INNOVATION

capacity
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Automated network provisioning at your fingertips

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AUTOMATION HAS YET TO TAKE THE WHOLESALE WORLD BY STORM. In the retail sector, solution providers can purchase virtual private servers (VPSs) and cloud-based services provisioned in real-time alongside their needs. This ensures that as soon as they have an opportunity for revenue – i.e. a customer willing to pay for that service – they can go to a portal, obtain a service and deliver it to them almost instantly.

Unfortunately, providers in the wholesale market must still contend with a conventional provisioning process. It involves multiple parties, extensive research by the provider building the solution, and most likely a circuit costing more than it should because they need it provisioned rapidly. Furthermore, the manual nature of the provisioning process is prone to errors that can result in project overruns or failure, while many of the carriers providing wholesale services are in a position to win the retail business themselves – presenting a conflict of interest influencing both prices and lead times.

Put simply, the traditional wholesale model was not built for the "speed of cloud" that has successfully penetrated so many other sectors of the communications industry. As a result, service providers, integrators, content providers and other types of enterprise with a wholesale requirement have struggled to realise revenue quickly and provide the level of service demanded by high-margin customers.

This is set to change. UK-based Allegro Networks is a new generation of carrier established in late 2012 to challenge the status quo. With a philosophy aligned with the interests of its customers, infrastructure based on market-leading hardware and a suite of unique provisioning tools, Allegro's proposition is completely transformative and will bring about a revolution in the wholesale business.

THE COST OF DELAYS

For solution providers, acquiring circuits and services has traditionally been an arduous and manual process. Ideally, they are looking for a carrier with a range of transit, peering and on.net data centre options. In markets such as the UK, this can prove particularly difficult, due to the large number of data centres and the low number of carriers able to offer on.net connectivity between them. Those carriers that are able to offer on.net solutions tend to delay provisioning because it allows them to command the best price possible. Certainly this will be

the case where a solution provider wants to move quickly to realise the revenue associated with the circuit required.

The dearth of carriers able to offer on-net connectivity means there is little pressure on those that do to provide the best possible price to win the business. As such, it is fairly typical that a circuit comes with a standard lead time of one or two weeks, while some lead times might be 30 days. If the solution provider cannot put their customer live for this length of time, they are effectively losing a month's service revenue.

Given that the end user is likely to be a high-margin customer, they will quite rightly be expecting a high level of service. Solution providers can therefore ill afford project overruns or failures. Yet with provisioning of the circuit being manual and usually calling for a site visit, the process is overly reliant on no mistakes or errors being made. A simple typo or misunderstanding on the part of the salesperson who expressed a provisioning requirement on the ticket can mean a circuit is misconfigured and all too often, a series of small errors and mistakes ultimately result in project overrun or failure.

CONNECTIVITY YOU CONTROL

Allegro Networks is developing a portfolio of exciting technical solutions to speed the provisioning process and significantly reduce the cost and complexity of acquiring circuits and services. These innovative solutions will deliver tangible commercial benefits to communications providers and set Allegro apart in the industry. The company's flagship platform – called SNAP – is a UK networking first and allows carriers, ISPs, and enterprises operating a wholesale model to log on to Allegro's portal, instantly obtain a wholesale price for on-net connectivity and, if they like the offer, hit "buy", and that circuit is live within minutes.

Using SNAP, point-to-point circuits, transit, peering and virtual cross-connects can be provisioned almost instantly. SNAP also gives users the ability to buy and provision services from their tablet, mobile or android device. With simple key strokes, users can access key UK data centres, leading content providers and all four UK internet exchanges (IXs). Crucially, the circuit is deployed by a robot rather than a human, dramatically reducing the risk of errors and project overruns due to provisioning delays.

SNAP ensures that the network architect of a company has

complete control of their connectivity. Being able to provision on the move also gives them total flexibility, removing any barriers (physical or time constraints) to getting circuits live and ensuring they get to market quicker and build solutions rapidly for end users. This strengthens their competitiveness in an increasingly challenging market. SNAP features include:

- Quote instantly and buy online
- Scale bandwidth up and down
- Access major content providers and initiate private VLANs with any on.net provider
- Instant access to metro networks and national network
- Single location for all billing, contract, and technical issues

SERVING CARRIERS AND ISPS

Allegro's radical approach, which puts the customer in control of their connectivity, is the first of several innovations in the pipeline and delivers a level of speed and visibility not currently available in the wholesale market. This will enable carriers to deliver the quality and reliability expected of an underlying provider to the network community.

Once on-net, SNAP gives carriers the flexibility to behave like it is their own network. Provisioning circuits, accessing IXs and data centres, and even novating circuits from one customer to another all become a matter of key strokes. For international carriers wanting to deploy a UK network, Allegro provides the tools to achieve this quickly and cost-effectively, significantly reducing their risk. For UK carriers, it's an effective and fast way to expand their reach, bring diversity to their network, or add an IX that is nearer to their customers. National reach into data centre locations also allows them to access every co-location market, irrespective of where they are connected.

For the ISP community, Allegro offers the perfect blend of internet connectivity, with the added benefit of being able to establish private peering connections within a matter of minutes. ISPs can peer at four UK IXs and can access both Tier 1 and Tier 2 transit providers on a single port, to create bespoke solutions that ensure their customers get a faster response when working on the internet, accessing content, or using VoIP services. In addition, SnapConnect – Allegro's virtual cross-connect product – enables ISPs to create private peering connections with their desired partners in a matter of

key strokes, even if the two companies are located in different data centres.

ALIGNING INTERESTS

Allegro's infrastructure is designed to complement its customers' network rather than replace it. This is achieved by the use of an open-standards based MPLS network, powering a portfolio of connectivity and internet services that enhance its customer's solutions, increase their product set and open up new commercial opportunities.

Allegro's carrier-class network, combined with its powerful SNAP management platform, enables any carrier or ISP to seamlessly access its high-quality connectivity services while also giving them the tools to price, buy and provision their required circuits in less than five minutes. Built on industry leading hardware, Allegro's network is reliable, responsive and robust. And because the company uses open standards to deploy point-to-point circuits, it is also extremely portable. Whatever customers want to run over these circuits, performance is assured.

Once customers become attuned to buying circuits or resource services in this way, Allegro anticipates demand for the same capabilities when provisioning circuits in Amsterdam, Frankfurt, and Paris. That is why European expansion is a roadmap priority for Allegro, with the first PoPs expected to go live later this year.

Most importantly, Allegro allows its customers to say "yes" to their customers because its philosophy is aligned with their interests. Allegro is not trying to be clever with its customer traffic; it is clever with the way it provisions. It is a simple story, but one that resonates strongly with what wholesale customers need. They do not want carriers to add complexity and break their services; they want a fast, predictable and controllable solution at a commodity price that allows them to move right away. And with SNAP, this is exactly the level of capability Allegro places at their fingertips.

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Turning Network Provisioning **on its head.**

From 25th September service providers can buy and provision services online in real time. Extend your network, build resilience or even deploy a UK-wide network, all in under 5 minutes.

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Fast, reliable, always-on connectivity that you control to the locations of your choice.