What telecom operators don't know they should want.

Alper Tunga Burak - CEO, Odine Solutions

By our very nature, we like the comfort of our routine. It is not called the comfort zone for nothing. Consequently, we can easily start to feel unsettled when the unknown and uncertainty appears into our lives. It is therefore not surprising that undergoing digital transformation is the epitome of discomfort, as most of what we know and do must be reinvented. From the way we plan and design services, to the way we deliver and manage them.

It is impossible to trigger this type of evolution without a 360° transformation of the organization. So we must therefore learn to embrace change, as not doing so is far riskier in today's fast paced world. It is now or never the time to start your digital transformation journey. If not now when?

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But with this comes many unknowns. For example, how to start the transformation, what to transform, and how? How to make sure it is as seamless and painless as possible for the organization, and how to integrate it with what already exists?

Many are in the dark and do not even know what their needs are in this new reality. Having worked with a number of industry stakeholders to empower such a transformation, we know what you need to do to achieve this successfully, even if you fully don't. We know what you never knew you needed and here is what it is.

Replacing your legacy with the cloud

The first things you should want are flexibility, agility, dynamic scaling, no vendor lock-ins, and lower CAPEX/OPEX. In essence, I would say you should be looking to migrate to software defined everything that you can.

Disaggregated and software defined transmission nodes, coupled with high fiber capacity, virtualized access and core networks & services, will empower you to dynamically shift and evolve your business as needed.

It therefore means swapping your legacy End of Life (EOL) and End of Support (EOS) equipment for modern cloud native VNFs, hosted in a private or public cloud. With this, deployed on SDNs, you will form the foundation of a platform that is managed, orchestrated, and automated to achieve scalability and robustness, while driving down costs.

Traditional network management is a labor and time intensive process that involves manual configuration, testing, updating, upgrading, and deployment of physical and virtual infrastructure. It often requires scripting and working on devices one by one, site by site.

Fortunately, this manual approach is fast becoming obsolete. Network automation is making it easier and faster to maintain, deploy, and consolidate single and multi-vendor wired and wireless networks. As a result, you can accelerate the delivery of revenue-generating services, while reducing operational overhead and driving efficient use of human resources. You will not be able to progress very far in your digital and/or network transformation journey without employing SDN and virtualization technologies, coupled with orchestration and automation. It's not just about CAPEX/OPEX savings, it's really about the agility that these technologies bring to the table.

Communication Service Providers are at a point where they must diversify to offer a range of managed datacenter services, co-location space and global internet connections. These capabilities are being further enhanced with support for cloud, network function virtualization (NFV) and software defined networking (SDN). If you do not evolve with the digital transformation, you will eventually become obsolete.

Replacing your static culture with hyperscalers' fluid ethos

Then if you wish to keep up with OTTs and hyperscalers and stay competitive, you must implement the same technologies and agile processes. This will not require only network transformation, but maybe more importantly, significant shifts to your organizational structure and corporate culture, to enable agility and resilience.

Having said this, two of the biggest challenges some of our customers are facing is internal resistance to change or employee pushback, and lack of in-house expertise and skills.

The first challenge is expected, as you have had to provide five 9s availability, while for many years relying on purpose-built hardware in different silos. This meant different functional teams managing and operating distinctive parts of your network. Virtualization blurs some of these lines and requires an organizational and cultural paradigm shift to evolve to something more fluid.

This resistance can only be overcome with buy-in from the management. The fact that virtualization is now "telco grade" and offers many benefits to everyone involved certainly helps break down this barrier.

Secondly, it is quite normal for a lack of expertise to support such a comprehensive network transformation program. NFV and SDN in the telco space encompasses relatively new and rapidly evolving technologies. This is where the use of a partner, such as ourselves, with expertise in managed services comes into play.

Replacing your 'do it yourself' attitude with aco-creation approach

One thing is certain, you may not know it yet, but you will not be able to achieve such a mammoth task on your own. The speed you need to do it at, to be able to be at the forefront of our industry in terms of technology, networks, and solutions, is challenging to say the least.

It will be almost impossible for most organizations to embark on such an all-encompassing transformation program without the knowledge and support of a partner that understands both the legacy and leading edge technology, systems, and processes.

Our expertise in both IT and communications networks is critical here, as a large part of a successful digital transformation relies on IT convergence. Our managed services can therefore help you control operational costs and the increased complexity in your IT and network environments, while reducing risk.

Also, each transformation journey will be different and must be addressed as such. You cannot apply a one-size-fits-all digital transformation solution. Therefore, working with a partner which can incorporate the new technology within your existing organization, in a way that is tailored and addresses your own reality, is crucial.

Finally, as time is of the essence and knowledge is power, you will need to find a way to scale-up your virtualization and digital expertise swiftly. This can be costly if you are looking to replace your current taskforce with a whole new team, or time consuming if your current people learn about digitalization and virtualization from trials and errors, as they go along.

Therefore, capitalizing on our many years spent supporting digital transformation at all levels of telecom operators' businesses, large and small, will be a vital part of your success.

The journey will not be an easy one, but always remember that great things never came from the comfort zone.

Odine Solutions is a leading provider of next generation virtualized solutions for the telecoms industry. Our continued evolution has kept us at the forefront of cutting-edge software & virtualization technologies, where we have been an integral part of network and digital transformation at over 170 operators and carriers in 35 countries.

As we strive forward to be the market leading technology enabler for telecom operators, our solutions empower CSPs with an advanced and continually evolving application suite for the end to end management of their wholesale voice operations, accessible from any device, any location, any time globally.

Odine Solutions' ability to deliver enhanced levels of efficiency, automation, optimization, and business intelligence through our global infrastructure providing the highest levels of performance and scalability on-demand to all customers, empowering them to never miss an opportunity.

To find out how we can help you, contact us at **info@odinesolutions.com**

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