Case study

How Nando's built always-on connectivity across 500 restaurants

ERICSSON

Image courtesy of Nando's

Ericsson's 4G/5G active-active connectivity with cloud management deliver more reliable, secure operations

Customer:
Nando's

Industry:
Retail

Use Case:
Hybrid WAN

Success story highlights

Challenge — Nando's UK operates around 500 restaurants where guest experience depends on reliable connectivity for payments, kitchen IoT, digital ordering, and Wi-Fi. Legacy MPLS and single broadband links caused outages, slow openings, and limited security control, driving the need for resilient, centrally managed networking to support cloud and sensor-driven operations.

Solution — Nando's replaced legacy failover solutions with Ericsson Cradlepoint routers, enabling cellular as a primary or parallel connection. Standardized, zero-touch provisioning and SD-WAN orchestration allowed sites to go live in minutes and shift to an active-active model, intelligently using fixed and cellular networks under central IT control.

Benefits — Always-on connectivity improved availability, keeping payments, WI-FI, and digital services online while boosting customer satisfaction — even when wired lines were unavailable. Centralized management through Ericsson NetCloud Manager reduced field visits and costs, while SD-WAN and in-house security controls strengthened protection, reduced vulnerabilities, and enabled teams to run operations predictably and at scale.

"The combination of reliability, speed, and security has been transformational for us. We're standardizing across 500 restaurants, cutting delays, and giving our teams a predictable platform they can trust."

Stephen Wingrove
Infrastructure Manager, Nando's UK

Background and challenges

Nando's UK operates roughly 500 restaurants across shopping centers, retail parks, cinemas, and supermarkets, all with a single objective: give guests a seamless, reliable experience from the moment they sit down. Delivering that experience depends on a resilient network that supports payment terminals, kitchen IoT (connected ovens, dishwashers, and fridge sensors), digital order flows, and guest Wi-Fi.

Historically, Nando's UK operated on legacy MPLS and single fixed-line broadband circuits. That model left sites vulnerable to long outages, slow broadband replacements (often delayed by planning or civil works), and supplier-managed security that limited control. With rising reliance on cloud apps and in-restaurant sensors, the business needed to own its security posture, reduce downtime, shorten time-to-open for new restaurants, and enable predictable, centrally managed operations.

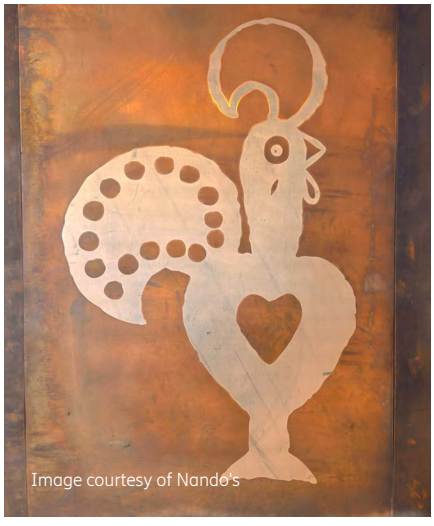
Image courtesy of Nando's

Solution

Nando's replaced legacy 4G failover hardware with Ericsson Cradlepoint routers at pilot sites and validated performance. Where fixed broadband was unreliable or slow to provision, cellular became a viable primary option. Remote router provisioning allowed configurations to download on first power-up, bringing new sites online within minutes.

The team standardized this configuration and rollout process so new circuits could be established centrally and quickly. This enabled restaurants to move from passive failover to an active-active network model. The solution combined enterprise 4G/5G routers, multi-network SIMs (selecting the strongest of four mobile networks), and SD-WAN orchestration so fixed and cellular circuits can be used intelligently and simultaneously.

Key components include:

- Ericsson Cradlepoint routers deployed at the site edge.
- Multi-network SIMs for automatic selection of the best carrier signal.
- SD-WAN overlay to define routing policies by application and priority.
- Ericsson NetCloud Manager for remote diagnostics, device provisioning, and vulnerability scanning.
- Integration with Nando's firewall, switches, and access points under the restaurant IT team's control.

"We see a direct link between the speed and reliability of our broadband and how happy our customers are. If our pay-at-table or guest Wi-Fi slows down, it impacts the whole dining experience."

Stephen Wingrove
Infrastructure Manager, Nando's UK

Outcomes

Higher availability and better customer experience

Active-active connectivity reduced downtime and ensured payment and pay-at-table services stayed online even when a fixed line failed. "We see a tangible relationship between the reliability and speed of our broadband and our customer satisfaction," says Stephen Wingrove, Infrastructure Manager, Nando's UK. Sites that previously experienced speeds below 5 Mbps were quickly upgraded via mobile circuits, improving guest WI-FI and in-restaurant technology performance.

Faster openings and reduced site delays

Where fixed broadband roll-outs were delayed by permissions or civil works, Nando's UK used 4G/5G as a primary connection to open restaurants on schedule. This agility improved time-to-revenue and reduced dependency on slow infrastructure processes.

Lower operational costs and fewer field visits

Centralized remote monitoring and remote reboot capabilities mean many incidents are resolved without sending an engineer on-site. Ericsson NetCloud Manager also allows forced updates and staged patching across sites, reducing MTTR and operational overhead.

Improved security posture

Moving to SD-WAN and bringing firewalls and switches under Nando's ownership enabled tighter, more consistent security policies. Remote vulnerability scanning and patch orchestration have driven endpoint vulnerabilities down to single figures across the estate in recent months.

Organizational impact and culture

Standardizing comms cabinets and cabling has reduced tech debt and made handovers between teams much simpler. The network team now has visibility into devices and can proactively address issues, boosting confidence and giving operations teams predictable tools to manage restaurants.

"Owning our firewalls and switches lets us set our own security policies across the estate. Combined with Ericsson's remote management, we've driven vulnerabilities down to single figures and can patch every site without setting foot in the restaurant," said Wingrove.

Nando's is continuing to reduce tech debt, standardize site builds, and move to cloud-first operations. The roadmap includes rolling out Ericsson's integrated WAN/LAN packages for smaller sites, deeper IoT sensor analytics, and exploring network slicing options from carriers to deliver dedicated SLAs for critical services.

Image courtesy of Nando's

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