

Tata Communications Recognized for

2021

Competitive Strategy Leadership

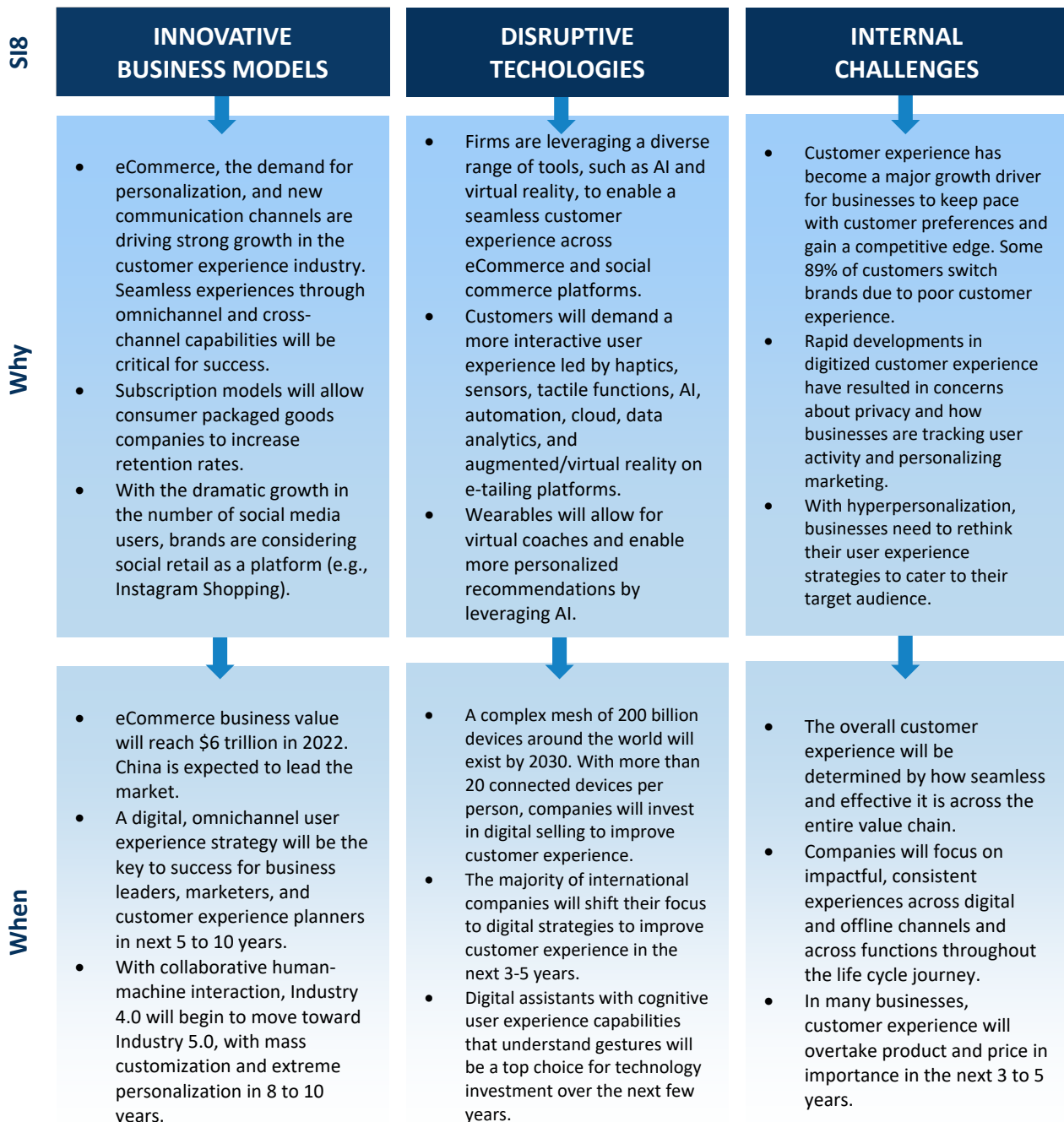
Asia-Pacific Managed SD-WAN Services Industry

Excellence in Best Practices

TATA
COMMUNICATIONS

Strategic Imperatives

Frost & Sullivan identifies three key strategic imperatives that impact the customer experience industry: innovative business models, disruptive technologies, and internal challenges. Every company that is competing in the customer experience space is obligated to address these imperatives proactively; failing to do so will almost certainly lead to stagnation or decline. Successful companies overcome the challenges posed by these imperatives and leverage them to drive innovation and growth. Frost & Sullivan’s recognition of Tata Communications is a reflection of how well it is performing against the backdrop of these imperatives.



Best Practices Criteria for World-Class Performance

Frost & Sullivan applies a rigorous analytical process to evaluate multiple nominees for each award category before determining the final award recipient. The process involves a detailed evaluation of best practices criteria across two dimensions for each nominated company. Tata Communications excels in many of the criteria in the managed SD-WAN services market space.

AWARD CRITERIA	
<i>Strategy Innovation</i>	<i>Customer Impact</i>
Strategy Effectiveness	Price/Performance Value
Strategy Execution	Customer Purchase Experience
Competitive Differentiation	Customer Ownership Experience
Executive Team Alignment	Customer Service Experience
Stakeholder Integration	Brand Equity

Strategy Effectiveness

Asia-Pacific (APAC)-based enterprises are increasingly embracing digital transformation. The rapid implementation of cloud strategies is driving demand for software-defined wide-area networking (SD-WAN) services. Tata Communications’ comprehensive portfolio of managed SD-WAN has allowed it to establish a strong presence in Asia-Pacific. It offers managed SD-WAN services to verticals ranging from healthcare to manufacturing and BFSI. With a focus on innovation, enhanced security features, a wide choice of deployment options, and a strong partner ecosystem, the company offers a superior and uniquely extensive range of SD-WAN solutions in the market.

The company’s multi-vendor, network-agnostic managed services model includes fully managed or co-managed options on a dedicated or multi-tenant centralized infrastructure. It offers three variants:

- **IZO™ SDWAN Cisco** is based on Versa and designed for greenfield deployments. It has standardized and simple network designs using white box x86 customer-premises equipment (CPE).
- **IZO SDWAN Cisco** is based on Cisco-SD-WAN and is suitable for large and complex deployments, supporting both cloud-based and on-prem architecture. It provides direct access to SaaS apps and advanced analytics.
- **IZO SDWAN Fortinet** is based on Fortinet FortiGate and is suitable for small to medium sized deployments and meets the security centric SD-WAN customer needs.

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The company manages SD-WAN deployments across APAC and includes co-managed and fully managed services. Tata Communications deployed more than 1,400 SD-WAN routers in approximately 1,200 locations in 2020 alone. Key verticals include Information Technology/ Information Technology Enabled Services (IT/ITES), manufacturing, and the banking, financial services, and insurance (BFSI) sectors. In 2020, the company recorded significant client wins in APAC, the majority of which involved complex deployments such as running SD-WAN over third-party networks (e.g., Internet and Multiprotocol Label Switching [MPLS]).

Competitive Differentiation

Tata Communications offers a hybrid solution with modular components (e.g., IZO Internet WAN, GVPN, IZO Private Connect, vProxy, SD-WAN, and Bring-Your-Own-Network). Unlike its competitors, the company offers features such as various underlay connectivity options, multiple services/cloud gateways, and highly skilled and trained staff further enhance Tata Communications’ offering. Compared to other players in the market, Tata Communication customers deploying the SD-WAN offering have achieved 25% to 40% cost savings as a result of migrating from a legacy network to a managed SD-WAN network. Another key differentiator is the company’s transition and transformation consultancy practice. The value-added approach provides customers a dedicated team that regularly reviews SD-WAN performance. Tata Communications has also been a leader in undertaking innovations such as advanced performance tracking tools for applications, network (APM-NPM), and overall infrastructure performance management (IPM) for deep-level network diagnostic capabilities. The company has also invested in AI/ML and natural language processing, virtual labs, and network function proximity services (Universal Customer Premises Equipment [uCPE], Network Function Virtualization [NFV]).

Customer Purchase and Ownership Experience

Tata Communications runs various assistance centers in Singapore, Hong Kong, and India (Chennai and Mumbai). The live assistance centers include sales teams that run demos showcasing the company’s SD-WAN capabilities. Tata Communications maintains a strong focus on customer relationships through various assistance centers, dedicated sales teams, and trained support staff that has received various SD-WAN-related certifications. Customers benefit from a dedicated team that is able to support SD-WAN deployments on an ongoing basis and suggest any remedial measures. For example, the company’s certifications include OCSA (an ONF-certified SDN Associate) and MEF (a certificate relating to carrier Ethernet and SD-WAN services). Employees have also obtained Cisco’s highest certifications in routing, switching, security, and data centers, assuring a seamless SD-WAN customer experience. Tata Communications undertakes various learning and development initiatives to ensure its workforce (including the sales and support team and subject matter experts) is fully trained in SD-WAN technology. The company’s staff is also trained in other vendor products, such as Versa and Cisco certifications.

Tata Communications offers customers the benefit of a dedicated team that can review SD-WAN deployments on an ongoing basis, taking corrective measures as required. Clients can also access the virtual lab for on-demand customer proof of concepts, demonstrations, and SD-WAN testing. The information is delivered through cloud architecture and can showcase SD-WAN features through pre-created and scripted sales demos. Such capabilities enhance clients' purchase and ownership experience.

Price/Performance Value

Tata Communications' pricing strategy is competitive, attracting customers despite COVID-19's impact on the market. The company's focuses on supporting its key customers and managing their costs by offering value-based propositions.

Tata Communications' managed SD-WAN service is available via a subscription-based model. Customers pay a monthly or annual recurring charge with the price varying based on hardware selection, service level, and network requirements. Clients can purchase customer premises equipment directly from the original equipment manufacturer. The managed services are priced per its three tiers of service: basic, enhanced, and premium. The service addresses security requirements and bundles basic firewall

functionality with all of the service tiers. Enterprise customers can also select advanced security features or any other value-added services for an additional charge.

The company offers a flexible pricing model that allows customers to onboard new services (e.g., virtualized services and Cloud Connect). Furthermore, the company can deliver cloud access solutions, Internet breakout, WAN optimization, network security, and managed services to deliver a holistic, one-stop WAN solution resulting in considerable operational efficiencies for customers.

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Brand Equity

Tata Communications has traditionally operated as a telecom wholesale service provider. In recent years, it has built various digital solutions to meet the evolving needs of large and small enterprises. Today, the company's IZO SDWAN offering and comprehensive managed services platform are delivered in more than 134 countries and supported by approximately 3,000 highly skilled technical resources. The company has deployed IZO SDWAN services for more than 100 clients and is deployed across verticals, including healthcare, high tech, manufacturing, retail, and utilities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the company has continued to build its brand by engaging with customers by holding virtual webinars, panel discussions, WhatsApp conferences, customer roundtables, and focus group discussions with its target market.

Conclusion

Tata Communications, a leading telecom service provider, continues to advance its position in Asia-Pacific by helping enterprises move towards digital transformation. The company's comprehensive portfolio of managed software-defined wide-area networking (SD-WAN) solutions supports businesses' rapidly growing requirements as they move to the cloud. Tata Communications is creating immense value for the entire ecosystem with its continual focus on innovation and forging strong technology partnerships.

With its strong overall performance, Tata Communications earns Frost & Sullivan's 2021 Competitive Strategy Leadership Award in the Asia-Pacific managed SD-WAN services industry.

What You Need to Know about the Competitive Strategy Leadership Recognition

Frost & Sullivan's Competitive Strategy Leadership Award recognizes the company with a stand-out approach to achieving top-line growth and a superior customer experience.

Best Practices Award Analysis

For the Competitive Strategy Leadership Award, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated the criteria listed below.

Strategy Innovation

Strategy Effectiveness: Effective strategy balances short-term performance needs with long-term aspirations and overall company vision

Strategy Execution: Company strategy utilizes Best Practices to support consistent and efficient processes

Competitive Differentiation: Solutions or products articulate and display unique competitive advantages

Executive Team Alignment: Executive team focuses on staying ahead of key competitors via a unified execution of its organization's mission, vision, and strategy

Stakeholder Integration: Company strategy reflects the needs or circumstances of all industry stakeholders, including competitors, customers, investors, and employees

Customer Impact

Price/Performance Value: Products or services provide the best value for the price compared to similar market offerings

Customer Purchase Experience: Quality of the purchase experience assures customers that they are buying the optimal solution for addressing their unique needs and constraints

Customer Ownership Experience: Customers proudly own the company's product or service and have a positive experience throughout the life of the product or service

Customer Service Experience: Customer service is accessible, fast, stress-free, and high quality

Brand Equity: Customers perceive the brand positively and exhibit high brand loyalty

