based management and market-leading wireless offerings combined with the most flexible consumption and operations options so you can reduce operating costs by up to 25% (TechValidate, 2021). Learn how modernizing your network with Aruba provides the right blend of network solutions, consumption, and deployment choices.