IBM Newsroom

IBM Brings AI-Powered Automation Software to Networking to Help Simplify Broad Adoption of 5G

IBM Cloud Pak for Network Automation is designed to help communications service providers improve networking and deliver new services in days, rather than months

ARMONK, N.Y., June 28, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- At Mobile World Congress 2021, IBM (NYSEIBM) announced new hybrid cloud AI-powered automation software for communications service providers (CSPs) to help deliver on the promise of 5G, including zero-touch operations, reduced costs and the rapid delivery of innovative services to customers. Using IBM Cloud Pak for Network Automation, CSPs can use AI-powered automation to stand up and manage networks quickly, in a wide range of environments, and is engineered to scale new services in days, rather than months.

CSPs provide a vital lifeline for citizens and enterprises globally, and even more so today, as unpredictable events can drive massive changes in network needs and traffic patterns. In fact, according to an IBM Institute for Business Value study, 82% of leading CSPs surveyed identified faster time-to-market of new services as the most important element for successful automation initiatives[1].

"As the telco industry races to capture new value from 5G and Edge computing, many are transforming their networks to software-defined platforms that can deliver on this promise. Yet our customers have identified that limited automation and the lack of real- time visibility across networks have hindered their ability to deliver innovative services to customers fast enough," said Andrew Coward, General Manager, Software Defined Networking, IBM. "To help address these growing demands, IBM's new Cloud Pak for Network Automation software uses AI-powered automation to enable zero-touch provisioning of new services which can facilitate the simplification of the management of network functions from the core to the edge."

IBM Cloud Pak for Network Automation, which is engineered to run in a wide range of environments on Red Hat OpenShift, provides a full suite of AI-powered automation capabilities to implement 5G and edge services by managing multi-vendor software-based network functions, which supports the evolution to autonomous operations. The software brings together advanced analytics, machine learning and AIOps to help CSPs discover hidden patterns and trends in networking data, so they can continually optimize network operations and performance with minimal human intervention. With the integration of IBM Cloud Pak for Watson AIOps and edge solutions including IBM Edge Application Manager, CSPs can automate the delivery of resources where they are needed dynamically.

With the addition of IBM Cloud Pak for Network Automation to the IBM Cloud Pak portfolio, CSPs can benefit in the following ways:

- **Generalized Network Lifecycle Modeling:** creates and automates vendor-agnostic models of physical, virtual and container network functions.
- **Intent-driven Orchestration:** Models the desired optimal operational state of a network that is automatically created rather than preprogramming workflows.
- **Automated Service Design and Testing:** Automation for the service itself and all underlying resources for test, pre-production, and production environments.
- **Real-time View of Live Network Performance:** Real-time view of all network and cloud infrastructures to monitor network uptime, performance optimization and faster automated problem resolution.

- **Closed-loop Operations:** Coupled with the IBM Cloud Pak for Watson AIOps, operators could realize a feedback loop between assurance and orchestration as they evolve to zero-touch or 'lights-out' operations.

IBM Cloud Pak for Network Automation is designed so that a network engineer could use it to turn up a site in a matter of 4-5 days. The solution enables hundreds of thousands of network functions, including hostname details, server ports, network architecture, tenants, IP address plans and more, to be organized and brought together (i.e.: "orchestrated") in real-time to deliver a holistic network service.

With the recent close of the acquisition ofTurbonomic, IBM plans to deliver the needed analytics and monitoring capabilities required of virtualized, automated networks. IBM plans to offer IBM Cloud Pak for Network Automation with Turbonomic network performance management and assurance. Turbonomic provides the ability to ingest large amounts of telemetry information and provide insight into performance and services to manage day-to-day operations. Through this planned integration, customers will have access to network recommendations from analytics, which will become dynamic actions within the network.

IBM Cloud Pak for Network Automation is one of the IBM Automation Cloud Paks that include a set of shared automation services supported by more than 30 ecosystem partners that helps professionals self-automate routine tasks so they can focus on high-value work. Today's announcement follows IBM's recent launch of IBM Watson Orchestrate to provide AI-powered automation to business professionals, and the acquisitions of Turbonomic, myInvenio, Instana and WDG Automation to build out a complete end-to-end AI-powered automation portfolio of software for transforming business processes and IT operations.

IBM Cloud Pak for Network Automation is built on Red Hat OpenShift®, can run in a wide range of environments including hybrid multi-cloud and multi-vendor, and can manage divergent networking vendor infrastructures, including edge networks. IBM Cloud Pak for Network Automation is available now. For more information, please visit https://www.ibm.com/cloud/cloud-pak-for-network-automation

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[1] IBM Institute for Business Value "Re-envisioning the CSP network" report
https://www.ibm.com/downloads/cas/73NVRNRY

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