



www.pipelinepub.com

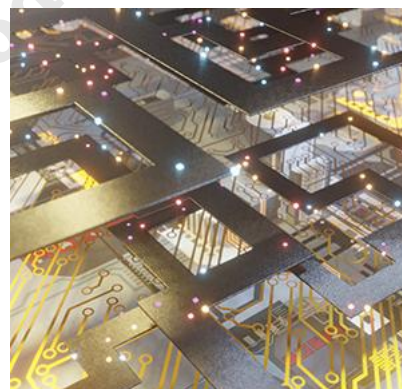
Volume 21, Issue 12

How CSPs can Rethink Network Optimisation in the Age of Complexity

By: [Martin Saunders](#)

CSPs are having to integrate a broad spectrum of technologies - from legacy infrastructure to virtualised systems and cloud-native applications. This is leading to an increasingly complex environment that often obscures how individual services are performing and makes efficient management a growing challenge.

This article explores how a hybrid approach to network evolution, while necessary, has created new blind spots in operational visibility. With multiple systems operating side-by-side, first-line support teams frequently struggle with inconsistent user interfaces and fragmented performance data.



But there's a solution gaining traction: unified network observability through a single, centralised portal that can be shared across both a provider and their customers to deliver significant benefits to both.

End-to-end visibility across an organisation's entire infrastructure can lead to streamlined support workflows, faster incident resolution, improved service performance analysis and data-driven decision-making at the executive level.

Streamlined support workflows

CSPs frequently begin by offering customers a unified view of their network's performance, often as part of a broader managed service package. Over time, many CSPs soon discover that adopting this same technology internally can significantly enhance their own support workflows and operational efficiency.

A common scenario is when a user experiences degraded performance during a business-critical task such as participating in a Microsoft Teams video call. The user depends on their provider for everything, such as hosted telephony, conferencing and collaboration services, all applications that place heavy demands on network quality.

When performance issues occur, the cause is not always immediately clear. Users rarely know whether the problem stems from their device, their local network or the service itself. This lack of visibility leads to a reactive support cycle, user frustration and a surge of support tickets.

Unified network observability transforms this situation by delivering real-time, actionable insights into both network and service performance. It enables users and local support teams alike to perform quick, informed diagnostics without needing specialised expertise. So rather than default to escalation, users such as a branch manager can consult straightforward dashboards or follow guided troubleshooting steps to help pinpoint the problem. They might discover, for example, that local Wi-Fi interference or a disconnected webcam is the real issue, or conversely, confirm that the broader network or service is at fault.

This approach offers two advantages. First, it significantly reduces the number of support tickets generated. Second, when a problem does need escalation, both the customer and the CSP's support team have access to the same transparent data. This shared visibility minimises back-and-forth communication, speeds up resolution and reduces blame-shifting between network and application teams.

Faster incident resolution

With unified network observability in place, both the customer's IT team and the CSP benefit. The provider receives support tickets that are already backed with actionable data, eliminating the need to repeat diagnostic steps. Most importantly, with both sides working from the same source of truth, there's no ambiguity about whether an issue is real or where it lies within the infrastructure. The CSP can save time and avoid the inefficiencies of repeated troubleshooting or blame-shifting between network and application layers.

Another important advantage is that the information presented through an observability platform is accessible and understandable to non-technical staff. Support teams can interpret the simple metrics and status indicators themselves, reducing their reliance on highly specialised network engineers. Instead, first-line support teams can handle initial issues with people who excel in communication, empathy and customer service skills. This makes it easier to build responsive support teams without the constant challenge of hiring certified network engineers for every role.

Improved service performance analysis

Network observability plays a critical role in enhancing service performance analysis. At the end of each month or quarter, report production for service reviews can be prepared in a fraction of the time. And the shared dashboards with a clear account of how the network and services have performed foster a far more conversational approach since customers are engaged throughout the support process. They no longer see the relationship as purely transactional; instead, they begin to feel they are in a more of a partnership.

Now instead of relying on anecdotal reports or reactive explanations, service providers can present clear evidence of what happened, why it happened and what steps were taken in response.

Data-driven decision-making

Beyond issue resolution, this data-driven approach supports smarter decision-making about future investments. Observability may reveal areas where additional network capacity is needed, or it might indicate opportunities to optimise resources and redirect capital or operational spending for better efficiency. Rather than basing these decisions on assumptions or isolated incidents, they are made using real and actionable insights.

Data-driven decision-making also transforms how organisations approach network upgrades by shifting conversations away from subjective feelings to objective evidence. Instead of relying on statements like "I feel my network isn't performing" or "users keep complaining," the discussion

becomes grounded in concrete data that shows exactly where and how the network is performing or not. This clarity helps remove ambiguity and emotional bias, making it easier to focus on facts rather than perceptions.

With shared data, there is also an opportunity to move away from adversarial relationships between service providers and customers toward ones built on openness and trust. By providing transparent and data-backed information, providers can foster collaboration rather than conflict.

The overall goal is to prevent issues from occurring in the first place, and when tickets are raised, to ensure they contain meaningful and accurate information. Since prevention is better than cure, keeping everyone along the support chain well-informed ensures each person understands the situation clearly and can act effectively.

This is also where multi-tenancy becomes vital by allowing access to be carefully tailored based on roles and responsibilities. For instance, a user in a branch office only sees information relevant to their location. A regional manager can access data across their region, while the customer's central team oversees all locations. At the highest level, the CSP can view all data relating to each customer. This hierarchy ensures that no one sees information they don't need, preventing distractions and maintaining focus on relevant details.

Next steps

Given the complexity of modern technology, it's important to recognise that failure at some point is inevitable. What matters most is the clarity and simplicity of communication when things go wrong. No system is immune to component failures, but by openly addressing issues and communicating precisely what's happening, organisations can manage incidents efficiently and maintain trust.

Looking ahead, service providers need to embrace this mindset of openness, transparency and partnership with their customers. None of the benefits of collaboration and observability will materialise if providers are hesitant to share the information customers need out of fear that it might reflect poorly on them. Unfortunately, some providers still operate with this defensive mentality, often choosing opacity because they worry that customers will use their transparency as leverage against them. Overcoming this requires a cultural shift that starts from the top, generating an environment where openness is valued and encouraged.

CSPs can start this process by seeing themselves not just as technology companies, but as service organisations. What truly matters is how they respond and support customers when problems occur. The focus moves from blaming technology failures to delivering excellent service and effective problem resolution.

This change in mindset means customers measure CSPs not by the absence of faults but by the quality and responsiveness of their support when things go wrong. It's a fundamental cultural shift that CSPs must embrace because it underpins long-term success.

At the heart of this transformation lies the importance of relationships. Being a service organisation means valuing and nurturing customer relationships as the foundation of everything you do. It's not just about the technical infrastructure or the specific products being sold, it's about the trust and partnership that develops through consistent, transparent communication and reliable support.