

## **Changing the rules – can regulation keep apace?**

The demand on the network from the vast array of devices and services is continuing in pace, as such the network is under pressure to perform. Recognized as critical infrastructure in today's digital world, the network is also facing increased regulation from governments keen to ensure fair competitive play, but can regulation keep up and stay relevant?

### **The changing role of the network**

How consumers and businesses utilized networks has changed dramatically over recent years. This has been mirrored by a soaring telecoms sector that through innovation and collaboration has driven technological advances – delivering more devices and services to the end users.

The network, and its associated systems, must support all these different services and products, and if this isn't enough - a growing number of partner company services and products too. By expanding networks and partnering, CSPs have managed to claw back some of its revenue streams by attracting customers to invest in the latest technology.

It is the end-customer that is driving much of this demand. The convenience of technology has revolutionized the way in which we live and people want more. With busy lives, the efficiency of technology services has resonated and surged in popularity.

As such, more focus and importance has been placed on the network, as the critical infrastructure to support this reliance on technology. CSPs complex business models must already comply to a multitude of regulations, so why the importance of increasing legislation?

### **Regulating a digital society**

With the network being recognized as an essential infrastructure, governments are interested in increasing competition to make a fair and open market for others to offer services. This certainly has advantages for customers who benefit from the competitive offerings, but challenges for telecom providers.

CSPs still manage ongoing complexities around legacy systems and the nature of the next-generation demands a more tailored approach to these

systems. And with new technologies already in the pipeline – 5G, NFV, SDN, IoE – I question how the regulations can keep up with the changing environment and still allow the CSP to remain competitive.

Some would argue that regulation is detrimental to the industry, holding CSPs back and impacting innovation rather than aiding a prosperous industry. There are obvious advantages for the consumer and it is acknowledged that a level of regulation is important, but how far should it go?

### **Network systems support**

This constant juggling of demands from customer, regulators, partners, etc., is only increasing the complexities of the network for the CSP. With increased network infrastructure requirements, it is more important than ever for network systems data to be federated onto one interface. This single-view of the data will help CSPs stay on top of network performance, so no matter how complex the picture gets, or how many demands, the CSP is in the best position to optimize resources.

Increased regulation or not, the demands on the CSP network are set to grow. Legacy OSS systems are struggling to keep up with the changing face of the CSP. Protection and increased knowledge of the critical network infrastructure is the best protection for CSPs to manage legislative, customer, and industry demands.

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