

# Deliver on Your NRF Vision: Aruba SD-Branch Addresses 3 Key Challenges for Retail

By Jeff Olson, Blog Contributor



Many brides-to-be have dreamed about this moment their whole lives: the moment they say "yes" to the dress. The whole experience of selecting the perfect dress can be filled with treasured moments and fond memories—or it can be just another stress-filled wedding task. But when it comes to picking the perfect dress for the perfect day, few boutiques can match the incomparable style and personal service of Vera Wang.

## About the Author



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Vera Wang, like many retailers, is using technology to better engage with their customers so store associates can personalize the experience, whether customers are

looking for a stunning dress, glasses that make a statement, or their newest signature fragrance. "As we continue to grow our retail stores internationally, we are laser-focused on using technology to deliver our customers a truly unique shopping experience," said Stewart Ebrat, CIO at Vera Wang.

### Bringing the Future of Retail into Focus

The store of the future will be a big focus at the [National Retail Federation's Big Show](#) next week in New York City, as retailers explore ways to blend physical and digital experiences to get shoppers back into stores, rather than clicking the "buy" button from the comfort of their couches.

With today's innovative technology, retailers can create personalized experiences that make shoppers feel welcome and their unique tastes understood. With the right technology, shoppers can be guided through the store to find their favorite items, presented special offers and have a great experience.

But delivering amazing retail experiences isn't easy. Joel Grace, senior vice president of IT Infrastructure and Cloud at Sayers, a full service provider of IT solutions, knows this first-hand. He says, "The variability in the form of volume of foot traffic, breadth of devices and data privacy concerns make branch location environments extremely complex from an IT perspective."

Further compounding the challenge is that retail IT teams typically run very lean, yet are responsible for smooth operations at hundreds or even thousands of locations. "At Sayers, we're laser-focused on providing best-in-class IT infrastructure and cybersecurity solutions to our clients and, with its industry-leading SD-Branch solution, Aruba is enabling us to deliver a secure, high-performance network architecture that's simple to deploy and manage."



### 3 Ways to Deliver on Your Retail Vision

Today, Aruba announced its next major milestone for our SD-Branch solution, which better secures, streamlines and simplifies network operations for IT staff responsible for managing multiple geographically distributed retail locations. Aruba's SD-Branch solution is a single, software-defined framework enables organization to meet today's IT, user, IoT, infrastructure and business needs at retail and branch locations with simplicity, speed and cost savings.

"With Aruba's SD-Branch solution as the solid foundation for a secure, easy-to-deploy and centrally managed infrastructure, we will also be able to better engage with our customers by identifying them via their mobile phones so that store associates can help personalize and transform their in-store shopping experience," said Ebrat of Vera Wang.

Let's take a look at how Aruba's SD-Branch solution helps retail IT professionals to deliver on their vision:

**1. Secure the growing retail attack surface.** Strong network security in a distributed retail environment has always been critical, and with retailers increasingly using the same network for front- and back-of-store connectivity, protecting against security threats becomes even more important. The number of IoT devices like electronic shelf labels, digital cameras, location sensors and smart lighting is skyrocketing. IoT devices are an essential part of retail transformation but they're also unproven from a security perspective. IT needs to ensure tight controls over IoT devices.

With Aruba's SD-Branch solution, retail IT teams can adopt a scalable, zero trust security methodology from edge-to-cloud, leveraging comprehensive security controls across stores, users and devices. Retail stores are secured using critical security capabilities such as firewall, role-based dynamic segmentation, intrusion detection systems and prevention systems (IDS/IPS) and Web content filtering. Identity-based IDS/IPS performs signature- and pattern-based traffic inspection on both the branch office LAN (east-west) traffic as well as the SD-WAN (north-south) traffic flowing through the gateway to deliver embedded in-store network security. An advanced security dashboard provides retail IT teams with everything they need to manage an end-to-end zero trust, edge-to-cloud environment providing network-wide visibility, multi-dimensional threat metrics, threat intelligence data, correlation and incident management.

Aruba's Dynamic Segmentation solution empowers retailers to microsegment their networks to limit how and where users and devices, including IoT devices, can communicate. A policy-based approach to microsegmentation reduces the risk of security gaps, improves network availability and compliance—and lightens the workload of a lean IT team.

**2. Simplify edge-to-cloud networks with a single control point.** Distributed retail networks are getting more complex with cloud, SaaS, and increasing IoT at the edge. Cloud applications and services and IoT are a critical piece of retail transformation, and with Aruba's SD-Branch single pane-of-glass and SD-WAN orchestration, retailers can easily and seamlessly connect stores to data, applications, and SaaS residing on multiple clouds such as Azure, AWS, GCP and cloud security vendors—at scale.

SD-Branch also addresses the challenge of local network operations inside the store (both wired and wireless) with streamlined user and device onboarding and provisioning, role-based policies and micro-segmentation. Our zero-touch provisioning app eliminates the time-consuming, manual work of network configuration and ensures uniform network and security settings. IT teams no longer have to hassle with complicated VLAN and ACL configurations or worry about static controls. That's because SD-Branch addresses the entire remote branch experience, from the wireless and wired networks in the stores, across the WAN, and to cloud resources and private data centers, all with zero trust security and consistent performance.

**3. Ensure non-stop operations at every retail location.** The importance of network uptime becomes even more important with connected stores for electronic payment processing, inventory systems and innovations like electronic shelf labels, magic mirrors and location-based services.

With Aruba SD-Branch, IT teams can leverage automation that keeps the network running non-stop and deliver amazing experiences for shoppers, associates and their devices. Applications perform at their best with high-performance, reliable connectivity. The SD-Branch solution includes role-based policy enforcement, dynamic path steering and SaaS prioritization features that dynamically adjust to changing network conditions to deliver the best experience to users and devices. Aruba provides enterprise-class SD-WAN over MPLS, broadband and LTE links. Built-in cellular LTE access in the Aruba 9004 Series Gateways gives customers the option to use the connection as a primary or secondary uplink or in a load shared active-active mode with other broadband/MPLS links.

Technology is transforming every aspect of the retail experience, from the shopping on the sales floor to the associate in the backroom and the executive offices. With Aruba SD-Branch, retailers can be assured of secure network availability, improved network operations, faster IT service delivery and enhanced shopper experiences.