



Mark Ehr
Senior Consulting
Analyst, S&P Global
Market Intelligence

Mark has a long career in IT, spanning consultant, entrepreneur, industry analyst, product marketer, software developer and salesperson. He spent 12 years at IBM in roles including worldwide security sales enablement and SIEM product management. He's also worked at Ping Identity, Polarsoft, Siebel Systems, Sybase and other leading firms.

Update: continuing SASE/ZTNA research yields more insights

TMT Consulting, a part of S&P Global Market Intelligence, was commissioned by Verizon to conduct a qualitative study focused on secure access service edge (SASE) and zero-trust network access (ZTNA). The objective of the research was to understand business drivers, key decision-making criteria, deployment types, barriers and key learnings from executives directly involved in evaluating and deploying SASE/ZTNA in their organization across Europe and Asia-Pacific.

The research revealed three primary ZTNA/SASE benefit groups: business, user, and security operations (SecOps). Key business benefits included strengthened cybersecurity capabilities, edge-to-edge, borderless protection, cost savings and improved support for virtual workers. The main benefits to users were an improved experience due to simplified remote access, reduced or eliminated VPN clients and better network performance. From a SecOps perspective, reduced attack surface and lower susceptibility to vulnerabilities, along with vendor consolidation and tool reduction, simplified management, improved scalability, and enhanced visibility were all cited as key benefits. In a ranking of all benefits, reduced attack surface, lower risk and overall security improvements topped the list.

Benefits for the business	Benefits for SecOps	Benefits for users
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened cybersecurity capabilities • Extended edge-to-edge, borderless protection • Reduced costs • Improved support for virtual workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced susceptibility to vulnerabilities • Fewer vendors and tools to worry about • Simplified management • Improved scalability • Enhanced visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved experience • Simplified remote access • Reduced, or eliminated, need to use VPN clients • Better network performance

Participants were at various stages of SASE and ZTNA deployment maturity, with length of deployment ranging from 12 months or less to more than three years. European organizations trended toward shorter deployments than their Asia-Pacific counterparts.

Interestingly, when asked about the composition of the SASE stack being deployed, only half indicated that they could get all the functionality they required from a single vendor. About half of participants reported using third-party deployment support, typically provided by the solution vendor and/or a systems integrator. Participants that had completed or nearly completed their SASE/ZTNA journey listed a variety of outcomes, such as reduced risk, lower costs, ease of deployment, higher productivity, and improved user experience. Another key topic was barriers encountered during the SASE/ZTNA journey. The most commonly cited challenges were dealing with legacy systems, understanding the current IT infrastructure, lack of staff, and difficulties creating a business justification.

As an example, one participant said “...understanding our network architecture and making changes to it so that it can support micro-segmentation was a massive effort.” Another, a CISO of a large insurance organization, said: “...very clearly understanding what, where, when and how applications integrate together across networks, internally and externally, across different infrastructure components, and also in association with any transversal technology that may be part of this fabric (i.e., internal firewall rules) – you need to invest time up front to fully understand all aspects, rather than piecing it all together in a troubleshooting mode during project implementation.”

On the positive side, many participants were delighted with the results of their SASE/ZTNA journey. Several indicated that enhanced visibility and easy administration through a single pane of glass enabled their teams to quickly focus on what’s important. And, not surprisingly, freeing users from the need to connect to a VPN, thereby improving user experience, was a top response as well.

If you are interested in learning more, we have several assets in development based on this research including a full-length paper, several shorter “impact briefs” and two virtual roundtables featuring business leaders discussing their experiences and viewpoints on SASE and ZTNA. Stay tuned!

Learn more

To find out more about SASE, visit our website. This is regularly updated with new content on this fast-moving topic. The results of the research mentioned in the above article will be published here:

[verizon.com/business/en-gb/resources/lp/secure-access-service-edge/](https://www.verizon.com/business/en-gb/resources/lp/secure-access-service-edge/)