

SOLUTION BRIEF

# Leveraging SD-WAN Xpress from Ekinops to improve and secure your Microsoft 365 usage



A key factor of success and acceptance when it comes to Enterprise digitalization is a good customer experience while using SaaS applications and, for enterprise users especially, Microsoft 365 for collaboration and teamwork environment.

Quality of Experience (QoE) therefore needs to be measured, and balanced with general corporate policies and security.

Thanks to Ekinops SD-WAN Xpress, the Enterprise IT teams can easily identify which applications are used in the company and define the best policy to improve their stakeholder experience while preserving security. As such, identifying Microsoft 365 (and others Microsoft services) traffic without performing intrusive analysis by leveraging our embedded SaaS database connected to the Microsoft 365 endpoint API, while granting security is key to enable local traffic egress, get the best experience from Microsoft 365, and improve adoption within the company.

Few additional benefits of SD-WAN Xpress are:

- Aggregation (and/or backup) of WAN connectivity to ensure service continuity and improve overall performance
- Ability to apply Quality of Service and shaping for specific applications, even on direct Internet traffic, such as Microsoft 365

Using such a setup, it becomes easy for IT organization to follow the Microsoft recommended architecture for Microsoft 365 networking.

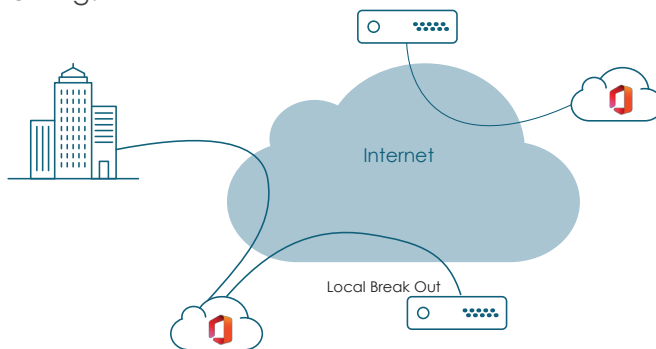


Figure 1 - Use case 1 - Recommended Architecture

Or to the main Customer site for security purposes:

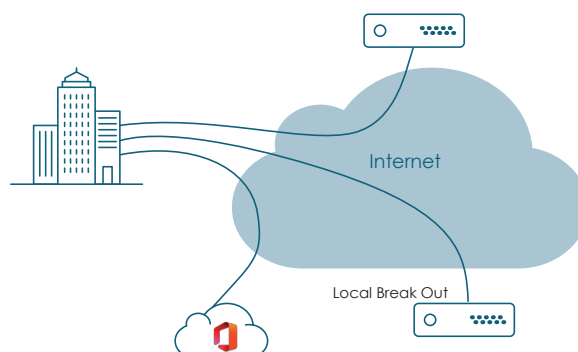


Figure 2 - Use case 2 - Via hub - FW client

Of course, some enterprises may prefer to send Microsoft 365 traffic over a security gateway in the Cloud.

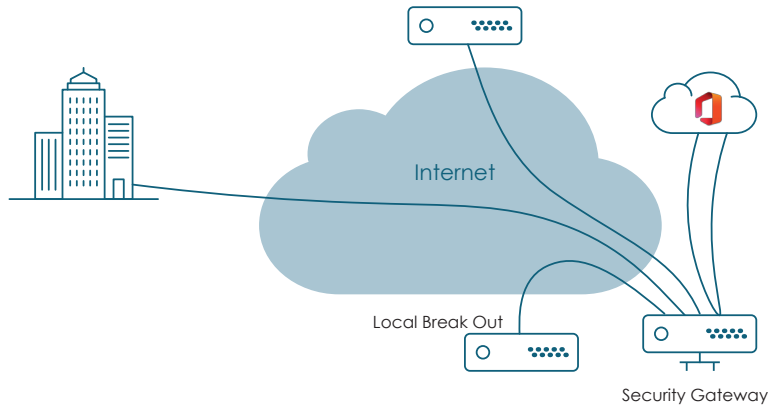


Figure 3 - Use case 3 - Via security gateway (LBO)

All the above mentioned scenarios can be set up easily and are fully supported by Ekinops SD-WAN Xpress. The first scenario is the preferred one in order to reach the best performance and Quality of Experience from Microsoft 365 services. This scenario is also the one successfully tested with Microsoft NPP (Networking Partners Program).

## A real-life example of business application identification with SD-WAN Xpress and Microsoft 365

A leading SaaS provider, Microsoft introduced the “Microsoft Global Network’s Distributed Service Front Door architecture”. Microsoft recommends to ensure Local Egress direct internet network architecture for the best Quality of Experience for employees.

(Additional information can be found on: <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/enterprise/microsoft-365-network-connectivity-principles?view=o365-worldwide>)

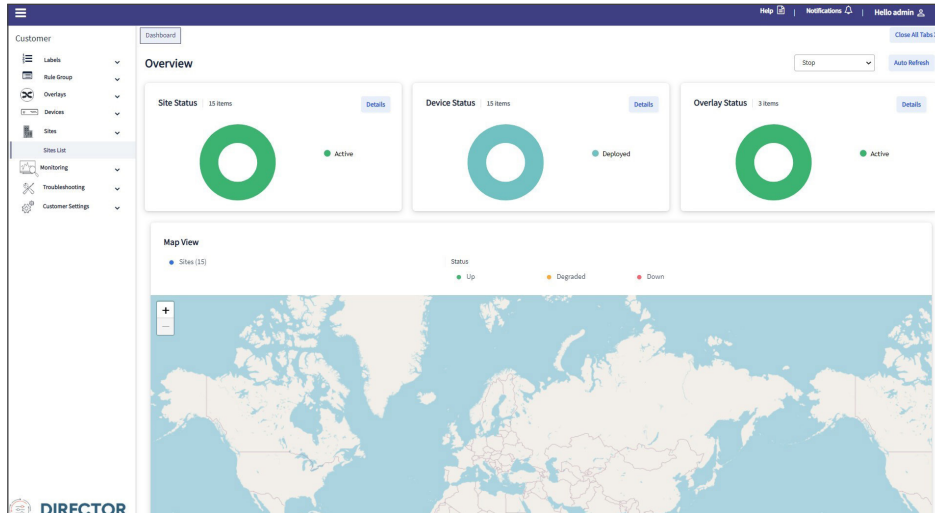
Within the SD-WAN Xpress framework, this translates into 4 simple steps for a customer:

1. Define a “Rule Group” to identify which Microsoft Service you are looking to identify
2. Create an “Internet Local Break out” Overlay: “Microsoft 365 Egress”
3. Assign the “Microsoft Rule Group” to the Overlay
4. Deploy the “Microsoft 365 Egress” on the customer sites

This will take no longer than 3 minutes to set up and deploy.

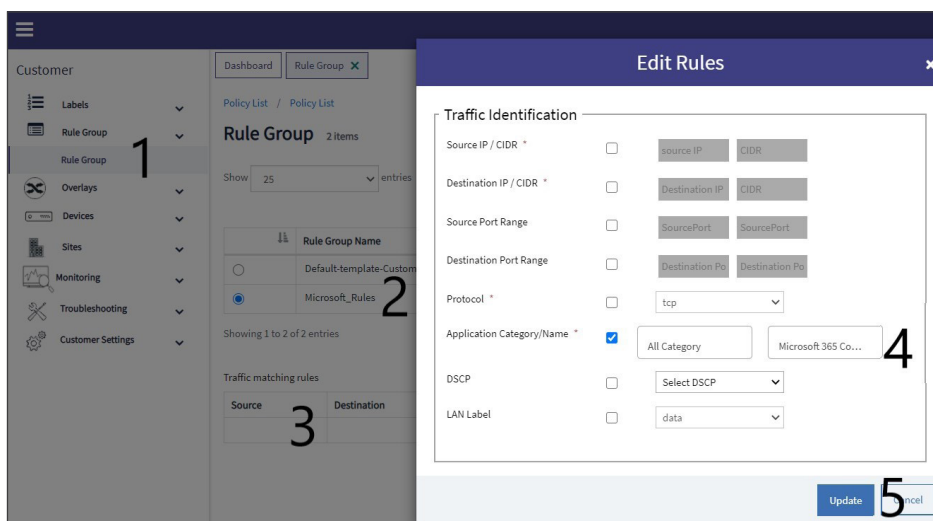
## Deploy a Microsoft local Egress (outbound) rule in less than 20 clicks and 3 minutes

➔ Log into the Ekinops SD-WAN Director (as a Customer)



➔ Define a "Rule Group" to identify which Microsoft Service you are looking to identify

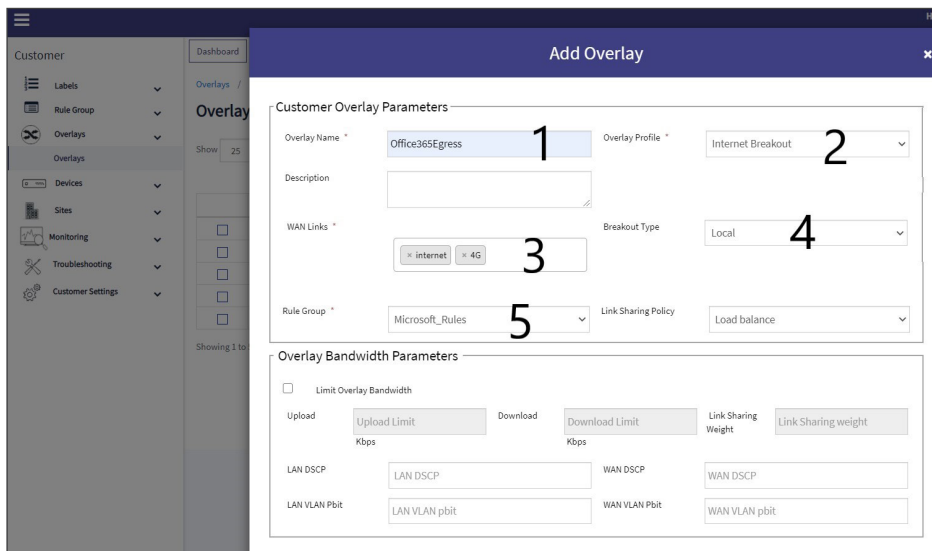
1. Select "Rule Group"
2. Create an overlay (named "Microsoft\_Rules" in this example)
3. Select "Edit" the Rules
4. Enter "Microsoft" in the proper filter and choose which services you need to identify
5. Click "Update" to save this new Rule



➔ Create an “Internet Local Break out” Overlay & Assign the “Microsoft Rule Group” to the Overlay

Select “Overlay” + add (not shown)

1. Enter overlay name
2. Select “Internet Breakout” for “Overlay Profile”
3. Select on which interfaces to send this traffic (“internet”)
4. Select “local” for Breakout Type
5. Select the Rule group created in the previous section “Microsoft\_Rules”
6. Click “Add” to save the Overlay configuration



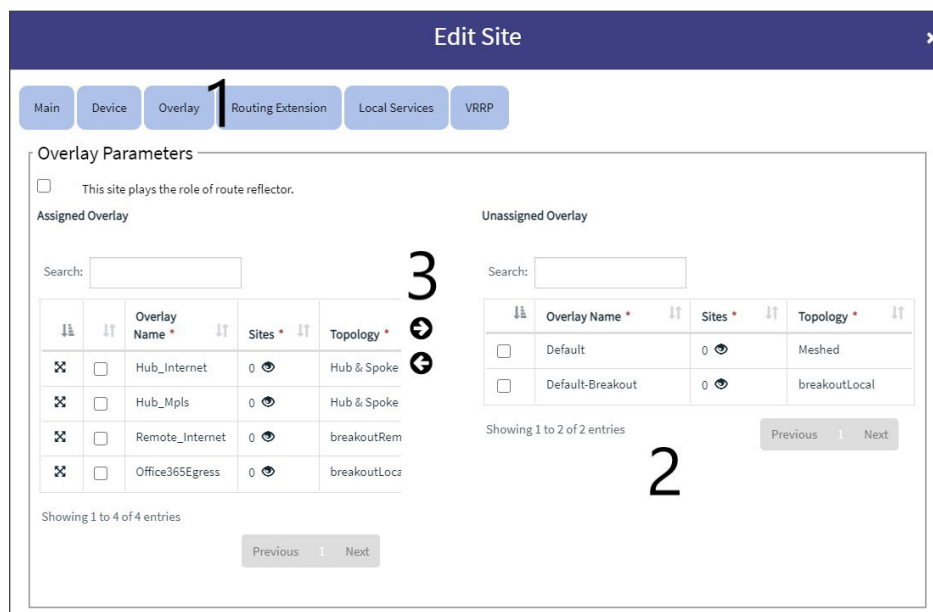
**Note:** The “load sharing policy” defines if the traffic is either:

- Simultaneously sent over interfaces (3) session based enabling link aggregation
- Or set as Active / backup mode for failover scenario

➔ Deploy the “Microsoft 365 Egress” Overlay

Select “Site list” and a site

1. Select the Tab “Overlay”
2. Select the “Microsoft 365 egress” overlay on the unassigned overlay table
3. Use the arrow to assign the overlay to the site
4. Update the configuration to save it and it will be automatically applied to the site



## Conclusion

With SD-WAN Xpress, implementing Traffic identification and Control and business application identification is easy which instantly optimizes business application traffic.

Within minutes, the Microsoft 365 traffic can be sent over the local “internet” interfaces following Microsoft 365 best practice.

Other benefits?

- No SSL inspection = no need to deploy and sustain certificate on end-user device
- No inspection and no traffic encryption means lower latency and lower edge footprint
- Link aggregation allow higher throughput = better QoE
- No need to send Traffic to a Cloud Security Gateway = cheaper solution
- QoE for employees is improved

**Find out more on the benefits of SD-WAN Xpress**  
<https://www.ekinops.com/products-services/products/compose/sd-wan>

## About Ekinops

Ekinops is a leading provider of open and fully interoperable Layer 1, 2 and 3 solutions to service providers around the world. Our programmable and highly scalable solutions enable the fast, flexible and cost-effective deployment of new services for both high-speed, high-capacity optical transport networks and virtualization-enabled managed enterprise services

Our product portfolio consists of three highly complementary product and service sets: EKinops 360, OneAccess and Compose.

- EKinops 360 provides optical transport solutions for metro, regional and long-distance networks with WDM for high-capacity point-to-point, ring and optical mesh architectures, and OTN for improved bandwidth utilization and efficient multi-service aggregation.
- OneAccess offers a wide choice of physical and virtualized deployment options for Layer 2 and Layer 3 access network functions.
- Compose supports service providers in making their networks software-defined with a variety of software management tools and services, including the scalable SD-WAN Xpress.

As service providers embrace SDN and NFV deployment models, Ekinops enables future-proofed deployment today, enabling operators to seamlessly migrate to an open, virtualized delivery model at a time of their choosing.

A global organization, Ekinops (EKI) - a public company traded on the Euronext Paris exchange - operates in 4 continents.

**EKinops360**  
*Dynamic Optical Transport*

**ONEACCESS**  
*Fast Network Virtualization*

 **COMPOSE**