Extracting better security, mobility and connectivity

For nearly half a century, PDC Energy has adapted and evolved to provide energy for the needs of everyday people. The company has remained focused on sound geological and engineering fundamentals, strong financials, adaptive technologies, and adding value for shareholders while working closely with property owners and local communities. The company concentrates on horizontal drilling and low-risk organic development of oil and natural gas reserves from shales and tight reservoir rocks. Its mission is to efficiently and safely produce energy, while respecting the environment, in order to power and better people's lives.

The Challenge

The energy sector is multifaceted, complex, and a vital part of any nation's self-reliance, output, and economy. PDC Energy has not been insulated to the changing nature of the sector and issues that have arisen due to COVID-19.

PDC Energy's business applications were predominantly running on servers housed on-premises, which used up the majority of the company's network capacity and inhibited network flexibility and opportunities to scale.

With the growing challenges of adapting to a mobile and disparate workforce, PDC Energy needed to give its work from home (WFH) users the flexibility and performance needed to perform their duties. One challenge was giving WFH users the assured experience of a high-bandwidth voice application that was hosted in its enterprise.

Another vital aspect PDC Energy faces is security challenges. The truth is that not all of the control systems that currently hold the oil and gas critical infrastructure together were designed to resist cyberattacks. In addition, expanded internet and IoT connectivity make matters worse, exposing these control systems to a range of increasingly sophisticated malware designed specifically to attack them.

While many companies juggle the need for a more agile workforce and increased WFH and remote contractors as employees, another unique challenge facing PDC Energy is the requirement to have workers on-site, with its deployment of mobile trucks and a vast fleet of vehicles. Managing such a large fleet and ensuring seamless connectivity with minimum downtime has been tough, with the weather playing a major role in some of the most extreme conditions.

PDC ENERGY

Profile

Industry
Oil & Gas

Region
United States

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Challenges

- Inconsistent application performance for remote workers and excessive network downtime.
- Centralized management for a vast fleet of trucks.
- Staying connected in extreme weather conditions.
- Protection from malicious attacks and industry compliance.
- Complex legacy network infrastructure

Results

- Assured application performance.
- Zero Trust security provided by granular control of traffic flows and isolated trust boundaries, as well as built-in stateful firewalling.
- Ease of deployment and flexibility with Netskope Borderless SD-WAN for offices and remote users that delivers superior user experience for hybrid work environment.
- Unified policy with converged secure and optimized connectivity across remote users, micro-branches, and data center.
- Thin, ruggedized form factor with multiple mounting options, can be easily deployed in trucks with Wi-Fi as WAN and cellular as failover.
- IP Rated and C1D2 compliant, for use in a variety of environments globally.
- Lowered TCO by 10x.

netskope

Security that's ready for anything

The Solution

PDC Energy initially started by exploring multiple SD-WAN solutions, but quickly found that CAPEX hardware costs and OPEX pricing and operational models were not aligned to address its micro-branch, remote worker, and mobile trucking scenarios. Netskope Borderless SD-WAN, on the other hand, enabled it to achieve high-quality connectivity and streamlined operational efficiency at a fraction of the cost.

Adaptability and Flexibility for WFH and Remote Workers

Netskope offered PDC Energy a single cloud platform with integrated cellular edge devices connecting remote workers, fixed and mobile sites, and IoT devices over wired and wireless WAN options. Netskope SASE Gateways eliminate the need for multiple single-function branch appliances by instantiating and delivering services such as application performance monitoring, firewall, IDS/IPS, and third-party services. Deployment is simplified by separating the control plane and the data plane, enabling automated one-click customer onboarding, one-click edge enablement, and one-click new services enablement for new users, sites, and devices, which also helps PDC Energy scale deployment easily. Contractors and remote workers working in areas where network problems were known to occur had a significantly improved experience with Netskope's network and application optimization capabilities, which ensured critical enterprise applications are delivered with the highest service-level agreements (SLAs) and application assurance.

Ideal for Use in Mobile Trucks and Oil Fields

Netskope Borderless SD-WAN helps unlock the power of Wi-Fi deployed with WAN and cellular wireless fleet connectivity for stable access to applications, including those accessed and provided by IoT in PDC Energy's long-haul trucks. Resilient, cloud-native, and elastic-scale architecture provided intelligent access combined with AIOps to centrally manage PDC Energy's entire fleet of vehicles without manual intervention. Netskope SASE Gateways are available with a thin, tough ruggedized form factor offering multiple mounting options, ensuring the devices can be easily installed in trucks and compact environments. In addition, all devices are IP Rated and

C1D2 compliant for use in a variety of environments. Whether it is the Wattenberg Field in Weld County, Colorado, or the Delaware Basin in Reeves County, West Texas, Netskope devices are designed for longevity and engineered to function well even when vehicles encounter extreme temperatures, humidity, shocks, vibrations, dust, and wet conditions including water splashes.

Zero Trust Security and Assured Application Performance

Netskope Borderless SD-WAN helps deliver unparalleled security with a converged zero trust architecture, powerful, converged built-in security features such as stateful firewall and IDS/IPS that protects PDC Energy from malicious attacks and guards against advanced threats. PDC Energy is able to send and receive critical information and sensitive data with a unified security policy including securing its IoT attack surface and enforcing data governance, even in the face of fluctuating global, federal, state, regional, and local regulations, allowing it to stay on top of standards of conduct and maintain critical documents for reporting and auditing.

Netskope Borderless SD-WAN greatly improves the voice and video collaboration experience. Business-critical applications are automatically prioritized with sufficient bandwidth allocation, thereby ensuring application performance. Application steering offers dynamic path selection with sub-second blackout/brownout protection.

> "Netskope Borderless SD-WAN stands apart from everything in the market. Whether it's addressing multi-cloud scenarios, connecting equipment in the field, or providing a simple 'plug-and-play' solution for the hybrid workforce, we're pleased with what we can accomplish and are excited to see where Netskope will take this integration with their SSE platform."
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> — **Mahesh Gopalakrishnan, VP IT, PDC Energy**