ARISTA

Customer Success Story

Frustrations with Incumbent Networking Vendor Led to a New Approach with Arista Networks

Alan Weckel, Founder and Analyst of the 650 Group, interviewed a large state government insurance agency, regarding their successful deployment of Converged Cloud Fabric. The following summarizes their results.

The insurance agency's existing data center network, which was designed several years ago, was no longer meeting the needs of the business. The amount of time needed to configure and maintain the network was not scaling with the number of new virtualization and cloud technologies the agency was deploying. These challenges initiated new design discussions, where greater emphasis was placed on automation, simplicity, and analytics, and less on which vendor had the greatest throughput (fastest chassis). This led them to Arista, where automation, and open networking switches, were several of the top features within Converged Cloud Fabric (CCF).

They decided to conduct a POC, where they acquired Open Networking Switches from Dell, and demo licenses of CCF from Arista. The POC went better than expected, as within hours they had the fabric up in running with significantly less configuration steps, then they had become accustomed to.

> *"We haven't had one failure since we switched to Arista. More up time allows my team to increase business velocity instead of just putting out networking fires."*

Insurance Services

Requirements

- Network must enable and deliver on the agency's IT Modernization initiatives
- Reduce networking complexities by moving away from a CLI-driven, time consuming approach
- Network scalability on-demand to support regular addition of virtualization and cloud technologies

Solution

- Converged Cloud Fabric
- Dell EMC Open Networking Switches

Results

- Reduced complexity thus eliminating the need for professional services
- Faster deployment of switches in both the POC lab and in the production network
- Cost savings in both Capex and Opex by a factor of two
- Elimination of costly break/fix switch maintenance agreements

> *"I was able to set up Arista on my own, without the need for professional services, a big change from our incumbent vendor."*

Based upon a successful PoC of CCF they decided to deploy a new switching fabric, with Open Switches from Dell Technologies. The government agency had significant cost savings with Arista and Dell. The Arista solution was an order of magnitude less expensive than the alternative solution. The cost savings were so significant that it took time in the procurement process to justify the savings.

Some people in the organization saw the price and performance as too good to be true and required the networking team to sell the solution at multiple levels within the organization. Old habits die hard and took time for certain individuals to think beyond their comfort zone. Once this comfort zone hurdle was addressed many individuals began to see the benefits of the Arista solution.

Once in production the CCF automation features allowed the networking team to change the way resources were added to the network. The configuration task of adding new servers, and switches to the network had previously been done manually, taking days to get anything new into production. With Arista, new switches came online in five minutes.

The agency was impressed that things in production really just worked and CCF's automation was that powerful. Moreover, the CCF feature list met all of their needs, where no one in the organization felt like there were any negative tradeoffs in moving to a Cloud First Networking approach.

As the agency became comfortable with CCF they began to think about cost savings beyond the initial purchase costs and operation automation. Because the Open Networking hardware was so affordable, the agency bought spares and kept them on-hand for any break fix outage incidents. This enabled them to stop paying for costly hardware maintenance contracts.

The transformation project saw a significant decrease in the number of vendor support tickets as well. Because the network was now automated where there were less human configuration errors, the number of problems reduced dramatically.

The agency was able to convert the time savings into more strategic efforts, specifically to increase the agency's business velocity. They were able to spend time with the DevOps team in a collaborative way, and start outlining workflows that would streamline infrastructure service requests. Finally, the agency said that as knowledge spread across their IT organizations, on the benefits of CCF, that other parts of the agency have begun to evaluate how they leverage CCF for other transformation project.

> *"The GUI allowed a lower barrier of entry to train team members and have DevOps see what was happening with complicated CLI scripts."*