



## INSIGHTS AND PUBLICATIONS



## Blogs

## Impressions from ONS 2014

Last week I attended the Open Networking Summit and was able to listen in on a few keynotes, talk to a number of vendors, and even manage to host one of the panels. Overall the time was well spent as industry buzz is still very high around SDN and this show provided some good examples of how organizations were evaluating, testing, or even deploying SDN solutions. Here are some of my takeaways.

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1. The show itself continues to build momentum. I believe they reported that the event had over 60 vendors participate and over 1500 attendees – plus those that go online. If you missed the event, or even just a specific session, you can always go online and view the archives <http://www.opennetsummit.org/archives-ons/archives-2014/>. I was there, but find this a really useful part of the event to catch up on sessions I missed. Dan Pitt from the ONF was actually able to demonstrate how the terms SDN and OpenFlow are making their way into popular culture in some very funny ways.
2. SDN is a marathon, not a sprint, and it is still early for the enterprise. These were insights gleaned from Matthew Liste, Goldman Sachs, who shared with the audience the long list of potential SDN solutions they tried over the last year, only one of which they have felt comfortable deploying in production as of today. It was an application they wrote themselves. He is encouraged by the progress, but his initial excitement and enthusiasm has been replaced with a realistic outlook that it will take time for SDN to take hold. This could really benefit legacy networking providers still bringing SDN solutions to market. Another important insight he shared was around how these trials impacted IT organizationally. In their case, a specialized team was formed, sort of a converged IT group with diverse skills to help drive these tests.
3. Progress is occurring in certain areas. The show continues to feature advances made by service providers in leveraging SDN and open networks. Sessions given by Verizon and ATT are always a big draw. Just before the show there were announcements from smaller service providers, like Pacnet, talking about how they are leveraging Vello Systems' SDN solutions in their production environment. In general the enterprises are taking more of a "show me" approach to the technology, wanting to see how these solutions and technology ecosystems will deliver real results. I expect to see more public references coming out as the technology matures. With some of the established network companies like Cisco still rolling out its SDN solutions (ACI controller in early summer), smaller startups like Adara, Big Switch, ContexTreme, Cumulus, NetSocket, Nuage, Plexi, Pluribus, and Vello (see above) have a window of opportunity to demonstrate how their technology works.
4. Should we be paying more attention to our SDN counterparts in Japan? In talking to companies like NEC (and even Big Switch and VMware [NSX]), we continue to hear about how the Japanese market has embraced the SDN and Open Networking technologies far more aggressively than its US (or ROW) counterparts. Unfortunately, that may be due to compelling events (earthquake, tsunami, and power plant outages), but it does provide an opportunity to learn from those who are leading the charge. For example NEC mentioned almost 100 organizations leveraging SDN solutions in production (not test, or pilot) in Japan, which is a pretty impressive number. Perhaps it is time to more closely understand what challenges they encountered, how they overcame them and what benefits they are enjoying from those environments. Organizations here could learn from those lessons and apply them to their deployments. Perhaps a track for next year?

Tags: [Open Networking Summit](#) [ONS](#) [software-defined networking](#) [SDN](#)

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