

## CASE STUDY

# A. McLean Bookmakers



## Seamlessly modernising legacy networks with a SASE network upgrade



### About the customer

A. McLean Bookmakers is Northern Ireland's largest independent bookmaker, boasting 64 sites across the UK and Ireland. A. McLean is a trusted name in the betting industry, and a household name across Northern Ireland.

### The challenge

For over a decade, A. McLean's network operated on a traditional MPLS (multi-protocol label switching) architecture relying heavily on PSTN (public switched telephone network)-based copper connectivity. With the imminent Openreach PSTN switch-off, it made sense to upgrade and re-design their network at the same time. Their goals were clear:

- Achieve a highly secure and flexible network infrastructure
- Use any type of connectivity – be it broadband, 4G, or satellite – for resilience and agility
- Simplify management to reduce ongoing operational costs
- Future-proof their network against regulatory changes and evolving customer engagement in the betting industry

The challenge was compounded by a lean IT team managing 64 remote sites, needing a solution that didn't add overhead or complexity to their ongoing operations.

**Martin continued:** "The support from our project manager and the Cato Networks specialist ensured a swift switchover without the loss of service to any of the 63 remote sites. Their willingness to demonstrate and provide training on the solution enabled McLean's staff to feel confident and knowledgeable in their installation process and future management of the solution."

### At a glance

**Industry:** Betting & Gaming

**Employees:** 300

**Solutions:** SASE

**CATO**  
NETWORKS

## The solution

We saw this not just as an upgrade, but as an opportunity for transformation. We proposed and implemented a SASE (Secure Access Service Edge) architecture – a modern, cloud-delivered approach designed for flexibility, security, and simplicity.

Thanks to our extensive vendor portfolio, we were able to review all SASE providers and identify Cato Networks as the best fit for A. McLean's specific requirements.

We built the Cato SD-WAN (software-defined wide area network) alongside an existing third-party network, with the new network acting as a spoke on the MPLS hub. This seamless orchestration meant:

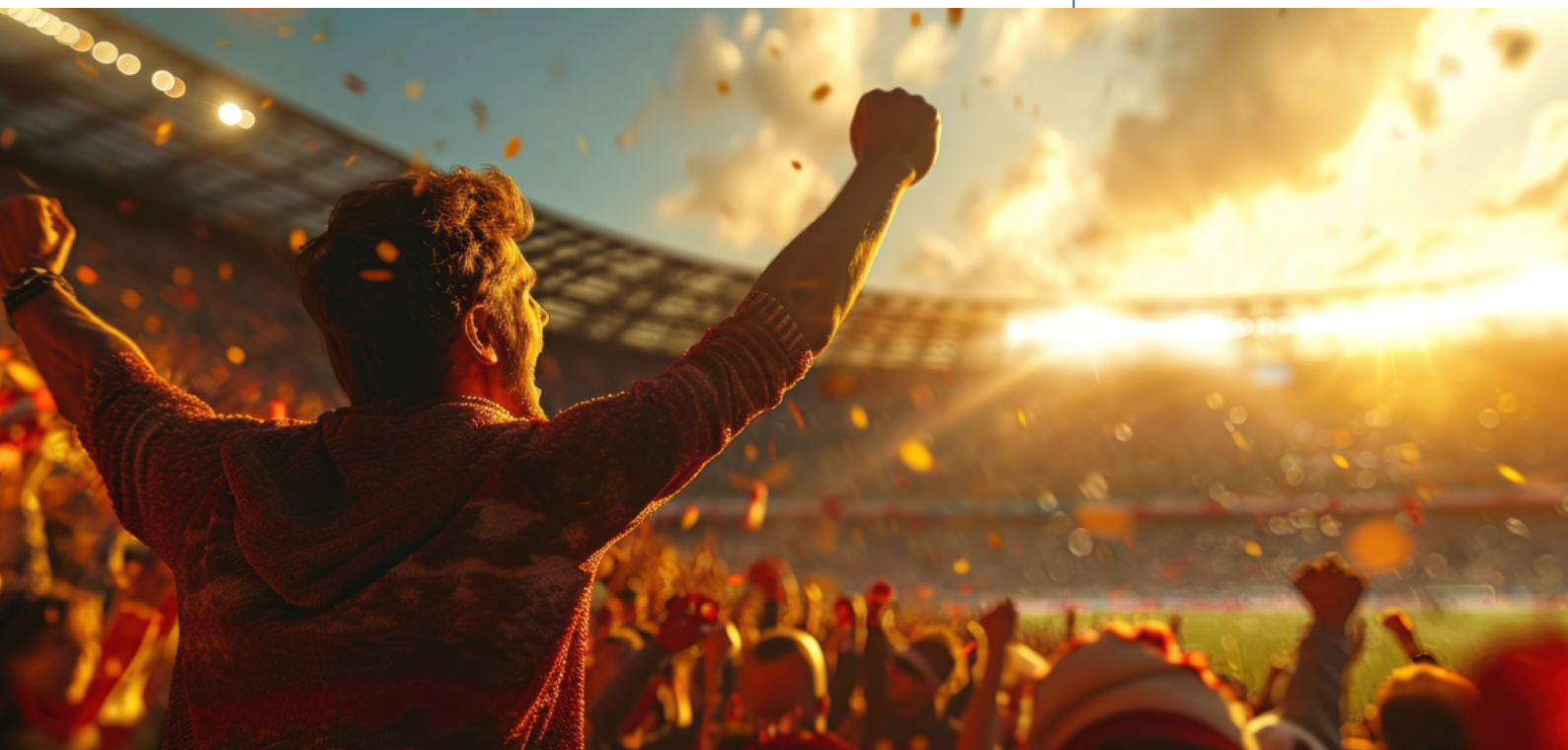
- Each site could be switched over at any point, keeping uninterrupted service throughout the migration process.
- As each new line went in, that store was moved across seamlessly onto the new connection and the new network without losing connection to any central resources on the MPLS.
- Once the last site was installed and transitioned, the final piece of the old network was shut down.
- While most network migration projects are hugely costly and risky during transition, this approach minimised cost overlap and kept the business risk to a minimum.
- The IT team didn't need to work overtime or rush to complete the project.



*“From the first technical discussions with our Account Manager through design configurations to support on rollout, Wavenet provided a professional, friendly, supportive experience for McLeans Bookmakers. They provided the complete service, an understanding of what our needs were, product knowledge, and a very competitive solution in comparison to others.”*

**Martin Hennessy**

IT Manager, McLeans Bookmakers



## The result

Having integrated the new Cato SD-WAN into A. McLean Bookmakers, we were able to help them realise significant and measurable improvements – all without overburdening their IT team during the project or requiring additional headcount to manage the transition. Benefits include:

- **Greater Visibility and Ease of Management:** Staff at A. McLean now have access to the Cato Central Management Application, which is so intuitive that their IT Manager was able to become entirely comfortable working with it within two days. This gives them visibility across all sites, detailed insights into every circuit, and the ability to monitor performance down to the user and application level across the network. They can now manage all their networking and security through a single pane of glass.
- **Improved Security:** With a central tool for managing all network security functions, policy management is simpler, and the risk of policy gaps reduced. AI tools help by highlighting any gaps in configuration and suggesting ways to optimise.
- **No More Patching:** The cloud architecture of Cato SASE means the IT team have no firewalls to patch as everything is managed by Cato centrally. That means no more late nights rolling out patches out of hours, and no more worrying about being a version behind with security patches.
- **Futureproof & Cost-Effective:** Now, if additional speed or resilience is needed, it can be achieved through bonding 4G or DSL (digital subscriber line) or adding in satellite connections, rather than relying on costly dedicated fibre circuits at every retail branch. The lowest cost connection is just as secure, and more resilient, thanks to the SASE architecture. Any security upgrade can be added within the same platform, all managed through a single pane of glass, whether it is data loss prevention (DLP), zero trust network access (ZTNA), or managed detection and response (MDR).

**Martin concluded:** *“This was a complex network upgrade project, with the installation of new circuits and routers across the network, as well as changing from MPLS to SASE architecture. It was all made so much easier with the management and expertise of the Wavenet team. We are so happy to have completed this project with Wavenet and look forward to future projects together.”*



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