

Avaya Partners with FatPipe Networks to Integrate SDNs and SD-WANs

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For some time now, two distinct types of networking architectures have been embracing the notion of being software defined. The first category involves the deployment of software-defined networks using a new generation of controllers and network virtualization overlays. The second involves managing wide area networks (WANs) at a higher level of abstraction using software that can simultaneously manage multiple remote connections.

This week, Avaya and FatPipe Networks announced their intention to bring those two networking worlds closer together by integrating Avaya SDNs with software-defined wide area network (SD-WAN) appliances from FatPipe Networks.

Under the terms of the non-exclusive alliance, FatPipe Networks President and CTO Sanch Datta says the management consoles Avaya has developed around the Avaya SDN Fx architecture will be integrated with FatPipe SD-WAN appliances using Avaya Fabric Connect software. The end goal is to make it possible for IT organizations to more holistically manage an entire software-defined network environment.

While SDNs and SD-WANs have been under development

in parallel, adoption of SD-WANs is now moving faster for a variety of reasons, including increased need for cloud networking connectivity and the fact that Cisco is in the middle of a router product transition. In both cases, IT organizations are considering a broader array of alternatives to providing networking services across the WAN. In the meantime, adoption of SDNs in the data center requires new hardware, which in turn slows the rate at which many IT organizations can deploy SDNs. Just about every IT organization will move to SDNs, with the speed of that transition varying.

Less clear is what the convergence of these two networking realms will mean for networking vendors. It's not too hard to see how SDN vendors will want to extend their reach out to WANs that, thanks to the rise of cloud computing, are more strategic than ever. Whether that ambition will manifest itself in the form of new network architectures or vendor alliances remains to be seen. FatPipe Networks, which is currently suing a number of SD-WAN rivals for patent infringement, is clearly betting on the latter approach. Lawsuits are currently pending between FatPipe Networks and Viptela and Talari Networks. FatPipe Networks recently lost a similar case against XRoads Networks.

Whatever the outcome, the walls that have existed between networks inside and out of the data center are slowly but surely coming down.