

Webinar report: Take back control of your infrastructure



Today's world is brittle, fragile, and subject to unpredictable situations. Businesses must be more flexible than ever to adapt to these constant changes. Additionally, the path of technology has accelerated and is evolving endlessly; keeping an organization up to speed while managing costs is a true challenge.

To help you understand how your enterprise can overcome these obstacles, harness disruptive technologies such as Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI), and achieve success, we recently hosted a webinar with **Mary Johnston Turner, vice president of research at IDC** and **Pierre-Marie Binvel, vice president of product marketing connectivity services at Orange Business**. This paper summarizes the key discussion points made during the event, which covered how to regain control of your infrastructure.

The core challenges facing enterprises today

As an enterprise, you are facing three core challenges:

1 Evolving needs

We're seeing more and more businesses rely on disruptive technologies, such as Gen AI, to grow and innovate. To do this means having agile, flexible, and scalable environments; in other words, turning to the cloud. Deploying those services effectively while managing the disruptive technologies you need requires skills and capabilities in high demand. Plus, a rapidly growing digital footprint increases the risk of cyber-attacks.

2 Constantly transforming markets

You can choose from many solutions that will deliver the same outcomes. On the one hand, this choice means that any enterprise can access the technology they need to meet their specific needs. Yet, on the other hand, choice cannot sacrifice performance – everything needs to be connected and chained together to ensure consistency.

3 The softwarization of everything

With the cloud becoming the preeminent delivery model for services, enterprises increasingly expect as-a-service as standard. Yet, at the same time, business is happening at the edge, so the question is, how do you link the two? That software-based delivery also means that change is much faster, massively accelerating technological shifts. It's delivering immense innovation and enabling the convergence of services to create new categories, such as SASE and SDCI. But the pace is relentless, so can you keep up?

All of this puts greater and greater demands on your infrastructure. No wonder then that, in our recent webinar, Mary Johnston Turner, vice president of research at IDC, said that "more than ever before, digital infrastructure is becoming not just top of the CIO agenda but the C-suite overall."



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Driving revenue with digital

Johnston Turner noted that CEOs' biggest focus when it came to technology was using it to drive more revenue-generating activities, and they recognized the need for different skills to enable that – digital strategy proficiency was a top three skill requirement. Senior executives understand that investment in digital business initiatives is necessary and that the roadblocks to operationalization severely threaten the organization's long-term viability¹.

There is a major complicating factor, however: Gen AI. As Johnston Turner put it, Gen AI disrupts everything. The ability to take all sorts of data, apply large language models, and create natural language outputs and automation is taking the market by storm.

This has significant implications for infrastructure. A massive increase in processing power and data is hitting enterprise cloud networks, which need to be agile, flexible, and scalable enough to handle this influx today and support future changes. As such, it's unsurprising to hear that a separate IDC survey found that 52% of Gen AI investments will go on dedicated and or public cloud infrastructure in the next 18 months.

This will all be shaped by the Gen AI use cases enterprises deploy. There will be some, such as customer support, help content, and other non-confidential information, that will be well served by public clouds. However, alternatives must be found where data is confidential or proprietary.

Compounding these demands are the age-old issues of acquiring and developing the skills and capabilities to manage this technology and the security and privacy implications. Any infrastructure, whether IT or network, must help enterprises tackle those obstacles to success.

The guiding principles of a digital infrastructure

What's the answer? Pierre-Marie Binvel, vice president of product marketing connectivity services at Orange Business, summarised it as needing to be based on three guiding principles:

1. Cloud is the new benchmark: enterprises are used to the as-a-service model enabled by cloud computing, so any solution must mirror that composability.
2. It has to be a catalyst for innovation: the infrastructure enables delivery. It must, therefore, be capable of supporting technologies designed to unlock innovation, not hinder them.
3. Trust and consistency must be embedded: the underlying platform must be dependable, able to deliver against ever-growing demands, and capable of being managed globally.

Taking back control with total experience

Building a platform based on these principles is exactly what Orange Business has been doing with Evolution Platform. It gives enterprises a network infrastructure that delivers today and is future-proofed for tomorrow.

Binvel outlined the three ways Evolution Platform supports enterprises looking for a digital infrastructure: orchestration, differentiation, and benefits.

- It's about orchestrating composable cloud, connectivity, and security services that you can consume with a cloud-native experience.
- It is differentiated by our global carrier-grade network and security assets.
- It benefits from the latest innovations that our ecosystem of partners can deliver.





Not just theory

This isn't just theory. A customer uses Orange Business' SD-WAN and runs a multi-cloud overlay with Aviatrix across a Microsoft Azure setup. Bridging these two worlds today is a manual, painful task. When there are changes on the VPN, similar changes must be made to the public cloud overlay, and vice versa.

With Evolution Platform, we're looking to automate these changes and ensure consistency and security, delivering cost savings of around 20-30% compared to the current setup.

Four key areas of focus for enterprises

Enterprises looking to invest in a digital infrastructure capable of meeting their network needs should consider four key areas:

- 1** Harness the cloud experience: Composable, pre-packaged infrastructure services will provide the cloud-like agility, flexibility, and scalability you need.
- 2** Plan for new Gen AI workloads: Future-proof your investments today to ensure that no matter what disruptive technologies you need to invest in, you can harness their benefits without overwhelming your operations.
- 3** Seamless interoperability, leveraging an innovative ecosystem: Access seamless delivery that draws on the expertise of leading vendors and partners to ensure you remain in control.
- 4** Secure the infrastructure: Security must be embedded within your network infrastructure, with controls and policies that identify the right environment for the right data.

What's next?

This first webinar provided a high-level overview of the market enterprises are operating, what's on the horizon, and what solutions are available to future-proof digital infrastructure. Over the next few months, there will be more sessions, digging into different topics in more detail. The first, SASE in Evolution Platform, will take place in early 2024. Look out for our invite to book your place.

In the meantime, you can go back over the key insights Johnston Turner and Binvel discussed in the [replay of our first webinar](#).



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1. IDC CEO Survey, February 2023

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