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OPINION

Open Networking User Group: CIOs want network programmability!

Ernest Lefner



AT&T distributed 75 press releases in September and I admit I don't normally pay attention to these announcements, but there was one that caught my eye last week: "AT&T Launches Supplier Domain 2.0 -- Next-Generation Supplier Program Facilitates AT&T's Rapid Transformation to an Open, Cloud-based Network."

The press release addressed AT&T's plans to simplify and scale its network by separating hardware and software functionality; segregating the network control plane and forwarding planes; and improving management of functionality in the software layer.



Essentially, AT&T announced that it is focusing on capital-efficient, programmable networks by leveraging SDN and Network Functions Virtualization (NFV) to reduce its time to market and enable new growth opportunities. AT&T put a stake in the ground: The company has a vision for the future and it will vote with its dollars to reward vendors that deliver on that vision.

As the co-founder and vice-chairman of [The Open Networking User Group](#) (ONUG), I am ecstatic to see IT business leaders putting it out there. ONUG is led by a board of directors that is composed of IT leaders from Bank of America, Citigroup, Fidelity Investments, GAP Inc., JPMorgan Chase, UBS and Nick Lippis of the Lippis Report. We provide a platform for IT business leaders to take control of their IT architecture and influence vendor product development investments, standards and open source initiatives. Attendees explore use cases, product test methodology and benchmarks.

I want to extend a personal invitation to AT&T and all IT executives who are reviewing, planning, piloting or deploying open networking solutions to join me at our second meeting, ONUG Fall 2013, to be held Oct. 29-30 in New York City, hosted by JPMorgan Chase.

At ONUG we will share real-world deployments and ONUG community-delivered use cases in a highly interactive environment. Our ONUG Academy on Oct. 29 is open to all and includes deep-dive tutorials taught by industry experts. Sessions include:

- **Integrating OpenFlow and OpenStack**, Rob Sherwood, ONF Chair, Architecture and Framework Working Group
- **Understanding White Box Networking Architecture and Economics**, J.R. Rivers, CEO and co-founder, Cumulus Networks
- **Getting Started with OpenFlow Deployments**, Brent Salisbury, University of Kentucky, Network Architect
- **Understanding and Deploying Virtual Networks**, Srin Seetharaman, Technical Lead for SDN, Deutsche Telecom
- **Writing SDN Applications on Popular Controllers**, Matt Davy, Principal Solutions Architect and Chuck Black, Principal Software Architect, Tallac Networks

The Open Networking User Group Conference on Oct. 30 features IT executive speakers



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who are evaluating, piloting or deploying programmable networks, SDN, OpenFlow, network overlay, white box, WAN, network visualization or virtualization solutions. Some of the speakers include:

- **Greg Lavender and Harmen Van der Linde, Citigroup**
- **Michael Payne, JPMorgan Chase**
- **Keith Shinn, Fidelity Investments**
- **Najam Ahmad, Facebook**
- **John Considine, Verizon Terremark**
- **Lane Patterson, Equinix**
- **Shamim Akhtar, Comcast**
- **Nick Lippis, Lippis Report**

A number of vendors and organizations will also be featured in the Demonstrator Showcase, sharing real world deployments of open networking solutions, including Adara Networks, Anuta Networks, Arista Networks, Cisco, cPacket Networks, Cumulus Networks, Embrane, Extreme Networks, Gigamon, Glue Networks, HP, IBM, Ixia, NEC, Nuage Networks, OpenDaylight, PLUMgrid, Stateless Networks, vArmour, Vello Systems and VSS Monitoring.

Our world is changing and IT business leaders today are emboldened by our need to do more with less. We know what we want, and we understand that by standing together we send a strong message to vendors, standards and open source organizations that open networking today is customer driven.

TechTarget readers receive a 10% discount by using code TT10 when [registering for ONUG](#).

About the author:

Ernest Lefner is the SVP of Architecture and Engineering at Bank of America. Ernest co-founded ONUG with Nick Lippis in 2012 after realizing that the user community needed to take control of their own destiny and expedite the network transformation. At the time he was VP of the Internetwork Engineering organization at Fidelity Investments, and under his leadership Fidelity hosted the first ONUG in Boston in February 2013.

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