Alan Weckel, Founder and Analyst of the 650 Group, interviewed a large commercial transportation provider, regarding their successful deployment of Big Cloud Fabric. The following summarizes their results.

“Networking should be much simpler than it has become. Legacy approaches are dead, many organizations just don’t realize that yet.”

Several years ago, the IT organization within a large North American transportation company was given the mandate to explore and test SDN-based offerings as a lower cost alternative to proprietary offerings. As the number of scheduling, safety, and other applications were growing significantly within its data center, they decided to focus their efforts on data center switching solutions that were SDN-based, which would offer the agility and flexibility needed to support the growing number of applications. This led them to evaluate Big Cloud Fabric software in combination with Open Networking switches from Dell EMC.

The quality of experience during the Proof of Concept exceeded expectations which allowed the company to accelerate its plans to deploy in production by approximately one full year ahead of schedule.

“All our developers know is that they are getting a better product, a better experience, and that is a very good thing.”

Large Transportation Organization

Requirements
- Network must enable and deliver on the organization’s cloud transformation initiatives
- Reduce networking complexities by moving away from a CLI-driven, time consuming approach
- Must offer orchestration integration to support hybrid cloud direction

Solution
- Big Cloud Fabric-Enterprise Cloud
- VMware NSX
- Dell EMC Open Networking hardware

Results
- Lower capex than expected for the data center expansion
- Speedy, touchless autoconfiguration
- Easier network management and expansion
- Seamless transition
- Faster onboarding for new and non technical staff
- Better support of DevOps by enabling access to network resources through the GUI
The company indicated that the cost of hardware in which Big Switch products integrated with was considerably less expensive compared to its previous provider. The cost and operations simplicity were so much better that instead of taking a more traditional service contract approach, the company simply kept spare switches at each data center. As a result, they were able to reduce its ongoing maintenance and service contract on hardware down to zero.

An interesting fact came out during the interview; the company has yet to use any of the spare switches, as there have been no hardware outages. This is a good indication that Open Networking switches have the same quality and reliability as the proprietary switches they have been buying for the past 20 years. Again, no expensive maintenance contract(s) and improved reliability change the type of conversation between IT and procurement, allowing for ongoing cost savings.

“Our team is saving a ton of time with Big Switch. Adding new resources to the network, maintenance and configuration are all faster, allowing our team to allocate resources to things like making the business run smoother, which is invaluable.”

The company’s day-to-day operations also improved significantly. Tangible differences between old and new included reduced documentation and maintenance complexity of the network topology. With Big Switch, the company can just connect and network will configure the device. The company was able to reduce configuration tasks from days to a matter of hours.

While the company’s networking team was originally afraid that the reduced time spent on daily configuration and operations tasks could reduce their importance, their value increased as they now had time to think more strategically with workflow automation, network analytics, and security monitoring. Specifically, in other business activities ranging from more proactive engagements with DevOps, to actually spending time analyzing traffic behaviors.

Finally, the company said that Big Switch technologies (BCF and BMF) has allowed the company to proactively plan and monitor rather than just making sure the networking was up and running. Being part of an infrastructure solution instead of just a plumber made the career of many people in the organization more rewarding.

About Big Switch Networks

Big Switch Networks is the Cloud-First Networking company, bringing public cloud-style networking and hybrid cloud consistency to organizations around the world. The company provides data center switching, visibility and security solutions for on-premises enterprise cloud, public cloud and multi-cloud environments that enable companies of all sizes to dramatically increase operational efficiency and business agility, while reducing networking costs.

To try Big Switch today, go to labs.bigswitch.com for a free, hands-on labs environment.

For additional information: visit us www.bigswitch.com, reach us info@bigswitch.com or follow us on Twitter @bigswitch, LinkedIn, and YouTube.