



## NEWS RELEASE

# CenturyLink announces virtualization plans as it continues integrating its network into the cloud

2015-10-19

MONROE, La., Oct. 19, 2015 /PRNewswire/ --CenturyLink, Inc. (NYSE: CTL) today announced that it has taken a leadership position in building a service-centric environment for customers through the integration of its network and cloud, combined with virtualization functions. The company is currently building an end-to-end network platform with software-defined networking (SDN) and network functions virtualization (NFV) capabilities to deliver a self-service application marketplace and on-demand services, creating an enhanced customer experience currently offered by few providers.

CenturyLink is aggressively working to transform its existing core network into an SDN and NFV-based environment and will virtualize 40 percent of its global IP core network locations by end of 2015 with plans to have full global virtualization coverage in its IP core network and data centers by 2018. The company has already built its NFV platform in 36 network and data center locations in seven countries, with plans to expand into a total of 44 locations by the end of the year. CenturyLink also was one of the first providers to use NFV technology to virtualize security features such as firewalls and a content delivery network (CDN) to distribute video through its Prism® TV service, providing quicker delivery of these services. In the coming months, CenturyLink will begin deploying a range of virtualized data and voice infrastructure services, including virtualized Multi Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) routers and Customer Premises Equipment (CPE) to enable dynamic delivery of scalable services for customers.

"CenturyLink is taking its network assets and combining them with our expanded NFV platform and cloud services to create a customizable and dynamic applications marketplace infrastructure that will give businesses near real-time provisioning and more control over their service experience," said Aamir Hussain, CenturyLink executive vice president and chief technology officer. "The customer experience is a top priority for CenturyLink. Integrating virtualized services into our network and developing an interactive marketplace and portal for our customers allows us to be more responsive to market opportunities and meet changing customer demands. We are pleased that our

efforts position CenturyLink as an industry leader in virtualization."

CenturyLink is actively replacing hardware with software over its recently launched Programmable Services Backbone (PSB) to quickly deliver new services to enterprises and small and medium businesses through virtualized functions. CenturyLink and Ciena (formerly Cyan) **announced** in March 2015 that the PSB will be mobilized by Ciena's **Blue Planet NFV** Orchestrator. The PSB platform will bring SDN and NFV functions to CenturyLink's core and metro networks, and new next-generation CPE, bringing the company's networking, cloud, hosting and IT services into an integrated offering that will be accessed through a portal and set of Application Programming Interfaces (APIs).

CenturyLink began implementing network virtualization and automation in 2013 when it partnered with five vendors to develop an open environment through common API structures, creating interoperability and enhancing the creation of applications. In February 2014, CenturyLink **announced** its agreement with Ericsson to deliver a next-generation Operations Support Systems (OSS) and Business Support Systems (BSS) solution through a single, reliable transport infrastructure which can rapidly fulfill customer demands and create the support needed for implementing NFV and SDN services.

In addition to Ciena, CenturyLink is working with several vendors, including Arista Networks, Nuage Networks, Red Hat and Supermicro to implement virtualization functions in its network and to deliver NFV-based versions of the vendors' current product lines.

### **About CenturyLink**

**CenturyLink (NYSE: CTL)** is a global communications, hosting, cloud and IT services company enabling millions of customers to transform their businesses and their lives through innovative technology solutions. CenturyLink offers network and data systems management, Big Data analytics and IT consulting, and operates more than 55 data centers in North America, Europe and Asia. The company provides broadband, voice, video, data and managed services over a robust 250,000-route-mile U.S. fiber network and a 300,000-route-mile international transport network. Visit **CenturyLink** for more information.

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