

SDN will hold most benefit for service providers

Enterprise challenges will hold back inhouse deployments of Software Defined Network, but data center will come first, according to industry experts

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Service providers are likely to see the most benefit from the Software Defined Network, according to speakers at the NetEvents conference in Portugal today.

But while companies such as Google and Facebook that manage a single application say they have already built their own SDN, the challenges for service providers and enterprises are likely to be much more magnified.

Dell Networking VP of product marketing Arpit Joshipura said: “What is interesting for large service operators like Google is they see their IT as key asset and a differentiator for themselves but for our customers IT is just way to deliver business services.”

He said this is why service providers are more likely to adopt the SDN approach before enterprise customers.

HP VP of Global Marketing for Networking Mike Banic said enterprises will not want to find themselves writing applications for SDN.

“Our clients want to buy complete solutions, and that is one thing that will be critical as we see the SDN market developing,” Banic said.

“A business is not going to want to throw people at this problem to solve it. This will lead to a hybrid environment in the enterprise.”

“Google is in a really neat position because it has a finite set of applications it has to deliver at scale. The breadth of the applications our customers (enterprise customers) have to work with every day means they have a very diverse set of requirements.”

Extreme Networks VP of Technology Shehzad Merchant said he agrees Google is the exception.

“What you will find typically out there in the market is that new applications are coming online on an ongoing basis, so it can be much harder to find the appropriate approach architecturally,” Merchant said.

“Service providers will get the biggest benefits, and these will be different to how Google benefits from SDN.”

One thing is certain, however, according to MEF President Nan Chen, and that is that SDN will make its way into the data center before it moves out to the campus.

“I believe SDNs are being discussed in the context of data centers at the moment,” Chen said.

“They will be deployed in data center, they will enrich the data center but we need more parts of the jigsaw to define the Software Defined Services.

“At some point network operators will find their networks evolve with data centers but they will be islands that will need to be rich enough to support all these SDNs.”