






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SDNs Pave Path to Virtual Data Centers in 2013

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
There's almost no doubt that **software-defined networks** (SDNs) will be one of the dominant IT themes of 2013. After all, replacing command-line interfaces with applications that can be used to automate the management of networking equipment has some obvious benefits. The challenge is that there will be many flavors of SDNs, ranging from **proprietary implementations from vendors such as Cisco** to any number of offerings based on the emerging **OpenFlow** standard. At the same time, there will also be SDN implementations that are tightly coupled to hardware that will be deployed alongside software-only offerings.

What will be interesting to see is how IT organizations cope with all these options, which is what the folks at **ADARA Networks**, a provider of SDN software and virtualization technologies that help unify the management of IT infrastructure, are betting will be more commonplace in 2013. ADARA Networks CEO Eric Johnson says his company is the only vendor really focused on providing network virtualization capabilities that span multiple SDN implementations. As SDNs mature, Johnson says IT organizations are increasingly going to be looking for frameworks that allow them to manage multiple types of networks, each of which may be running a different SDN implementation.

In fact, Johnson argues that SDNs will ultimately become part of virtual data centers where compute and network resources will need to be managed via a common integrated framework for managing services that inevitably span multiple types of virtual and physical infrastructure.

While it's still relatively early days as far as SDN technology is concerned, it's obvious that **interest is running high**. It will be interesting to see to what degree SDNs get sucked up into a **larger virtual data center trend**, of which SDNs are a critical component.

In the meantime, IT organizations would do well to consider how their internal staffs are organized if for no other reason than the way they manage the data center today is almost certainly not going to be the way they will be doing it by the end of 2013.

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