Zoom into the future

Scaling a global communications innovator

Zoom

zoom.us

- Leading provider of cloud-based enterprise communication solutions
- Platform supports individual video or audio calls, virtual meetings, webinars and webcasts
- Diverse customer base from individual user to Fortune 100 enterprises

Challenges

- Needed to manage skyrocketing growth and expanding footprint
- Required ability to scale globally
- Needed high-quality, 24/7 network availability, reliability

Solutions

- Lumen® MPLS/IP VPN to connect their data centers in California and NY
- Lumen® Wavelength Services to connect their data centers in North America, Latin America and Europe as well as to key high-volume customers
- Lumen® Dedicated Internet Access at all major sites, including a colocation facility in Brazil
- Lumen® Voice for conferencing and Zoom Phone support

Results

- Ability to scale globally
- Reliable network connectivity and security delivers higher-quality customer experience
- Brought Zoom closer to its customers
- Made collaboration easier

"Zoom has had historical growth. Our challenge is to be able to keep up with customers' needs and add capacity to our network. The Lumen global network is one of the biggest networks in the world, and that capacity will be critical to our business as we grow."

— Alex Guerrero,
manager of SaaS operations
Zoom

zoom

LUMEN®
TECHNOLOGIES

Challenge

Maintaining high quality and keeping costs low during rapid growth

Zoom is a leading provider of cloud-based enterprise communication solutions that help users hold individual video or audio calls, convene virtual meetings for up to 1,000 people, conduct webinars for 50,000 attendees or host webcasts for over 1 million people. Its customers range from the individual online user all the way to the largest Fortune 100 enterprises in North America.

According to founder and CEO Eric S. Yuan, Zoom's primary mission is to build a "frictionless communications service that brings happiness to customers." In practice, that means that Zoom customers can empower people to accomplish more by making it easier for team members to communicate and collaborate whether they're in the same room or on opposite sides of the globe. This collaborative spirit also drove Zoom's efforts to find a company it could trust for its communications infrastructure.

Zoom's business is growing at an astronomical rate. According to Harry Moseley, Zoom's Global CIO, the service handled more than 80 billion meeting minutes and through August 2019 had doubled what it logged in all of 2018.

Growth of this magnitude comes with challenges like handling more customers and more employees while managing an expanding industry footprint. For Zoom, it's all about the ability to scale, knowing that its IT structure can support rising user demand.

"Our company's growth is not a hockey stick, it's a rocket launch. It's just going straight up," Moseley said. "We can handle that growth because of the way we scale our platform and the fact that we monitor our service utilization so that when it gets to 50% we automatically scale up."

Reliability is a key part of Zoom's brand promise and its ability to stay ahead of the competition. Because video conferencing is a real-time application and requires high-quality, 24/7 network availability, reliability was also a major factor in Zoom's choice of a service provider. Users notice every glitch, and any inconsistency can provoke customers to try competing services. With that in mind, Zoom only considered service providers that were able to deliver high quality levels and could maintain them over time.

Because the Zoom team was looking to expand its global presence, they needed their network infrastructure provider to be global as well. By positioning networking resources closer to the edge, they could reduce latency. Another important factor was the depth of technical resources available to quickly troubleshoot and address potential issues. One of the most critical requirements was the ability to automatically and seamlessly failover to other circuits before video conferencing customers suffered a noticeable reduction in quality. Because it is a highly competitive market, cost was also a factor in selecting a provider. But Zoom had to carefully weigh cost efficiency against providing a quality, reliable service around the world.

Strategically, Zoom wanted a company with the same vision and dedication toward customer happiness. They knew that simply adding more and more providers to accomplish the technical scale required was not practical. The complexity of managing multiple relationships would grow unwieldy at some point and sap management's time and focus away from growth. Therefore, the ideal service provider needed the resources to help Zoom manage today's requirements as well as shape and manage the company's future growth.

Finding all those factors in a single provider led them to one company.

Solution

A collaboration backed by comprehensive network and internet solutions

Zoom chose Lumen as its primary network provider because of its expansive worldwide fiber network and reputation for providing reliable infrastructure. As a video-first communications company whose customers demand that services always be available, bandwidth and reliability are paramount.

"Reliability and availability are very important because customers who depend on our service want to make sure that at any time Zoom just works," Yuan said.

In addition to network scale, reliability and having a common vision, the ability to have a close working relationship was also a critical consideration. To drive collaboration, the companies established relationships between executives from the CEO on down. This created a common view of the business that facilitated the growing relationship.

"The number one thing is don't let our customers down," said Yuan. "We're going to do everything we can to deliver happiness to our customers. Because of that, we needed a very reliable, very solid trusted partner working with us to deliver service to our customers."

To accomplish this, Zoom relies on the Lumen global network in a variety of ways. Lumen Wholesale Voice Services support the audio portion of Zoom Conferencing in the US and Latin America, plus Zoom Phone (a cloud- based phone system) in Latin America. Lumen MPLS networking connects their data centers.

Access to data centers around the world is also a key part of growing or improving Zoom's services in various markets. For instance, a colocation facility at a Lumen data center in Brazil makes it easier for Zoom to service customers in the region. Zoom relies on its IP transit links and point-to-point waves to connect to its global data centers.

Lumen Solution Set

- Lumen® MPLS/IP VPN to connect their data centers in California and NY
- Lumen® Wavelength Services to connect their data centers in North America, Latin America and Europe as well as to key high-volume customers
- Lumen® Dedicated Internet Access at all major sites, including a collocation facility in Brazil
- Lumen® Voice for conferencing and Zoom Phone support

Results and Future Plans

The rocket launch of global growth continues

This comprehensive connectivity solution empowered Zoom to scale globally. The MPLS backbone created the foundation for the entire Zoom solution, allowing the failover ability to avoid service interruption. Wavelength connectivity safeguards the quality of the experience for their users, providing them added levels of security built into the network.

The solution brought Zoom closer to its customers, made collaboration easier, and enabled Zoom to deliver the highest-quality customer experience – virtually anywhere in the world.

"The size of the Lumen global network means that we can count on them knowing which services we need no matter where they're needed around the globe," said Alex Guerrero, manager of SaaS operations at Zoom.

Zoom is one of the fastest-growing unified communications firms in the world. Valued at a billion dollars prior to its IPO in April 2019, Zoom commanded a market cap of more than $14 billion after its first day of trading as a public company. And Zoom doesn't see its growth slowing down any time soon. Plans are already underway to expand Zoom's global reach further into Europe, South America, and Asia Pacific and focus on introducing new features and innovations.

LUMEN® TECHNOLOGIES