

## Bridging the Digital Rift with Federos

By: Scott St. John

When was the last time you went to a mall? Or went into a bank to withdraw money or even make a deposit? How long has it been since you got your daily news from an actual newspaper? How many years has it been since you used a pay phone or even a landline? Better yet, when was the last time your kids untethered themselves from their devices to go outside and play? I'm willing to bet that, like for me, it's been a while. Digital transformation isn't changing the world, it *has changed* the world.

Fight it though you may, there is no avoiding it and no going back. And I can't think of a single industry impacted more than telecommunications. When you think about it, it wasn't that long ago when a switchboard operator manually connected a call from point to point, using a physical switchboard and connection cable. Now, not only is the switchboard a thing of the past, so is the operator. Both have ultimately been replaced by virtual software and end-to-end automation.



## The Great Digital Rift

This shift is just one manifestation of the seismic transformation that continues to take place in the telecommunications industry. But today, telecom companies are peering over a great, digital rift. This divide lies between the many point-product solutions, legacy systems and tools that have served service providers well for decades, and mounting pressures to achieve greater agility, scale, efficiency, zero downtime, and hitless updates.

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Legacy systems, the multitude of disparate systems, and even our own human capacity can't meet these demands—or manifest success. Humans, in all our glory, simply can't keep up using outdated methods. To bridge the great digital rift, simplicity and automation are imperative, and are essential to survival as an explosion of future technologies looms in the not-too-distant future.

These technologies – such as 5G, cloud, IoT, and network virtualization – offer enormous promise but add enormous complexity. A complexity that's rife with data. This vast and constantly expanding universe of data presents a wealth of information as well as opportunity for innovation.

Bridging the rift enables service providers to immediately and efficiently address network demands and service issues; create new, innovative tools and technologies; and deliver exceptional customer experiences in ways that build true and lasting loyalty. Taken together, these are some of the most important keys to success and bridging the digital divide.

The future, and likely your future, may rest with the ability to bridge this divide. To put this into perspective, imagine yourself in a self-driving car and a connectivity or quality of service issue occurs. There is simply no time or place for manual intervention. And this case is only one of many new use cases facing the industry today. Extreme as that case may be, it's becoming a reality along with the demand for other advanced services and the need for new networking technology. To evolve, we must bridge the rift between the tools and systems of yesterday, the demands of today, and the systems of tomorrow. Failing to do so condemns you to the same fate as the old switchboard and operator.

## The Federos Future

*Pipeline* recently had the opportunity discuss bridging this rift with Federos' CEO David Knight. Federos is a leading provider of next-generation, unified service management solutions that help its customers—service providers, managed service providers, and financial services enterprises—better meet the challenges of shifting from legacy systems to meeting the demands of the future.

“Operational executives are realizing that 'another tool' doesn't solve their problems,” says Knight. “They need to simplify their environment, and provide an end-to-end view of services across all the domains the service provider has in place.”

Knight goes on to explain that many of the tools and solutions service providers have in place today were built in the '90s or later, and each was designed to solve a very specific problem. He says this approach won't work as new technologies continue to advance to meet the constant change. He goes on to explain that their customers' new services span both new and legacy domains, and there is a need to have a single interface and a “single source of truth” to provide an end-to-end view of services.

“Customers of ours like, like Eir in Ireland, have been able to reduce to reduce their response time, with fewer resources, reduce their resolution time by having in place one location to understand where the problem is, what's causing it, and what they need to resolve.”

Federos' award-winning products collect information from both virtualized and legacy (e.g. switch) environments so that service providers can look across all domains, explore the underlying topology, identify where the problems really are, and examine the cause and effect of events and issue that are impacting services.

## Making Virtualization a Reality

Federos has also deployed a solution with Ericsson and Verizon that provides service assurance for enterprise customers with a closed-loop management for virtual network functions (VNFs)—the first solution in the industry to be production-ready and fully support and automate network function virtualizations (NFV) initiatives for business transformation.

The solution features closed-loop service assurance with zero-touch automation and validation, a single source of truth, automated business processes; and automated service provisioning, orchestration and assurance from customer order, service instantiation, to decommission. All changes are handled in real-time via automated system-to-system communications. In addition, BPM workflows include both automated and human validation steps. System-to-system APIs allow changes to be shared in real-time between order management, customer management, inventory, orchestration, provisioning, incident management and service assurance.

“This is a very unique approach to service assurance,” Knight comments. “Federos is providing a platform that aggregates information from legacy, cloud, and virtual domains and enabling end-to-

end service assurance to monitor SLAs so if an issue, update, or event is triggered, further action can be taken automatically.” But making virtual network technologies a reality is just the beginning of bridging the digital rift.

“As you begin to think about the application of analytics, AI, machine learning, and end-to-end automation, you must have one place for this information to live,” adds Knight.

Federos products include full automation for many of the events that require intervention today, such as in the example above. However, the company is also partnering with companies like Arago to leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) to deliver new use cases later this year. Like its customers, Federos is continuing to evolve its products and company to meet the demands of the future by helping simplify service management, improve the customer experience, and increase operational efficiency.

## Transforming a Monolith

Federos is uniquely suited to both understand and embrace that challenge but underwent its own transformation to keep up with its customers’ evolving needs. Founded originally as Monolith software, it operated under that name for a decade. In November 2017, it rebranded as Federos. That rebrand signified more than a name change.

“We wanted to reestablish ourselves as a trusted guide to help solve [our customers’] service-management needs and address service assurance needs in future—and move them off the monolithic and legacy solutions they have been dependent on for decades. That started with changing our own identity,” Knight told *Pipeline*.

In addition to rebranding itself and its products, Federos acquired new assets to better serve its customers. Its Assure1 and Fusion1 software provide unified service management, analytics, unified visualization, workflow automation, and a contextual dashboard. Federos also expanded its footprint in the UK and North America as well as its ecosystem of reliable and trusted partners to grow its presence in particular verticals.

This repositioning and expanded portfolio better equip Federos to help its customers transform operations by creating an agile service assurance environment more ideally suited to meeting the demands of today’s constantly changing service, network, and technology landscape.

## Guiding across the rift

In today’s digital world, change is the only constant. And, the pace of change is constantly accelerating. The legacy tools many telecom enterprises—and other businesses—operate with aren’t prepared to help them bridge the rift between where they were and where they need to go.

Simplifying the service management environment comes with many pluses. It reduces the cost of running end-to-end managed hybrid services and eliminates the need to manage repetitive tasks currently handled by skilled employees. In addition, simplification can accelerate service revenue and improve the customer experience and onboard and manage physical and virtualized services in a single interface. End-to-end visualization can provide context to and enrich operational data.

Modernizing the operational environment to handle today’s—as well as tomorrow’s—demands is an imperative. This shift reduces complexity and increases efficiency, and it reduces the risk of following the fate of the fabled switchboard operator. Companies like Federos are there to be a trusted advisor and guide, to help enterprises cross over the great, digital rift by harnessing the power of legacy domains and coupling that with the promise and opportunities of the future.