



# Pantaenius

SD-WAN for insurance company

Client Success Story





## CHARTING NEW WATERS WITH RIEDEL'S SD-WAN SOLUTION

### Manuel Schlieff

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at Pantauenius Holding GmbH

In IT, one size does not fit all. Every business has different infrastructure needs, and a solution that works for one company may not suit another. That's why it's essential to find a partner who understands how you operate and what makes your organization different.

Pantauenius Yacht Insurance is a family business that grew out of our founders' love of sailing. We are a boutique maritime insurance provider that serves the global yachting community. We offer a full variety of specialized insurance solutions for all types of vessels ranging from small boats to superyachts. Our offices are strategically located in nine countries near international yachting hot spots, and our staff works 24/7 to serve every time zone. We cater to customers from every walk of life, but they all love the sea.

### Keeping Our Global Network Online

As Head of IT for the past five years, my team and I work to keep the Pantauenius global network online. Keeping this complex machine running is a challenging and rewarding job. Fortunately, my schooling in communication informatics and previous position at IBM's business consulting division taught me that IT is about creating business advantages, not just crafting solutions. There are dozens of ways I do this at Pantauenius Holding, and no two days here are alike.

To ensure an outstanding customer experience and a uniform work environment for our staff around the world, Pantauenius operates a centralized data center in Hamburg, and everyone uses a standardized set of apps running on virtual desktops. This approach requires a high-speed, high-availability network that intelligently routes traffic and minimizes latency and jitter.

### Finding the Right MPLS Partner

For several years, our backbone was a traditional MPLS network operated by a major German communication provider, but costs kept increasing, so we switched to a more affordable supplier. We soon discovered that the lower price came with inferior support. When we encountered a problem, we found ourselves dealing with anonymous engineers at an overseas call center. Nobody knew how our network was configured, and we didn't have a dedicated support person who understood our needs.

This one-size-fits-all approach to technical support was far from ideal, especially for a niche business like ours. This partnership didn't last, and four years ago, we switched to Riedel Networks as our MPLS provider.



In Riedel, we found the right fit in terms of budget and personalized service. We appreciate that we can talk directly with the people who engineer our network. We also have end-to-end support, from infrastructure implementation all the way to troubleshooting specific issues. We don't have to start at the beginning every time we talk to them.

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### Recognizing the Limitations of MPLS

Early in our relationship, Riedel offered a backup to our MPLS network. Before that, we didn't have a failover. If one trunk of the MPLS network fails, the entire network would go offline. Riedel offered a failover using VPN connectivity. If our MPLS network experienced an outage, we could reroute traffic over an encrypted connection across the public internet.

It was a leap forward in terms of reliability, and it drastically reduced downtime. However, rerouting all network traffic across the VPN connection while Riedel repaired our MPLS slowed down everything else. This made it difficult for our international offices to run remote applications from our Hamburg data center during network outages.

When it came time to renew our contract, I traveled to Riedel's head office in Butzbach to discuss Pantaenius Holding's needs. Since we were already using MPLS with a VPN failover, they recommended moving to SD-WAN.

### Boosting Our Bandwidth and Flexibility with SD-WAN

This was my first encounter with this technology. SD-WAN would allow us to continue using our MPLS network as the primary connection between our branches while replacing our failover VPN with a full-time software-defined network that ran over the public internet. It gave us the flexibility to route speed-sensitive application traffic over the MPLS segment of our network while sending lower-priority tasks, like email, over the public internet.

Instead of switching to a VPN connection only when the network failed, SD-WAN would allow us to run our WAN over MPLS and the public internet at the same time, effectively doubling our bandwidth. It would also give us a single-pane-of-glass interface to maintain and monitor our worldwide network.

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SD-WAN provides the flexibility to route speed-sensitive application traffic over MPLS while sending lower-priority tasks over the public internet.

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I presented these benefits to our head of infrastructure, who was intrigued but remained skeptical. When I explained that these extra features and capacity cost the same as our previous solution, he became much more enthused and gave the green light to move to SD-WAN.

### **Deploying SD-WAN in Less Than Three Months**

Going from the initial proof of concept to deploying our SD-WAN took less than three months. Riedel paired us with an engineer who served as our point of contact during the deployment. He set up the virtual part of the network at their end and shipped pre-configured routers to all our international locations.

We didn't have to send out IT people into our offices because installation was so simple. It only took a few seconds and didn't require any technical knowledge. Each of the devices shipped with easy instructions that enabled anyone—including receptionists, sales agents, and other non-IT staff—to place the routers into a network rack, plug in a couple of cables, and connect their branch to our global network in minutes.

After the routers were connected, they were activated and managed remotely by Riedel and my IT team in Hamburg.

### **Finding the Capacity We Needed During the COVID Crisis**

During our deployment, COVID-19 forced many of our employees around the globe to start working from home. This increased the load on our network, and the demands for our services also increased drastically.

Although we hadn't planned for a remote work scenario, Riedel's SD-WAN solution gave us the bandwidth and network management tools to easily and securely connect everyone to our Hamburg data center. Instead of managing a dozen corporate locations, we have provided connectivity to hundreds of home offices running virtual machines remotely. Our network is running at full speed, and nobody is complaining about lag or poor performance.

Riedel has always excelled at listening to our needs and delivering customized solutions that meet our needs—and the pandemic situation has been no exception. Their support team was invaluable during our transition to remote work.

### **Supporting Our Internal Partners and International Locations**

Riedel helps us find solutions, but we also rely on them to supplement our internal IT team. We have 14 engineers supporting 300 users, and four of us comprise the infrastructure team. When something goes wrong, we can usually resolve the issue ourselves. But it's good to know that somebody sitting at Riedel's offices 400 kilometers away can spot a problem that we missed and point the way to a solution.



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The best partners are open to good ideas from anywhere—even other service providers.

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For example, our Australian office has one physical cable that connects it to the internet. Although we could run a VPN or SD-WAN on that line, there was no MPLS failover if that cable failed. Riedel engineered a mobile broadband backup solution to ensure uninterrupted service. They also moved secondary traffic to the broadband connection to reduce the cost of sending data across an intercontinental MPLS cable. To top it all off, they also took on frontline support duties for our Australian office, so we no longer have to wake up our IT people in the middle of the night should an issue arise.

In addition to supporting us, Riedel works hand in hand with Marcant, our internal network partner. They're open to good ideas from anywhere—even other service providers.

### Competing with Multinationals

As a boutique insurer serving a global clientele in a niche market, Pantaenius can't afford to have any downtime on our network. With SD-WAN, we've found a solution that ensures that all our offices stay connected and all traffic reaches its destination promptly.

We're a family-run business in a field that is dominated by multinationals. Riedel helps us compete with bigger players and allows us to offer personalized service and attractive policies to yacht lovers around the world.



Und als Krönung übernahm Riedel auch noch den Frontline-Support für unser australisches Büro, sodass unsere IT-Mitarbeiter bei Problemen nicht mehr mitten in der Nacht aus dem Bett geholt werden müssen.

Riedel unterstützt uns nicht nur, sondern arbeitet auch Hand in Hand mit Marcant, unserem internen Netzwerkpartner. Das Unternehmen ist offen für gute Ideen, egal woher sie kommen – selbst von anderen Service Providern.

### **Auf Augenhöhe mit multinationalen Konzernen**

Als Boutique-Versicherer, der in einem Nischenmarkt einen globalen Kundenkreis bedient, kann sich Pantaenius keine Netzwerkausfälle leisten. Mit SD-WAN haben wir eine Lösung gefunden, die eine zuverlässige Anbindung aller Büros sicherstellt und dafür sorgt, dass sämtlicher Datenverkehr zeitnah sein Ziel erreicht.

Wir sind als Familienunternehmen in einem Bereich tätig, der von multinationalen Konzernen dominiert wird. Riedel hilft uns dabei, mit den großen Playern zu konkurrieren, und ermöglicht es uns, Yachtliebhabern auf der ganzen Welt einen personalisierten Service und attraktive Versicherungslösungen anzubieten.

### **Über Pantaenius Holding GmbH**

*Pantaenius ist einer der weltweit führenden Spezialisten für Yachtversicherungen. Mit der Erfahrung aus einer mehr als einhundertjährigen Unternehmensgeschichte konzipiert Pantaenius die angebotenen Yachtversicherungen nicht nur selbst, sondern setzt die entwickelten Deckungskonzepte auch mit Versicherer Konsortien oder einzelnen Versicherern in Versicherungsprodukte um. Die Konsortien, mit denen Pantaenius kooperiert, stellen die Spezialisten von Pantaenius nach umfassenden Marktrecherchen eigens für diesen Zweck zusammen. Als Trendsetter entwickeln die Spezialisten von Pantaenius ständig Versicherungsbedingungen für neue Tarife und passen das Bedingungsmerkmal dem sich ändernden Bedarf der Yachteigner und den am Markt zu erzielenden Konditionen an. Der Versicherungsschutz ist daher auf die Bedürfnisse der Kunden zugeschnitten..*

### **Über Manuel Schlieff, IT-Leiter bei Pantaenius Holding GmbH**

*Manuel Schlieff ist bei der Pantaenius Holding GmbH für die IT-Strategie und den gesamten IT-Betrieb, einschließlich Infrastruktur und Softwareentwicklung, verantwortlich. Bevor er zu Pantaenius kam, war er als IT-Manager und Berater tätig und leitete alles von der Entwicklung von Unternehmenssystemen bis hin zur Datenanalyse, Datenmigration und Performance-Tests. Er erhielt einen Abschluss in Kommunikationsinformatik von der Hochschule Harz.*

# Get in Touch

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### About RIEDEL Networks

RIEDEL Networks is a privately held, global network provider focused on tailored networks. We are listed in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for Network Services, Global, as a niche provider specializing in mid-market international enterprises and the media and events sector. With our own global backbone, we help companies be connected worldwide. Our services include internet connectivity, MPLS, SD-WAN, SASE, Cloud Connect and much more. Our customers come from a variety of industries and value quality, security and reliability. RIEDEL Networks is a 100% company of the RIEDEL Communications Group in Wuppertal, Germany, and is fully privately owned by Thomas Riedel.