



Schoeller Allibert increases network visibility, control, performance and security with managed SASE solution from Expereo.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Schoeller Allibert is one of the world's largest manufacturers of returnable plastic packaging for material handling.

The company has been inventing, developing, designing and manufacturing Returnable Transit Packaging (RTP) for more than 60 years. Today, Schoeller Allibert is the European market leader in returnable plastics. The company employs over 2,000 people worldwide, has 13 production locations and a local presence in 50 countries.



Schoeller Allibert
Innovating your logistics for a better world

From on-premises to the cloud, from VPN to SASE.



Challenge

Over the past decade, Schoeller Allibert has gone through a number of mergers and acquisitions, resulting in a fragmented IT landscape. All IT infrastructure ran on-premises, and the company used a traditional VPN tunnel-based WAN to connect its 36 sites, including 13 factories.

Peter Koning, Director Global IT Infrastructure at Schoeller Allibert: "I joined Schoeller Allibert in June 2019. At that point, we were running behind on IT innovation, management, and control of our infrastructure. Even with a lot of hard work, the team could not keep their knowledge and our systems up to date. We decided upon an ambitious cloud strategy to catch up with the current state of technology and add more value to the business. But to do it successfully, you have to ensure that the foundation – the network – is reliable, easily scalable, and flexible."

"A successful move to the cloud requires the foundation – the network – to be reliable, easily scalable and flexible."

Peter Koning
Director Global IT Infrastructure



Goal

The first step Schoeller Allibert wanted to make towards the cloud was a digital workplace based on Microsoft 365. Peter Koning: "If you adopt a cloud-first strategy, you must ensure optimum connectivity with cloud services such as Teams, OneDrive and SharePoint. The VPN tunnels in our old WAN sometimes suffered from network traffic conflicts and network outages. Also, we did not have the insight into traffic flows to resolve these issues." Schoeller Allibert investigated the possibilities and advantages of SD-WAN and SASE.

Stronger security was another major objective for Schoeller Allibert. The company was using a lot of legacy technology, so it needed to better secure the infrastructure core. Peter Koning: "With the explosion of ransomware and other security risks, we wanted a solution that filters all internet traffic before it enters our network. I was already familiar with the Zscaler cloud security solution, which I see as one of the best cloud security products on the market today. Instead of adding more firewalls, we have now integrated SASE into our SD-WAN."



Solution

The selection process

The company evaluated three potential partners, including Expereo and their existing network provider. Peter Koning: “We chose Expereo for a number of reasons. First of all, they are a true specialist in SD-WAN and SASE and have a clear focus on what they do. Furthermore, they have a very good track record with internationally operating companies like Schoeller Allibert. Last but not least, they work very selectively with some of the best technology providers in the market. The combination of VMware SD-WAN™ and Zscaler that Expereo offered was the perfect match with our needs. All these aspects helped build trust in Expereo, which is very important for us.”

Migration to SASE in times of COVID-19

Schoeller Allibert and Expereo kicked off the migration project towards the end of 2019. Not long after, the COVID-19 pandemic broke out. Peter Koning: “That initially brought a lot of uncertainty. However, it was extraordinary to

witness how such a project can be rolled out successfully in just six months, even in these difficult times. The SASE solution allows remote implementation, so Expereo didn’t need to have engineers on site. The incredible flexibility of Expereo resulted in a fast roll-out at locations that were not in lockdown.”

Internet connectivity

In the past, Schoeller Allibert’s internet connections were sourced locally by the subsidiaries. As a result, IT could not negotiate optimum value for money and could not manage the wide area network centrally. As part of the managed SASE solution, Expereo provides a centrally managed and invoiced business internet connectivity. With the SASE solution, Schoeller Allibert has insight into traffic flows and bandwidth usage, which can be used to further optimize the network.



BENEFITS

The benefits of a managed SASE solution

The managed SASE solution gives Schoeller Allibert more control over the network, better performance for latency-sensitive applications, more flexibility, and higher levels of network security.

The company can now offer a quality of service in specific traffic flows such as voice and video in Teams, which is crucial during COVID-19 times. Peter Koning: "The solution also is very flexible. We had a problem with an unstable line at a location in France. We simply added a 4G mobile connectivity dongle, and that works brilliantly."

Ranadeep Sarkar, Information Security Officer at Schoeller Allibert adds: "Expereo helped us become more secure with their VMware SD-WAN and Zscaler solution, and through their professionalism. Their managed SASE solution enhanced Schoeller Allibert's security landscape. This powerful solution enables us to easily manage and control security policies across many locations with different layers of granularity. The knowledge and expertise of Expereo IT's project team, in combination with the skilled and customer-focused delivery team, was the perfect recipe to get this implemented."



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Ranadeep Sarkar
ISO at Schoeller Allibert

Because Schoeller Allibert was already using internet connections, they did not experience the cost reductions often seen with MPLS replacement. Peter Koning: "We did not really have a short-term financial business case. But we have significant improvements on the usability side because we no longer have the VPN-related problems. We also have a much better alignment with our future cloud agenda. For example, we are developing an Internet of Things (IoT) solution to help intelligently track our crates for recycling. We can now roll out new functionality for the business, without having to worry about the network."

Next step: Windows Virtual Desktop

After moving their datacentre workloads to Microsoft Azure, Schoeller Allibert started the implementation of Windows Virtual Desktop. Before that, the company used traditional desktops and laptops managed and supported at 36 different locations. Peter Koning: "With Windows Virtual Desktop, we can provide applications from the cloud in a secure, centrally managed way. Azure is immeasurably scalable as it provides the cloud version of your desktop. It continuously performs well and provides secure access to your business applications. A well-performing network is the key element of success."

Expereo was the right partner.

Peter Koning: "We are taking our first steps towards the cloud and the network is our foundation. If our WAN doesn't work, the whole organization is affected. Therefore I wanted a professional partner that delivers quality and acts as an extension of my organization. The people at Expereo have extensive knowledge of the technology and know how to select the right products. They have built a very strong proposition and deliver on their promise.

As an IT department, we want to focus on where we really add value to the business. With our aggressive cloud agenda, we want to increase the value to the business from IT. That includes divesting activities to parties who can do an even better job than we can, at a fair price. Our

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Marc Schmitz
CIO at Schoeller Allibert

WAN is one of these, and I am very happy we chose Expereo."

Marc Schmitz, CIO at Schoeller Allibert concludes: "Our SASE implementation project with Expereo was delivered on time and within scope during 6 months of challenging COVID-19 times. The SASE solution increases our insight into the traffic running across the WAN, tightens our Datacom control and increases our network performance as well as our security."

