



World's leading companies shape the future of Broadband networks

New perspectives at milestone broadband event trigger immediate actions to achieve industry goals

Atlanta, Ga. June 2, 2016: The Broadband Forum today announced the conclusion of a special three-day meeting held in Atlanta and subsequent agreement of the Board of Directors, with the purpose of examining common strategies for the future of broadband and IP networking. It also aimed to develop a new operational model and immediate actions that leverage new technology and development approaches to serve the business requirements of the stakeholders in the broadband market.

The outcome of the meeting was a course of action that included the following:

- The Forum must embrace the best of both open source and standards development and will immediately instigate new methods for rapid delivery of innovative software and standards for key use cases to the community of manufacturers, service providers and open-source organizations that replace traditional Standards Development Organization (SDO) approaches.
- To complement the above action, the Forum will take action to significantly increase its collaboration with key industry groups including developing open initiatives, including both members and non-members, for the benefit of the whole broadband community.
- The Forum must emphasize the work and methodology that is bringing the most value to stakeholders, such as new value added services, enabling the broadband smart home; a safe harbor for intellectual property, virtualized business and residential gateways, YANG data models, interop testing for ultra-fast networking and guidance for deployment best practices.

Service providers and equipment manufacturers which support broadband came from around the world to the Atlanta meeting to present their latest thinking on broadband networks to a large audience of Broadband Forum members and invited guests. AT&T, BT, CenturyLink, China Unicom, NTT Labs, Orange, Spark New Zealand, Sky, Telecom Italia and Vodafone, along with key broadband market equipment suppliers Adtran, Calix, Huawei, and Nokia, as well as analyst house Infonetics Research and test organization European Advanced Networking Test Center (EANTC), gave their visions of the future along with their views on how the Forum should contribute to the future of networking in terms of its work and operations.

An important context for the meeting was the emergence of the Cloud Central Office (CO). Demonstrations and presentations of the [Central Office Re-architected as a Datacenter](#) (CORD) project – an open source project led by [Open Networking Lab](#) and partners – were sponsored by AT&T at its Foundry lab in Atlanta. The demos showed participants how the Cloud CO concept could accelerate operators' deployment of new technologies in a re-imagined central office.

Broadband Forum CEO Robin Mersh said: "The meeting, regarded by many as one of the best in our history, pulled no punches. Perhaps the most important message is that while we have made significant strides towards 'agile, programmable and ultra-fast networks' in the last year, we need to dramatically extend and accelerate delivery of standards and software to enable the innovation the broadband industry needs."

The Atlanta meeting outlined many different perspectives and commonalities with some specific

conclusions for actions to be taken by the Broadband Forum. The meeting participants expressed agreement on the following:

- Ahead of the technology and deployment issues, the most significant theme from providers was the need for programmable networks that enable new sustainable business models. This is in line with the Forum's Broadband 20/20 service oriented vision initiative published last October.
- The need for interoperable standards may still be important but the traditional SDO approach of defining requirements and specifications for all possible eventualities is over, supplanted by agile development and an emphasis on best practices. Collaboration will be key. With the advent of locally distributed dynamic compute and software functions and Cloud CO, the model of end-to-end architecture may no longer have the same meaning.
- Next, the advent of virtualization, networking programming, open-sourcing and projects such as CORD has clearly been understood. The value of IT technologies to transform carrier business is evident and the industry is ready to start this transformation. The standard implementation of these approaches is far from settled and there is a consensus that this needs rapid resolution.
- There are many unresolved issues in terms of migration, testing and intellectual property rights. The role of provider and manufacturer as system integrator has become blurred with open sourcing and there is concern about standardization becoming replaced by integrator lock-in especially for smaller providers.
- The Forum does have extensive liaisons with industry associations but the anticipated initiatives will have to include much closer collaboration with OPNFV, IETF, ETSI NFV-ISG, Open Networking Foundation, TM Forum and the CORD community, among others. The Forum looks forward to working on some key initiatives with all its partners.

From the various inputs, the meeting looked at new roles and important changes to be adopted by the Forum to enhance its industry impact and interactive delivery processes.

The exciting new areas where the Broadband Forum can provide great value and lasting impact for the broadband industry include: providing a safe harbor for intellectual property rights (the Broadband Forum has taken a leadership role in this area); providing migration guidance and software; interoperability and performance testing; implementation; functional broadband expertise; and defining software service platforms on which providers, vendors, and application developers can innovate. In addition, the Forum will provide iterative specifications, test initiatives and supporting software, upstream and downstream of specific solutions open to members and non-members. The Forum can provide invaluable implementation best practices guidance to the large number of regional and local services providers which do not have the resources to keep pace with developments.

Many of the innovative definitional, testing and implementation projects currently underway are very well aligned with both adding valuable service and industry thinking. The projects include virtual residential and business gateways, Cloud CO, Software Defined Networking (SDN) broadband management, G.fast deployment projects, residential and business user services platform, hybrid wireline-wireless and broadband assured IP services, etc.

A full meeting report is available to Broadband Forum members.

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About the Broadband Forum

Broadband Forum, a non-profit industry organization, is focused on engineering smarter and faster broadband networks. Our work defines best practices for global networks, enables service and content delivery, establishes technology migration strategies, engineers critical device & service management tools, and is key to redefining broadband. Our free technical reports and white papers can be found at www.broadband-forum.org. Twitter @Broadband_Forum.

For more information about the Broadband Forum, please go to <http://www.broadband-forum.org> or follow @Broadband_Forum on Twitter. For further information, please contact Brian Dolby on +44 (0) 7899 914168 or brian.dolby@proactive-pr.com or Jayne Garfitt on +44 (0) 1636 812152 or jayne.garfitt@proactive-pr.com.