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## Q&A: Interview with Skyline and ADARA on the Importance of Combining SDN Education with SDN Selling

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[ADARA Networks](#) and [Skyline Advanced Technology Services](#) recently announced a channel and training partnership to broaden Skyline's predominantly Cisco networking offerings to include ADARA's software-defined networking (SDN) and cloud computing products. The companies are also jointly developing a vendor-agnostic SDN training program to help the industry fill a critical gap in SDN skills. To find out more about the partnership, I spoke with Skyline's COO, Mike Zantotto, and ADARA's director of global accounts, Steve Garrido.

**VMblog:** Let's start with giving readers a little bit of background on your two companies.

Steve Garrido: ADARA provides a complete, production-ready SDN solution, built for cloud computing and networking solutions in the global enterprise capable of interoperability with current SDN and conventional IP Networking standards and vendors. We've been around for 10 years and have successfully extended our market from the federal government sector to enterprises.

Mike Zantotto: Skyline is a long-time VAR and trainer for networking solutions. We deliver leading-edge training, professional services and hardware sales for networking products. We specialize in combining design, training and implementation of networking solutions.

**VMblog:** Can you tell us about the channel and training partnership?

Zantotto: In the past couple of years, we've all seen a move to the cloud, and from hardware-focused networking to SDN. That's the point of our partnership with ADARA. Apart from selling and implementing ADARA's full range of SDN solutions, we're also developing our first open SDN training program. We're filling the market demand for SDN education and how to take advantage of the power of SDN technologies.

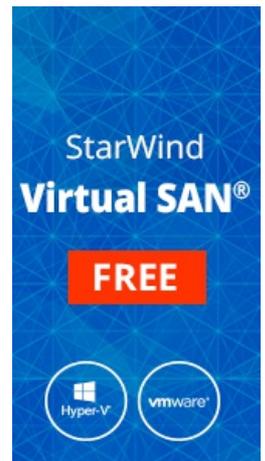
Garrido: Skyline will resell and implement ADARA's advanced SDN solutions, including ADARA cloud fabric SDN controller, OpenFlow-enabled switches and SDN WAN virtualization, acceleration and optimization. Our shared objective is to help Skyline customers optimize their legacy network infrastructures to increase security, scalability and network performance, and to improve access to critical business applications and data.

**VMblog:** What challenges have you seen companies facing in selecting and implementing SDN solutions?

Garrido: It's the customer's recognition of SDN use cases that drive capex, opex savings, agility, and measurable benefits over what customers are currently doing with legacy networking solutions. There seems to be a general lack of knowledge and some confusion about what those benefits are.

Zantotto: The biggest problem we have is finding talent - top-tier talent that can design and explain business solutions, pass on knowledge and teach people about new technologies. Everybody in technology faces this problem.

**VMblog:** What would you say are the most important elements of an SDN product and training partnership?



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Zanotto: We were looking for a technology that is 100% transparent and 100% open, and a partner with the ability to explain to key decision makers what the drivers are for the technology, what solutions we're providing, what problems we're solving, and what the payback is. You need to have a partner who not only has the product but can also help explain those things.



For customers that we have historically supported on Cisco for example, one of the challenges we always face is adoption - understanding what it is they're buying, getting their staff prepared to implement it, support it, and to troubleshoot for future upgrades. That's where education comes in. Education is a form of adaptation. People won't buy things that they don't know how to use, unless the provider has the expertise and the education to provide to them.



Garrido: This partnership is important to both our companies and to our customers. First, we want to help customers gain a good understanding of what SDN is. Second, it allows us to provide training and delivery of an SDN solution that solves pain points to companies looking to move to SDN. It's a combination of two critical components - teaching and solving business problems all in one package, delivered by Skyline and supported by ADARA.



#### VMblog: When will the SDN training program become available?

Zanotto: ADARA's SDN and cloud products are now available through Skyline.



Garrido: And we are currently developing a very dynamic training program, and expect to announce details in Q3 2015.

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Once again, a special thanks to Steve Garrido of ADARA and Mike Zanotto of Skyline for taking time out to speak with VMblog.com.

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