

<b>VERTICAL:</b>	Manufacturing
<b>HEAD OFFICE:</b>	France
<b>LOCATION TYPE:</b>	Manufacturing Plants & Offices
<b>GLOBAL LOCATIONS:</b>	30 Locations
<b>GLOBAL SPREAD:</b>	5 Continents
<b>SALES OFFICES:</b>	20

# Haulotte Halves Network Costs and Boosts Application Performance By Migrating from MPLS to Cato

## About Haulotte Group

Haulotte is a global manufacturer of lifting equipment used in construction sites, warehouses, farms, and similar locations. Based in L'Horre, France it has more than 40 locations on five continents, including six manufacturing plants and more than 20 sales offices. Before Cato, Haulotte had just rolled out MPLS to all its sites and relied on a traditional VPN solution for mobile and home connectivity.

## The Challenge: Network Reliability at a Lower Cost than MPLS

Global manufacturers face significant challenges in an age of digital transformation. Many have relied on MPLS to connect manufacturing plants, corporate and sales offices, and the datacenter. As mobile/home users and cloud applications have grown in importance, however, MPLS has shown itself to be both too expensive and not agile enough to remain a viable WAN solution.

Such was the case with Haulotte, a global manufacturer of materials and people lifting equipment used in construction, warehouses, farms, managed forests, and similar sites. With six manufacturing plants and more than 30 offices across Western Europe, North America, South America, Africa, and Asia Pacific, Haulotte had faced three years of delays and cost overruns rolling out MPLS to all its locations. At the end of those three years MPLS accounted for a whopping 10 percent of the entire IT budget. Service was usually adequate but there were definite issues.

“During my first few months at Haulotte, the network was a daily headache,” says Thomas Chejfec, who joined Haulotte as Group CIO in 2019. “There were outages, complaints, and negative feedback from several internal teams about the service from our major international MPLS provider.” Haulotte was also migrating to Office 365 and MPLS was not a great fit for the cloud.”

## **Haulotte Considers Alternate MPLS and SD-WAN solutions, Chooses Cato**

With several MPLS contracts reaching end of life, Chejfec decided to look at both MPLS and SD-WAN alternatives. “It was clear that switching MPLS providers could save us 20% in budgetary costs but migrating to SD-WAN could save as much as 50%,” says Chejfec. Chejfec’s IT team investigated several SD-WAN providers, including traditional hardware vendors and more specialized service providers. In the end Cato was the clear winner.

“I went to Tel Aviv to meet with the Cato team, see how they work, and investigate the solution’s coverage,” says Chejfec. “I liked the company’s ‘Unicorn’ spirit, with its young, highly responsive employees at the forefront and Cato’s ultra-simple management software solution.”

Cato connects all global enterprise network resources — including branch locations, physical and cloud datacenters, and mobile and home users — into a single secure, global, cloud-native network service. With all WAN and Internet traffic consolidated in the cloud, Cato applies a suite of robust security services to protect all traffic, including anti-malware, next generation firewall, and IPS.

Connecting a location to Cato is just a matter of installing a simple preconfigured Cato Socket appliance, which links automatically to the nearest of Cato’s more than 65 globally dispersed points of presence (PoPs). At the local PoP, Cato provides an onramp to its global backbone and security services. The backbone is not only privately managed for zero packet loss and 5 9’s uptime, it also has built in WAN optimization to improve throughput dramatically. Cato monitors network traffic and selects the optimum path for each packet across the Cato backbone.

Chejfec felt that Cato’s approach to networking and security was the most user centric of the solutions he considered. “Cato’s management interface was so easy to use compared to those of the traditional SD-WAN players we looked at,” says Chejfec.

“That really made a difference for us. It allowed our small team of three, with two based in our Romanian datacenter, to view network traffic across all our sites in real time. We can even see which sites use YouTube and other apps the most and how many gigabytes are transferred and we loved the price, of course!” says Chejfec. “Cato let us take advantage of good access at half the price of MPLS.”

Chejfec also liked that Cato had its own converged backbone with a high density of global Points of Presence. He was also impressed with Cato’s security services, including the ability to shut down the entire network with a single phone call to prevent the spread of ransomware and other attacks.

### **Fast Deployment, Fast Performance, Low Cost**

Chejfec started rolling out the Cato SD-WAN solution to individual sites, leaving deployment of Cato’s security services for the future. When Covid-19 hit, Cato came in very handy for mobile/home user access as well.

“For the first lockdown we kept our previous VPN, but we didn’t have enough licenses for all our new home users and activating new licenses would add significant costs and long implementation times,” says Chejfec. “We decided to try the Cato VPN and were able to deploy it to 300 home-based staff in less than a day!”

Deploying Cato to its sales offices was also simple. “We just dispatch the Cato Socket with a page of instructions to each location,” says Chejfec. “Our local contact installs it at the site and then we take over remotely to finish the job. It’s truly plug-and-play.” As for the manufacturing plants, IT sent the staff an email notifying them that the network would be unavailable between 7 pm and 10 pm in order to change providers. “At 10 pm the network was up and running and employees could resume work the next morning with no disruption.” The migration was delayed by the slow termination of MPLS contracts, but it has been a relatively trouble-free experience.

“In my 10 years of experience in IT, this is the only major project that turned out to be a minor project,” says Chejfec. “Usually a network migration project is a hot topic of conversation and affects everyone at every level but migrating to Cato was truly seamless.”

Not only was the switchover seamless, but there were notable performance and quality of service improvements with Cato compared to its previous MPLS solution. “We had just migrated

to Office 365 and the quality and performance of Microsoft Teams was a definite improvement,” says Chejfec. “I believe this had a lot to do with the switch to Cato.

For the network team, the management interface is a godsend,” Chejfec adds, “as Cato anticipates Internet link problems, they can intervene quickly before they affect users.”

The next phase in Haulotte’s Cato migration will be to start deploying Cato’s security services globally and the entire Cato solution to a new factory currently being constructed in China, where Cato has several PoPs. Perhaps the best thing about the transition to Cato.

“The network is no longer a topic of discussion with users,” says Chejfec. “We never hear about it anymore.”

**Thomas Chejfec,**  
**Group CIO, Haulotte**