Zscaler on Zscaler

Accelerating the Secure M&A Integration of Red Canary

Introduction

Mergers and acquisitions (M&A) are strategic milestones for every enterprise, but often fraught with challenges related to IT integration, security uncertainty, and friction for end users. Leveraging our own Zscaler products, IT successfully integrated Red Canary, showcasing how Zscaler Internet Access (ZIA) and Zscaler Private Access (ZPA) enabled:

- Rapid time-to-value
- Seamless, day-one connectivity for more than 400 Red Canary employees
- Ironclad security through a zero trust framework

By eliminating legacy VPN solutions within the first week and avoiding traditional IT bottlenecks, Zscaler accelerated synergy realization, allowing the newly merged organization to focus on driving growth.

The M&A Challenge:

Time to Value, Security, and User Experience

M&A often brings inherent challenges for IT teams tasked with merging two organizations' networks:

1. **Delayed synergy capture:** Consolidating disparate systems and networks can take months post–merger, delaying the realization of promised business synergies

2. **Unpredictable security posture:** Assessing and ensuring the acquired company's cybersecurity resilience can introduce uncertainty and risk.

3. **User friction:** Legacy systems, such as VPNs or backhauling users to central egress locations, create bottlenecks and detract from employee productivity, especially during the critical initial days post–merger.

Rapid value creation during M&A requires IT leaders to streamline integration efforts while maintaining robust security and delivering exceptional user experiences from Day One.
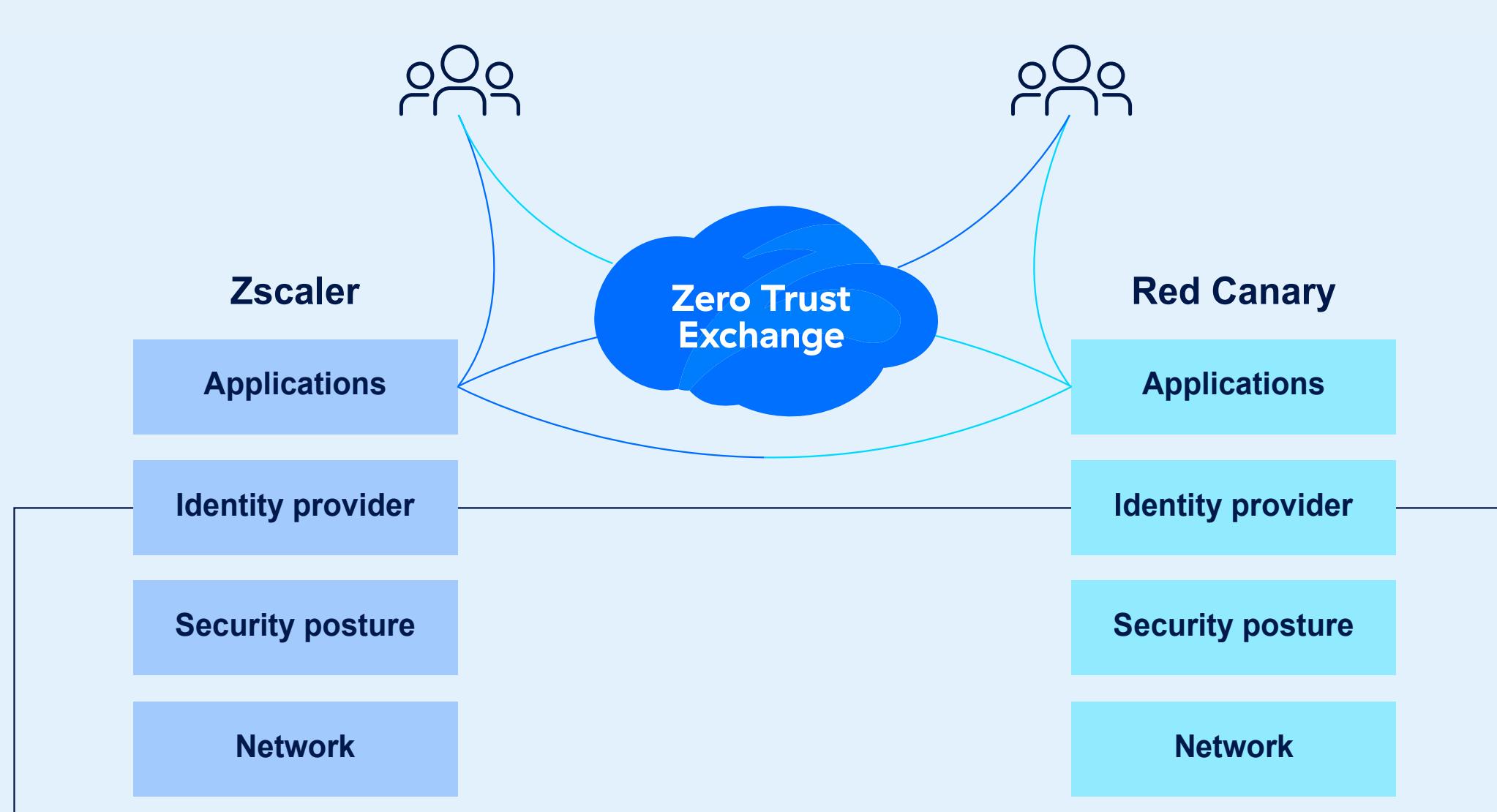

Figure 1: Zscaler removes complexity to facilitate a successful M&A with Day 1 protection and productivity

M&A Timeline

Successful mergers and acquisitions typically involve months of due diligence and planning, followed by lengthy and complex infrastructure integration. However, by leveraging the Zero Trust for Users solution, we achieved complete integration on Day One, significantly accelerating this timeline. Zscaler Internet Access (ZIA) and Zscaler Private Access (ZPA)——both of which are part of Zero Trust for Users——were pivotal in enabling secure access for Red Canary team members.

The Zscaler on Zscaler (ZonZ) team met weekly with the Red Canary's IT teams to formulate a plan for integrating the two companies.

Identifying the crown jewels and planning app connector locations	Deploy app connectors using Terraform in the Red Canary environment	Testing of ZIA, ZPA, in an isolated test environment	Decline role based access controls on all new ZPA flows	Go Live
30 Days prior to close	**21 Days** prior to close	**15 Days** prior to close	**7 Days** prior to close	**Day 1** prior to close
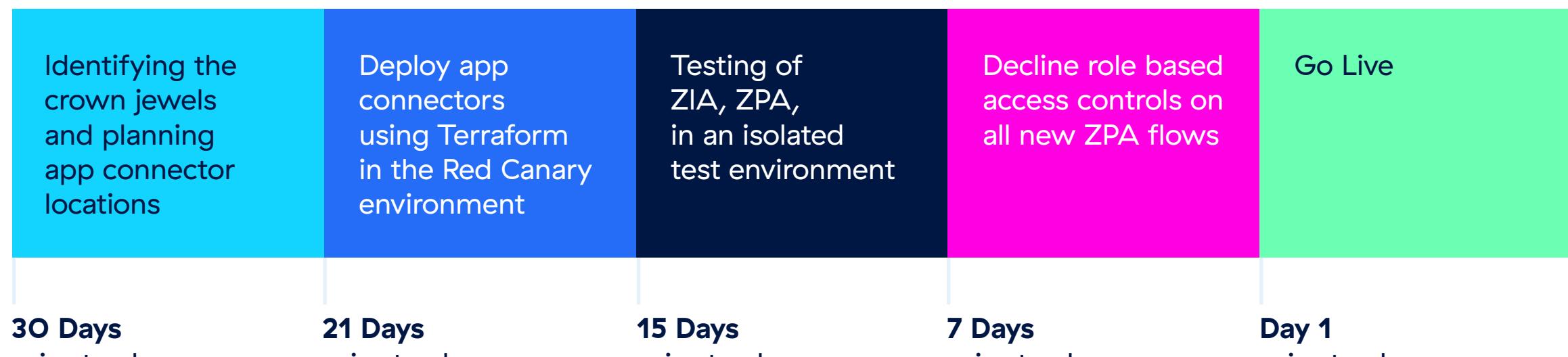
Figure 2: Timeline of events prior to and beyond close date

30 Days Prior to Deal Closure

Identifying the crown jewels and planning App Connector locations: The ZonZ team collaborated closely with Red Canary IT to pinpoint essential business–critical resources and applications to ensure employee productivity and continuous support for Red Canary customers. A key hurdle encountered was addressing the absence of a complete application list and resource inventory, a common issue for many companies. To build a zero trust architecture effectively, the team prioritized identifying and classifying necessary applications while determining user access requirements. Once the ZonZ team compiled a comprehensive list, they began configuring and marking SaaS applications as "sanctioned", then proceeded to build access policies for both ZIA and ZPA. This process ensured Red Canary's crown jewel applications were ready for seamless and secure access on Day One.

21 Days Prior to Deal Closure

Deploy App Connectors using Terraform in the Red Canary environment: The Red Canary IT team, despite having minimal guidance and no previous Zscaler experience, successfully used Terraform templates to deploy App Connectors in their test environments. This hands–on experience not only prepared them for deployment into their production networks once the deal closes, but also streamlined the subsequent testing phase.

15 Days Prior to Deal Closure

Testing ZIA and ZPA in an isolated test environment: The Red Canary team initiated testing of the newly deployed App Connectors in their test environments to confirm expected connectivity. The ZonZ team built out test policies in non–production test tenants. This involved using test laptops with Zscaler Client Connector (ZCC) and test accounts.

They also tested ZIA, to prevent any user issues with SSL inspection, the dev tool teams installed and used their tools, ensuring a seamless day-one experience. This real-world testing led ZonZ to add new sanctioned applications and implement necessary SSL bypasses.

7 Days Prior to Deal Closure

Define role-based access controls on all new ZPA flows: Once the Red Canary team was assured that Zscaler's platform could provide immediate employee access as a seamless replacement for their VPN on Day One, ZonZ began drafting ZPA policies. These policies were designed using placeholder Identity Provider (IdP) groups, ensuring that connectivity was ready and fully functional from the very first day of integration.

Day One and Beyond

Go live: The Zscaler IT team successfully deployed ZCC, ZIA, ZDX, and ZPA to every Red Canary laptop. User accounts were created within the IdP and assigned to the appropriate groups in ZPA policies. The Red Canary team deployed the App Connectors in their production environments, facilitating a seamless onboarding experience. This approach allowed more than 400 Red Canary users to gain secure, high-speed access to mission-critical systems on Day One—without experiencing bottlenecks or latency issues. The Zscaler platform enabled the newly integrated team to maintain uninterrupted productivity, emphasizing the vital role seamless IT integration plays in the success of mergers and acquisitions.

Following the first day of integration, the IT team delivered a three week of hypercare support to assist newly onboarded employees as they transitioned. During this period, the focus was on educating users about remote access processes and eliminating reliance on legacy connectivity methods. Insights and feedback gathered during this phase have enhanced the team's ability to communicate and implement changes efficiently, further optimizing processes for future M&A activities.

Security and Networking Benefits

Day-One Security: Hardening the Red Canary Environment

One of the critical challenges in mergers and acquisitions is establishing a secure operational framework immediately after the merger, especially before networks are fully integrated. Zscaler's IT including the ZonZ teams ensured robust, day-one security for Red Canary by implementing comprehensive protections, leveraging existing standardized security policies across both organizations. Key measures included:

- **Removed implicit trust:** Zscaler adopted zero trust principles from Day One. Instead of trusting the new network or users by default, ZIA and ZPA required users and applications to authenticate before gaining access and assessed user and device risk posture. This eliminated security gaps often present during M&A processes, ensuring that Red Canary's environment was hardened against potential threats.

- **Unified security policy:** The same enterprise-grade security policies already protecting our Zscaler on Zscaler environment were seamlessly applied to Red Canary employees from Day One. Uniform implementation covered aspects such as URL filtering, data loss prevention (DLP), SSL inspection, and cloud access security broker (CASB), protecting users whether accessing SaaS applications, web resources, or internal data.

- **Reduced the attack surface:** Improved security posture by reducing overly permissive access policies, narrowing excessively large TCP and UDP port ranges to only a few commonly used ones.

- **Instant visibility for SOC, SIRT, and IT:** The Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange empowers IT, security operations centers (SOCs), and incident response teams with instant visibility, robust security integrity, and enhanced operational performance——ensuring seamless and scalable onboarding from Day One. Zscaler Internet Access (ZIA) delivers comprehensive insights into user activity and network traffic, enabling SOC and security incident response teams (SIRTs) to swiftly identify threats and enforce security policies. Simultaneously, Zscaler Digital Experience (ZDX) provides IT teams with critical visibility into user experience, device health, and network performance, allowing for proactive issue resolution and optimized efficiency.

By leveraging our existing security policies and tools, Red Canary's users were protected immediately, avoiding vulnerabilities that often surface during IT transitions in M&A.

Simplified Networking:
Avoiding Complex IP Routing and Overlapping Private Subnets

Integrating traditional IT infrastructure during an acquisition often involves resolving complex IP routing issues, such as overlapping private IP subnets or trying to merge two distinct network architectures. Zscaler on Zscaler effectively removed these concerns from the equation by leveraging our cloud-native platform instead of relying on traditional network-centric approaches.

Key benefits included:

- **Eliminated complex IP routing:** Bypassing the need for intricate network convergence or IP route adjustments. By enabling secure point-to-point access through ZPA, we avoided time-consuming configuration or re-architecting of IP-based systems.

- **Independence from overlapping private subnets:** In scenarios where both organizations might use overlapping IP ranges (e.g., 192.168.x.x networks), Zscaler's architecture allowed each company to maintain its existing private subnets without reconfiguration. Red Canary employees connected directly to applications without the need to integrate underlying networks——a significant headache avoided.

- **Cloud native scaling:** By leveraging Zscaler's Zero Trust Exchange cloud platform, cross-organizational connectivity was handled at the application layer rather than the network layer, which vastly simplified the integration process while delivering secure and scalable connectivity.

Business Impact

Mergers and acquisitions demand fast, seamless IT integration to fully realize business synergies; however, traditional methods often introduce significant complexity, security risks, and user disruptions. Zscaler's IT integration during its acquisition of Red Canary demonstrated the power of a cloud native zero trust platform to deliver immediate operational efficiencies, strengthened security, and an exceptional user-centric experience. By leveraging Zscaler Internet Access (ZIA), Zscaler Private Access (ZPA), and Zscaler Digital Experience (ZDX), the integration was completed in less than one week—far surpassing traditional timelines that can take months.

This accelerated integration enabled day-one productivity for all 400 Red Canary users, eliminated reliance on outdated technologies like VPNs, and simplified IT workflows, unlocking substantial value across three core dimensions:

Value creation: The rapid integration timeline allowed Zscaler to accelerate synergy realization, enabling Red Canary's employees to focus on driving growth from Day One. Eliminating downtime provided weeks of additional operational time compared to traditional approaches, directly contributing to incremental revenue opportunities and business productivity.

Value capture: Zscaler's cloud native approach reduced costs by eliminating the need for legacy VPN hardware, MPLS deployments, new DMZ/Extranet capacity, complex network reconfigurations, and prolonged IT labor. The avoidance of overlapping private subnet conflicts and unnecessary hardware scaling further minimized operational expenses, significantly lowering the cost of IT integration.

Value preservation: By implementing a zero trust security framework from Day One, Zscaler reduced Red Canary's attack surface, mitigated lateral movement risks, and maintained a robust security posture during a critical M&A period. Standardized security policies, instant visibility for IT and security teams, and comprehensive data protection helped avoid security incidents that could otherwise result in millions of dollars in damages, ensuring both operational continuity and long-term risk reduction.

From achieving day-one productivity to enabling fast, cost-effective integration without sacrificing security, Zscaler's transformative approach redefines the standard for M&A success. By accelerating IT integration, eliminating complexity, and enhancing security and user experiences, the Zscaler platform delivers rapid time-to-value, ensuring agility, operational excellence, and sustained growth.

TRADITIONAL M&A APPROACH	ZSCALER-OPTIMIZED M&A APPROACH
VPN-based access with increased attack surface and lateral movement risk	Day One integration with a zero trust approach of connecting users to apps
Overlapping subnets requiring network fixes	Cloud native application access allows each company to maintain its existing private subnets without reconfiguration
Bottlenecks and delays impact user productivity	Immediate productivity for users on Day One
Higher costs from IT labor and hardware	Reduced cost through efficient integration and elimination of many security and networking hardware
Elevated risk to cyberthreats and elongated deployment (months) limiting business value	Provided secure cross company access shortly after closing (hours), enabling business integration to occur on Day One, while maximizing current IT investment

Conclusion

The Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange transformed the integration of Red Canary, delivering immediate productivity, security, and simplicity during a typically challenging M&A process. By leveraging ZIA and ZPA, Zscaler on Zscaler achieved rapid results:

- **Accelerated integration:** Completed in less than one week, far outpacing traditional M&A IT timelines.
- **Frictionless user experience:** Red Canary employees accessed internal and SaaS applications securely with no disruptions or latency issues.
- **Strengthened security posture:** Red Canary's environment was segmented and monitored for threats from Day One, ensuring robust protection.
- **Efficient system transition:** Legacy VPN systems were decommissioned immediately, enabling faster, more secure access with improved controls.

Zscaler's cloud native approach redefines M&A integration by delivering secure, seamless connectivity while accelerating time-to-value. The successful onboarding of Red Canary employees demonstrates how Zscaler's zero trust solution empowers organizations to eliminate IT bottlenecks, mitigate risks, and ensure operational excellence at scale. This integration sets a new standard for efficient and secure mergers.

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Zero Trust Everywhere