



Schneider Electric

Achieving easy and cost-effective
multicloud traffic management





>> Schneider Electric

Schneider Electric understands firsthand the value of taking the long view. At the same time, the company recognizes that it is essential to be nimble in today's business environment—putting pressure on a talented IT team to constantly balance the requirements of the past with the needs of the future.

>> Challenges

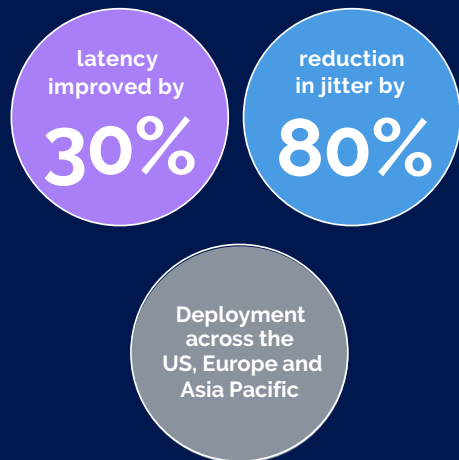
One area where agility is critical is in planning and forecasting. To continue to support its business needs and ensure its network agility, Schneider Electric embarked on a journey to reinvent the way it accesses cloud applications. The company's cloud connectivity journey commenced in 2012 when the CIO decided to adopt Salesforce as its main CRM.

This adoption was meant to become the cornerstone of the pervasive ordering system for Schneider's partners worldwide with the aim of improving the overall customer experience, but internal users were facing challenges regarding performance issues and action needed to be taken to improve performance and tackle connectivity challenges.

Schneider Electric began working with InterCloud to deliver a fully managed private connectivity solution to help tackle these performance issues, as part of a journey that went on to tackle interconnection of its most critical applications.

“ We tried to look at the digital transformation holistically, which involves how we engage our customers, how we serve our customers with the best digital offers, and how we operate those offers in a way that is secure, scalable, efficient, and reliable. ”

- Hervé Coureuil, CDO



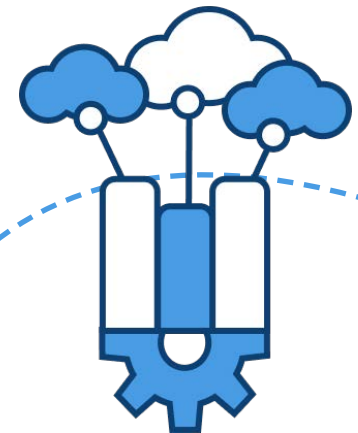
>> Key benefits

While the partnership between InterCloud and Schneider Electric continues to develop, there are many milestone achievements of the projects completed so far.

Here's just a summary of some of the key benefits Schneider Electric unlocked by implementing new ways of working and transforming global connectivity:

- 30% improvement in latency when accessing Salesforce and overall jitter reduced by up to 80%, thus enabling network agility to further support its business needs.
- Established the granular network metrics needed to extend the visibility and control over the application traffic.

- Covered the deployment in the US, Europe and Asia Pacific for Schneider Electric's most business-critical applications, including its CRM and ERP.
- Guaranteed connectivity performance while maximizing cost-efficiencies.



>> Background

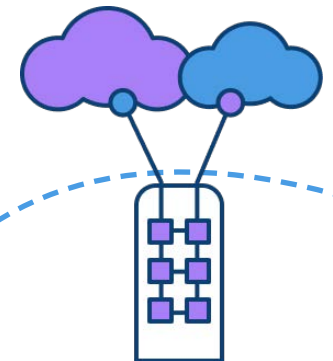
Schneider Electric's cloud connectivity journey started in 2012 when the decision was made to adopt Salesforce as its CRM.

This new SaaS CRM was meant to become the cornerstone of the pervasive ordering system for Schneider's partners worldwide, and thus drastically improve the customer experience.

"Not before long, internal users started to complain that accessing Salesforce was too slow and we figured that we needed in-depth visibility into the Salesforce traffic to address performance issues", recalls Lionel Marie, who was then Network Architect and a better approach was needed in order to deliver improved performance.

Why was it so critical to Schneider Electric?

When cloud applications face performance issues, you need the relevant metrics to investigate where the problem stems from and bring this evidence forward to users and managers in order to accelerate troubleshooting. What was achieved with Salesforce was soon extended to AWS, Microsoft Azure, and most recently on Google Cloud Platform and Alibaba Cloud. Also, for all of its SaaS applications, Schneider Electric devised another way to guarantee connectivity performance while maximizing cost-efficiencies.



“ This involves leveraging machine learning and artificial intelligence, the cloud, and application programming interfaces [APIs]. We are mirroring many of the technologies that our product people are using to build products for our customers. ”

- Elizabeth Hackenson, Global CIO



When managed connectivity hubs simplify management and rationalize costs

Building on the Salesforce case, the network team was fully aware that the Internet was simply not an option to deal with critical applications traffic. A secondary take away was derived from this experience: although the team was highly invested in its global MPLS, it was a challenge to keep up with the company's cloud adoption pace... And even so, this came with a substantial price tag and additional complexity.

The opportunity to disrupt the network infrastructure management arose when Xavier Schaak joined the company. The new VP of Global IT Network supported his team's idea to move from a single 10 Gb pipe to IX peering for most SaaS applications.

“Five years ahead of our ecosystem, we started using direct connectivity from SaaS providers to connect O365, Box or Webex”, explains Mr. Schaak. “The challenge was to prove that it was a cheap, simple and sustainable way to upgrade our global network to access cloud resources”, adds Mr. Marie.

“In 2019, around 60% of Schneider Electric's Internet “commodity” traffic comes from Internet Exchange Points via our Network Hubs. This amount of data collected directly from the Cloud Service Providers, CDN, or Content Provider is free of charge.”

“ Beyond using the InterCloud platform to centralize and control our network traffic, we use it to mutualize some key functions such as firewalls. Instead of having one firewall per VPC/VNET we can scale firewalls for multicloud, multiple regions while filtering cloud-to-cloud traffic. ”

- Network Innovation Leader



>> The InterCloud Solution

InterCloud's connectivity platform was used as a central hub for all network functions that were isolated from other IT functions. The idea was to allow independence of all network functions to facilitate changes in the infrastructure whether it is moving out of an on-premise data center or connecting a new CSP or customer location. Today, InterCloud manages a dozen regional network hubs for Schneider Electric offering a choice of cloud connectivity options ranging from private connectivity for the most critical applications, to IX peering and including transit. This leads us to the main advantage of implementing network hubs for a large corporation, such as Schneider Electric: network management simplification and delegation of the daily operations to focus on value-added missions and innovation.

Managed connectivity hub high level design

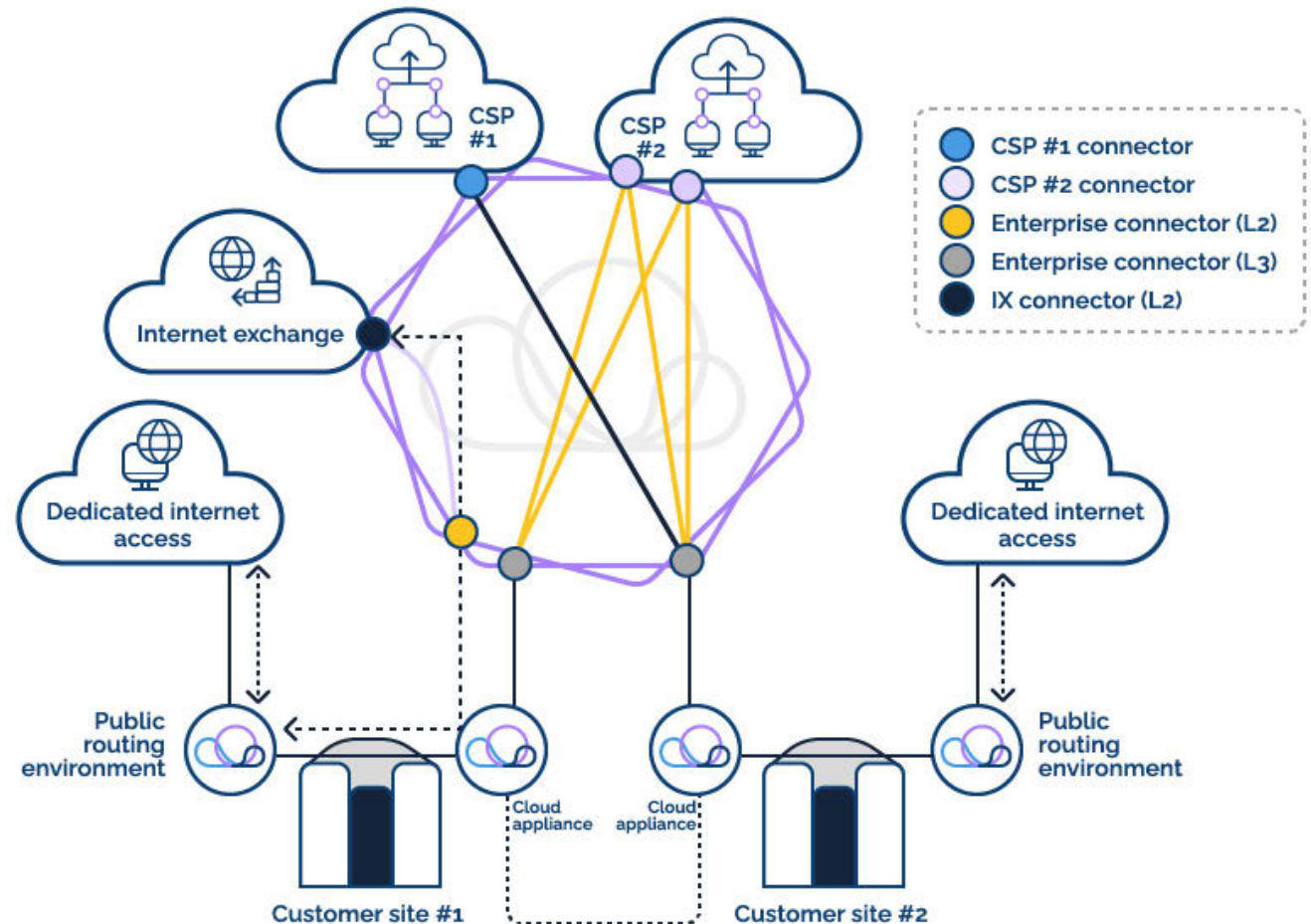
- A choice of connectivity modes: private connectivity for the most business-critical traffic flows and the IX peering or Dedicated Internet Access for less critical ones
- Natively resilient solution: easy to build redundancy and backup for each flow inside the hub and easy to replicate hubs to achieve geo-redundancy
- Additional third-party functions / appliances such as firewalls hosted and managed by InterCloud
- Optional BGP routing optimization: guaranteeing the best possible path. operations to focus on value-added missions and innovation.

“ Five years ahead of our ecosystem, we thought that direct connectivity from the cloud providers was the most scalable and cheapest way to upgrade our global network to access cloud resources. ”

- Xavier Schaak,
VP global IT network



>> The InterCloud Solution





About InterCloud

InterCloud's end-to-end global connectivity platform eliminates the complexity in deploying the cloud, giving businesses full control over the security, sovereignty, and performance of their critical data traffic with complete peace of mind.

Working with organizations to help them transform global connectivity, reduce network complexity, and accelerate growth and innovation, InterCloud is a trusted advisor to some of the world's leading brands when it comes to leveraging the cloud for future success

With offices across Europe, the company's platform is underpinned by its team of cloud experts who guide customers to implement effective strategies to leverage the power of the cloud across their organization – making global connectivity a driver for business performance.

www.intercloud.com