Competitive Battlecard: Remote WorkForce ZTNA vs. NordLayer

Target Audience

Primary

Managed Service Providers (MSPs) serving small to medium businesses (SMBs)

Secondary

IT decision-makers at SMBs seeking cost-effective, purpose-built ZTNA solutions

Use Case

Organizations needing secure remote access with pure ZTNA simplicity, not SASE platform complexity or feature bloat

Key Differentiators -- Why Remote WorkForce ZTNA Wins

Category	Remote WorkForce ZTNA (Winner)	NordLayer (Disadvantage)
Ease of Use	• Simple, clean UI designed for non-technical admins • Intuitive setup wizards • No specialized security training required • Purpose-built for businesses without dedicated security teams • Easy “flip the switch” capability to go from cloud-based VPN to full ZTNA	• Over-engineered for typical SMB needs • Feature-rich management interface with steeper learning curves • Requires understanding of SASE framework concepts • More complex for admins without security background
Deployment Time	• Deploys in hours with minimal configuration • No specialized hardware requirements • Quick MSP onboarding • Immediate productivity	• SASE framework adds deployment complexity • Often takes days to configure properly • Requires understanding multiple security modules • Extended time-to-value for SMBs

Remote WorkForce VPN/ZTNA

Category	Remote WorkForce ZTNA (Winner)	NordLayer (Disadvantage)
Cost for SMBs	• **Transparent all-inclusive pricing** • All features included • No tier upgrades or feature gates • No minimum user requirements • No hidden costs	• **Premium tier required** for core business features • Four-tier pricing model (Basic, Advanced, Premium, Ultimate) • Essential features locked behind higher tiers • Upgrade pressure as needs grow • Budget unpredictability with tier-based model
Contracting	• Simple per user/month pricing • No contracts, minimums or fixed costs • Month-to-month flexibility • Scale up/down instantly • Cancel anytime without penalties	• Annual contracts for best pricing • Tier-based model creates upgrade complexity • Less flexibility to adjust mid-contract • Upgrade costs can surprise budget planning
Focus	• **100% pure ZTNA**, optimized exclusively for SMB needs • Laser-focused on 10-250 user organizations • Purpose-built solution, no feature bloat • Right-sized functionality for businesses without full-time security teams	• **SASE platform approach** with unnecessary complexity for SMB core needs • Broad market strategy (small teams to enterprise) means compromise • Many features SMBs don't need or use • Over-engineered with SASE framework overhead
MSP Friendliness	• Native multi-tenant architecture built from ground up • MSP cost makes channel partnerships highly profitable • Simple client management across portfolios • Easy white-labeling options • MSP-first business model	• Multi-tenancy available but not core focus • Direct sales priority over channel partnerships • Less profitable pricing structure for MSPs • Partner program geared toward multiple market segments
Support	• Direct MSP support with quick onboarding • Dedicated SMB-focused training • Responsive technical assistance • Support team understands SMB constraints	• Support model serves multiple market segments • Less SMB-specific expertise • Longer resolution times reported by some SMBs

Category	Remote WorkForce ZTNA (Winner)	NordLayer (Disadvantage)
Visibility & Control	• Straightforward group-based access policies • Zero lateral movement by default • Simple policy management for non-security experts • Clear, actionable dashboards	• SASE framework adds policy complexity • Multiple security modules to coordinate • Requires more security expertise to configure properly • Overly-complicated for SMB needs
Architecture	• Clean, modern architecture • Purpose-designed for zero trust access	• SASE framework adds unnecessary layers • More complex under the hood than SMBs require

Sales Positioning Statements

For MSPs:

"While NordLayer serves a broad market from small teams to enterprises with a SASE platform approach, Remote WorkForce ZTNA is purpose-built exclusively for MSPs serving SMBs. You get pure ZTNA security without SASE complexity, feature bloat, or tier-based pricing games. No tier upgrades. No surprises. Just simple, effective ZTNA that works."

For SMBs:

"NordLayer assumes you need a full SASE platform and have the expertise to manage it. Remote WorkForce ZTNA delivers pure zero-trust network access sized right for your business – simple to manage, quick to deploy, and priced transparently with all features included. No tier-based upgrade pressure. No feature gates."

ROI Positioning

"While NordLayer requires Premium tier just to get the features SMBs actually need – plus the complexity of managing a SASE platform – Remote WorkForce ZTNA delivers complete pure ZTNA functionality with no tiers, no gates, and no contracts. Your security investment is transparent, predictable, and profitable from day one."

Objection Handling

"We need the full SASE stack, not just ZTNA"

Response: "That's exactly the trap NordLayer's positioning creates – convincing SMBs they need full SASE platform complexity. Our research shows 90% of SMBs only need core ZTNA capabilities. Why pay for and manage a SASE framework you don't need? Remote WorkForce ZTNA focuses on pure ZTNA done exceptionally well. Start with what you actually need today without platform bloat."

Competitive Intelligence Notes

NordLayer Pricing Reality:

- Basic tier insufficient for business needs
- Advanced tier still lacks critical features
- **Premium tier required** to access company networks, device posture
- Enterprise tier for highest security
- Four-tier model creates upgrade pressure and budget complexity

Remote WorkForce ZTNA Advantages:

- Simplified pricing - with all features included
- Excellent partner margins
- No tiers, no feature gates, no upgrade pressure
- Month-to-month flexibility with instant scaling
- Sweet spot: 10-200 users where pure ZTNA focus, simplicity, and transparent cost matter most

Next Steps

Contact your account executive to position Remote WorkForce ZTNA against NordLayer's SASE complexity and tier-based pricing model. Win with pure ZTNA simplicity, MSP-first channel economics, and transparent all-inclusive pricing.