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PIPELINE / VOLUME 22 / ISSUE 4

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Accelerating
**AUTONOMOUS
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TRENDS

RF COVERAGE
FOR NEXT-GEN IoT

PERVASIVE MOBILE
CONNECTIVITY

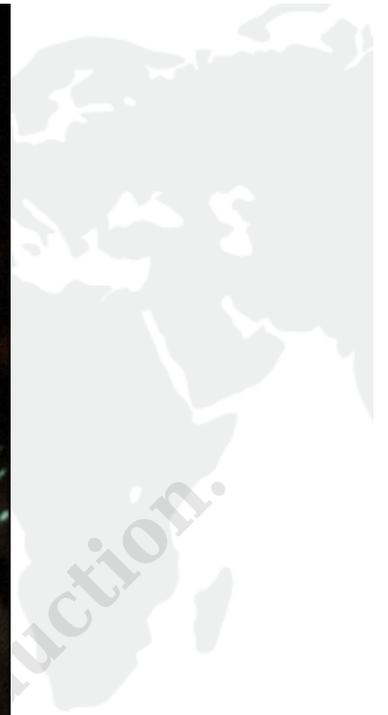
5G SA & AI-NATIVE 6G
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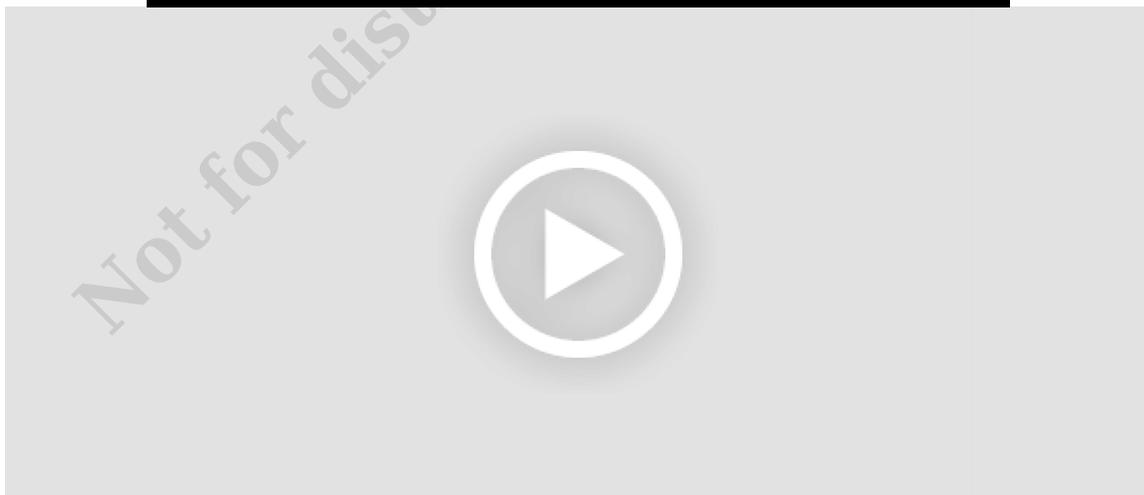
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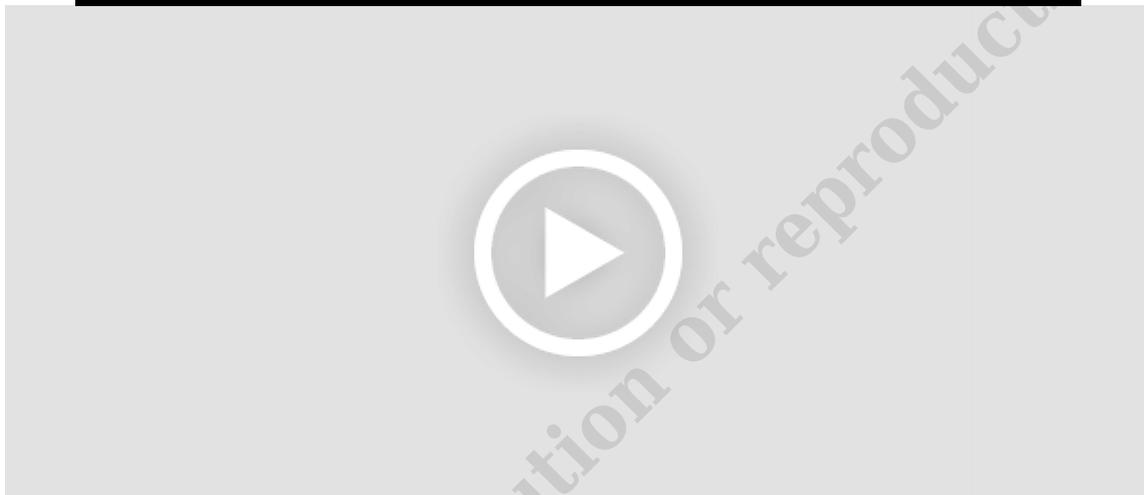
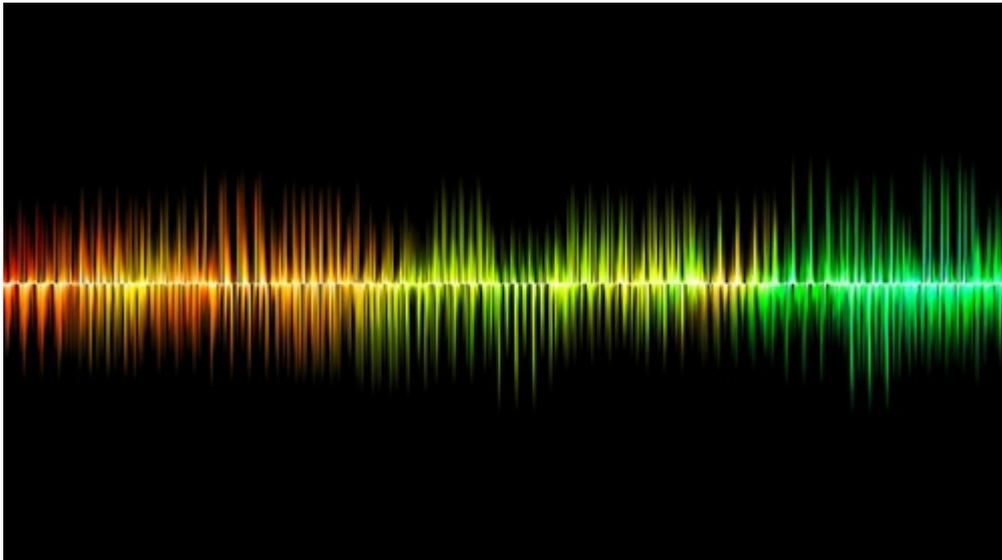
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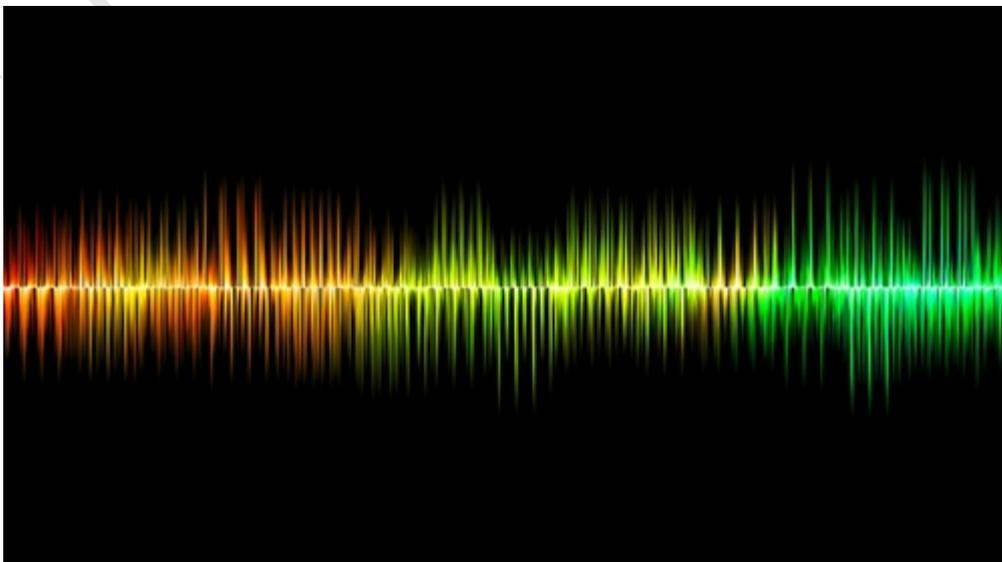
End-to-End Solutions for Broadband Networks

In case you missed Lindsay Broadband - a division of Technetix group at the SCTE Cable-Tec Expo, this video highlights the must-have, end-to-end solutions for your network.



Predicting Colonial Pipeline: Mitigating Risk and Compliance

Mitigating risk and compliance for lawful intercept using lawful intelligence is explored in this Pipeline article feature SS8. Learn how CSPs can comply with lawful intercept regulation, while empowering law information with critical, real-time data.





Podcast: The Evolution to 6G

The world's eyes are already looking forward to the potential of 6G. Demands resulting from innovative use cases, for instance specific requirements from different industries and other user groups, as well as overarching goals like sustainability, are driving the standardization and development of mobile technologies.

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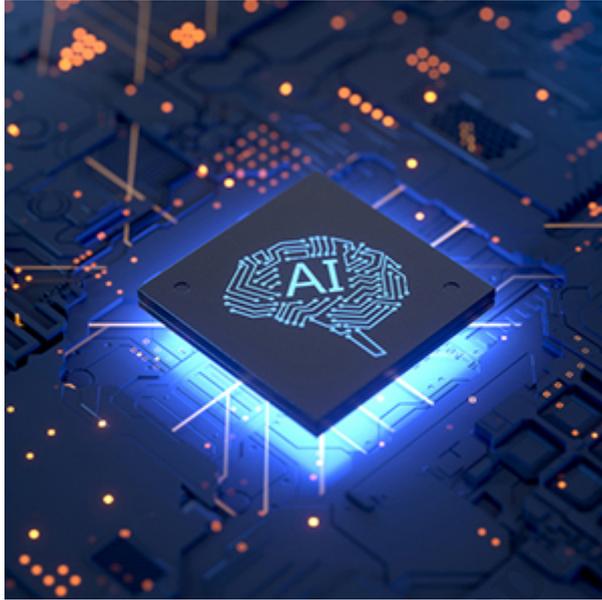
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THE LOW-LATENCY SERVICES MARKET:

Evaluating the Emerging Market Opportunity for Service Providers and Telecom Carriers

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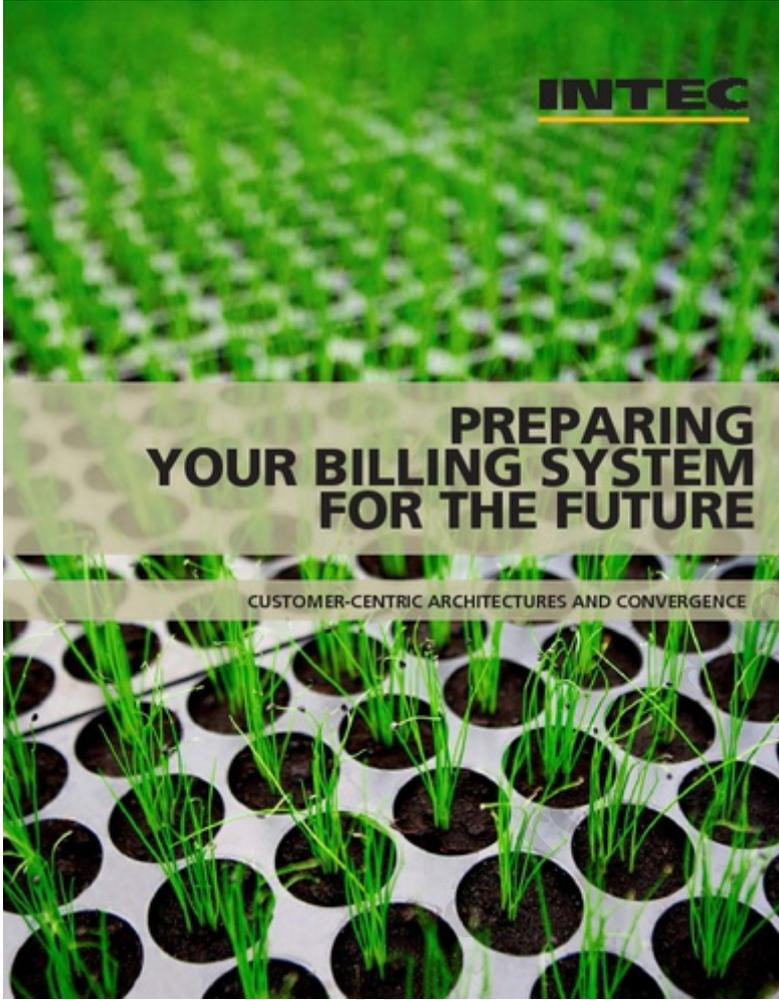
CASE STUDY

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Document Version: 1.0

Date: July, 2011

Author: Fredel Thomas, Director of Product Management



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101 guideline

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INTRODUCTION

Along with the phenomenal growth in volume of data on the mobile Internet, there has been an increase in the different types of data flowing through wireless networks. In addition to traditional types of data, such as file transfer protocol (FTP), hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP), voice-over-Internet protocol (VoIP), e-mail and video streaming, there has been a constantly increasing list of over-the-top (OTT) smartphone applications generating new types of data, including peer-to-peer (P2P) data from applications such as BitTorrent and Kazaa. In an effort to differentiate themselves, operators have also been offering their subscribers their own unique applications, which in turn contribute to the variety of data on wireless networks.

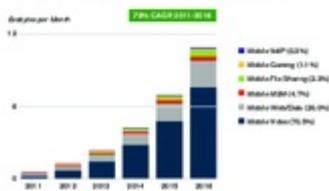


Figure 1. The explosive growth in mobile data.

This vast amount and variety of data has created a need for it to be managed effectively. There are several motivating factors to do so, chief among them being:

- ▶ Honoring service-level agreements (SLAs) and delivering committed quality of service (QoS) to customers
- ▶ Efficiently managing network resources
- ▶ Generating revenue as opposed to being just a "dumb pipe" for data
- ▶ Securing the network

Let's look at each one of these aspects in a little more detail.

HONORING SLAs

Operators have SLAs with their customers to guarantee a certain minimum performance from their networks. To be able to meet these commitments, the network elements have to be able to ensure that the required amount of resources is made available when needed. A recent study has shown that 5% of users consume 60% of bandwidth. This type of usage pattern can endanger an operator's ability to meet its SLA commitments to the rest of its subscribers. Operators have a strong incentive to manage the data usage of such heavy data users (e.g., by throttling the throughput rates available to such users).



Figure 2. Mobile network operators (MNOs) need to proactively manage network usage.

Honoring SLAs may also mean being able to identify data associated with key customers and giving it preferential treatment in the network. There are strict guidelines in the LTE specifications about the handling of data with different levels of QoS. Gateways in the network have to correctly implement these techniques to ensure that committed QoS is delivered.

EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF NETWORK RESOURCES

Another motivation for operators is to manage their CAPEX. Operators are making huge investments in building out their networks to keep up with the growth in data consumption. Unmanaged data usage coupled with the need to deliver on SLAs would result in operators having to deploy more equipment to handle the load. A better alternative is to manage the data usage. The LTE 3GPP specifications introduced the concept of maximum bit rates (MBR). The idea is to limit the maximum throughput used by a subscriber. This is a very critical technique for operators in order to prevent abuse of network resources by a few "bad" subscribers.

REVENUE GENERATION

With an explosion in over-the-top (OTT) applications on the Internet, operators risk becoming mere "dumb" pipes carrying user data back and forth. This is not an enviable situation for operators, considering the enormous investments in infrastructure required to keep up with growth in data usage. Operators want to find ways to generate revenue from the data flowing through their pipes. They can do this by providing the same services as the OTT players, for instance voice-over LTE (VoLTE), but with significantly better and more predictable quality. Operators may want data associated with their own applications to be given preferential treatment as compared to equivalent OTT applications. Additionally, they can add value to the data already flowing through their network (e.g., by signing retransmission deals with service providers in exchange for prioritizing their data, or through targeted advertising based on the content of user data, similar to what Google does with Gmail).



Case Studies



Case Study: GSM wireless network build

PROJECT

GSM wireless network build

SITUATION

When a converged telecommunications services provider faced the sale of its wireless partner properties to a large, national wireless company, it chose to expand its market penetration by building its own wireless GSM network.

The provider engaged Cycle30 to build out, integrate, and deploy all of the BSS & OSS functions to support the new GSM network and wireless services in three metropolitan areas, over an aggressive nine-month timeline.

CHALLENGE

Critical to the ROI of the buildout was the ability to successfully acquire a number of new wireless subscribers, while retaining 99 percent of existing subscribers from the old MVNO network.

Cycle30 planned and delivered all necessary BSS, OSS and conversion functions to support two separate network and product go-live dates, dictated by a strict schedule from the provider acquiring the partner assets.

In addition, severe winter conditions across the provider's geography forced Cycle30 to compress the timeline in order to complete the conversion before winter.

RESULTS

- Cycle30 conducted end-to-end testing of the network and conversion process to ensure a seamless customer experience while finishing the deployment
- Delivered the project on time
- Delivered the project 10 percent under budget
- Cycle30 flexed to the provider's network deployment needs, so that BSS/OSS and conversion activities accelerated progress instead of impeding it
- Provider successfully converted 48,000 subscribers to its new GSM wireless network
- Customer conversion retained 99.2 percent and added 42,000 new subscribers.

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Case Studies



Case Study: CDMA acquisition and conversion

PROJECT
CDMA acquisition and conversion

SITUATION
When a GSM provider acquired a CDMA competitor in order to expand its geographic footprint, it needed to integrate the acquired network, subscribers and inventory into its existing order-to-cash billing platform.

The provider engaged Cycle30 to convert the acquired CDMA system customers so that they could be billed and managed from the same platform as the provider's other services.

CHALLENGE
The acquired CDMA provider enjoyed a small, local-company reputation among its customers, and had historically referred to its new parent company as "the big competitor" in its marketing campaigns. This created a high standard for the parent company to attain as it reached out to this newly acquired customer base ahead of the conversion.

Assimilating 42,000 pre-paid and post-paid subscribers from a different consumer brand and wireless technology required careful planning for a cost-effective and positive customer experience. Each difference in technology between CDMA and GSM systems had to be evaluated and reconciled to integrate them successfully, without duplication or error.

RESULTS

- Cycle30 delivered the provider's conversion with a minimum total system downtime
- Conversion delivered on time
- Conversion delivered on budget
- 99 percent customer record data accuracy, remaining items resolved before next cycle
- Delivered the new billing cycle with no pro-rates or adjustments

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SCALABILITY

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SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

Switches to EMC Watch4net and reduces OPEX by 60%



ESSENTIALS

Challenges

- Customer contracts required robust SLA monitoring solution
- The legacy system (InfoVista) grew too expensive and difficult to maintain
- InfoVista was slow to deliver upgrades
- InfoVista's upgrade costs were comparable to purchasing an on-premise solution

Solution

- Watch4net was deployed in just a few days
- Watch4net is running in a virtualized environment
- Dedicated Oracle Solaris resources are no longer required, resulting in cost savings

IT Improvements

- 60% reduction in cost-per-managed device
- 40% savings on collectors and additional modules
- Replaced Java JRE with fast AJAX/Webs 2.0 front end
- Troubleshooting is simpler, faster due to Watch4net's streamlined architecture

Business Benefits

- Increased revenue from premium portal offerings
- Improved data retention (from 7 days to 7 months at "5-minute" detail)
- Improved SLA metrics and more accurate billing from more granular bandwidth utilization reports
- Enhanced service offering with ad-hoc reporting and automated report delivery

CUSTOMER PROFILE

ABOUT SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

Headquartered in Columbia, SC, Spirit Communications provides carrier-class telecommunications services to businesses and government agencies throughout the southeastern U.S. over its private fiber-based MPLS network. Spirit offers a wide variety of solutions including VoIP, SIP trunking, local and long-distance calling, wholesale long distance, SS7 AIN, on-demand video conferencing, audio/Web conferencing and hosted Internet services. Spirit Communications prides itself in providing solutions that are reliable, flexible and responsive to customers' business needs.

Monitoring efficiently the wide choice of bandwidth and quality of service along with the service level agreements (SLA) is essential to the success of their enterprise.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Spirit operates a mixed network comprising equipment from Alcatel-Lucent, Cisco, Avaya, Adtran, Genex, Brocade and more - over scores of servers and several thousand network devices. Proactive performance monitoring is strategic to Spirit's success in delivering a competitive offering that features a variety of options for granularity of bandwidth and quality of service (QoS). Spirit provisions service level agreements (SLAs) that allow customers to select end-to-end performance metrics based on CIR, frame loss, delay and jitter. Spirit's customer contracts absolutely require robust SLA monitoring solution.

In 2006, Spirit implemented InfoVista's performance management solution. The product met the initial requirements, but as time went on, the software became more cumbersome to upgrade and maintain; additionally, Spirit needed upgrades to support the Alcatel-Lucent 5620 SAM and these were slow in coming. Spirit decided to investigate a variety of alternatives, including using open source tools to build their own solution as well as purchasing commercially available products.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Spirit embarked on a search for solutions capable of providing performance reporting for Alcatel-Lucent equipment. Spirit determined that the cost of InfoVista upgrades equaled the cost of purchasing an entirely new solution. Next, the IT team carefully



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ORDER MANAGEMENT (ORDER TO CASH)

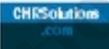
CHR's Order Management accelerates cash flow with an integrated order-to-cash process — providing a faster path to revenue, improved operational efficiencies and higher customer satisfaction. Order Management supports complex product bundling, parallel and sequential order flows and end-to-end automation from order capture to fulfillment. Our intuitive tool makes it easy to identify and correct errors. Order Management provides robust pricing and promotion capabilities to include bundling and discounting. We provide a complete solution for credit analysis, order entry, fulfillment and billing.

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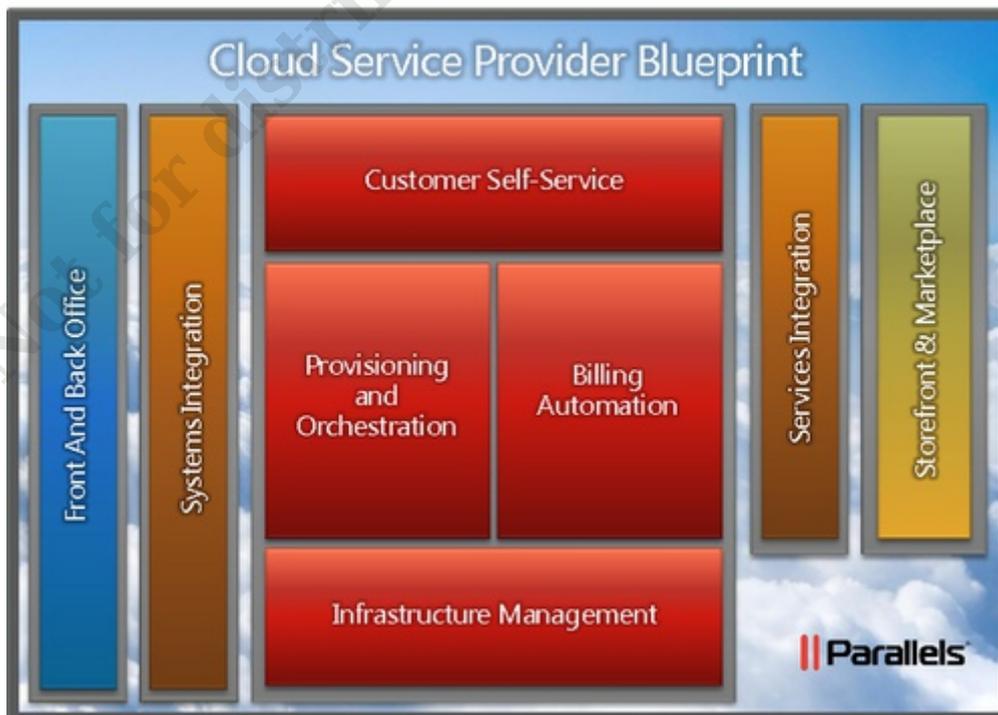
CUSTOMER CARE MANAGEMENT

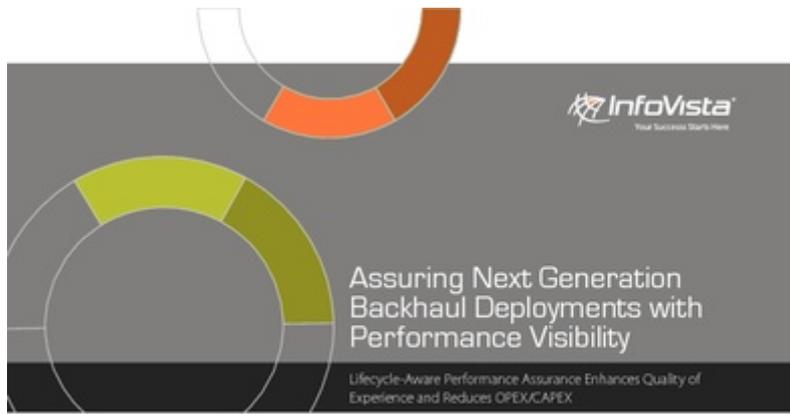
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White Paper

Common Language Drives Customer Value for All Network Technology: 5G/MEC and Virtualized Networking Included

Sponsored by: icorectiv

Karl Whitebeck
January 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

icorectiv TruOps Common Language was established to facilitate the service design and asset tracking needs of the operations and business management processes for prevailing and emerging network connectivity architectures. Common Language has been used by communications service providers for over 40 years.

Complexity from new technology evolution (e.g., network virtualization, private networks, hosted networks, 5G, multi-access edge computing [MEC], and the Internet of Things [IoT]) requires assets to be aligned with business and technical objectives to keep costs within expectations, address end-to-end (E2E) service objectives, support partner accountability, maximize interactive efficiency, and show business management responsibility. On the basis of its successful long-standing customer implementations and evolutionary approach to the network management processes, Common Language is expected to play a major role in the evolution and deployment of new facilities-based networks and the virtual aspects upon which these new technologies come to rely.

This paper explains how teams with network and partner-provided asset management responsibilities can achieve business value by maximizing the use of common nomenclature. In addition, the paper describes how a common naming strategy improves the effectiveness of real-time network operations and key business management functions. This paper also explains how Common Language can bring increased awareness when defining, launching, and managing new network-based services.

Introduction

As network technology and business strategies continue to evolve, the greatest challenge asset-based communications service providers face is how to manage the physical and virtual assets that define the services they provide. Understanding the physical and logical placement of assets is strategic to several information operations functions including network planning, inventory, service orchestration, catalog, activation, network assurance, service-level agreements (SLAs), policy, provisioning, and charging. The multilevel construct of the underlay and overlay connectivity infrastructure and the E2E partner-provided services to customers of all types brings additional layers of asset tracking complexity that must be addressed by each of these business and operations management domains.

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INTEGRATE with the enterprise
MINIMIZE costly errors

NetDesigner streamlines the complex process of planning, implementing, operating, and optimizing next generation networks. Components of NetDesigner can be deployed on a standalone basis or integrated to enable end-to-end automation.

NetDesigner is an Esri GIS-based geospatial network design and management solution for complex, multi-domain networks. NetDesigner optimizes resources, enhances workflow, improves customer service, and maximizes operational efficiency, allowing for unprecedented cost savings.



Centralized repository and single workspace

NetDesigner offers a consolidated workspace and a single, accurate data repository to enable planning, design, construction, and operations for a next generation network.

Automated design

Design automation within NetDesigner enables engineers to develop a baseline network design

within hours instead of weeks. Design parameters can be customized by changing business rules to meet unique requirements.

Powerful business intelligence and planning

NetDesigner allows users to plan "what-if" scenarios, simulating what it would mean to bring network resources to underserved communities and targeted businesses. Users can integrate with visual, schematic map elements, and third-party data (e.g. ARRA, Connected Nations, demographics, census data, wire-center information, FCC data, flood plain barriers, environmentally sensitive areas, etc.) to get a comprehensive and visual overview of a proposed or as-built network. The Bill of Materials functionality allows users to quickly acquire project costs and/or material costs of any design and generate equipment reports.

Modular, flexible, standards-based solution

NetDesigner is modular and can be deployed as a standalone solution or integrated with other applications to manage fiber, wireless, copper, coax, and hybrid networks, structures, and other assets. Using standard out-of-the-box APIs, NetDesigner may be integrated with systems such as OSS, BSS, ERP, Facilities Management, and many others to automate end-to-end service provisioning, customer relationship management, and network operations.



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