



ONOS Searches for a New Daddy



Linda Hardesty
October 2, 2015
11:30 am PT

More than one source tells SDxCentral that the [Open Network Operating System \(ONOS\)](#) community, currently curated by the Open Networking Lab (ON.LAB), is looking to find a new home with an [open source](#) foundation, and that home is likely to be the [Linux Foundation](#).

The Linux Foundation already hosts the [OpenDaylight Project \(ODL\)](#), which is somewhat of a competitor to ONOS.

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"I think Linux would have trouble explaining that away," said Christian Renaud, an analyst with [451 Research](#), when asked about the possibility of the foundation adopting ONOS. "I kind of view ONOS and ODL as mutually exclusive."

ODL was announced in April 2013 with the goal of advancing [software-defined networking \(SDN\)](#) adoption by creating a framework for building SDN controllers. ONOS was formed in November 2014.

A couple of weeks ago, during a call to discuss [ONOS' fourth code release](#), Ram Appalaraju, a strategic advisor to ONOS, said the group was created especially for the benefit of service providers. But Renaud says there's also a lot of focus on service providers within ODL.

ONOS itself seems to be doing well, with several carriers picking it up as the SDN controller for WAN and transport networks. Its service provider partners include [AT&T](#), [NTT Communications](#), [SK Telecom](#), and, most recently, China Unicom. Vendor partners are [Ciena](#), [Cisco](#), [Ericsson](#), [Fujitsu](#), [Huawei](#), [Intel](#), and [NEC](#).

Just this week, [Adara Networks](#) announced it has [joined the ONOS project](#) as a collaborator and will package ONOS for distribution as part of its SDN products.

But despite some increased momentum on ONOS, perhaps long-term, member-financed, open source projects are hard to sustain outside of a foundation. ODL clearly has many more supporters.

Having ONOS and ODL both under the Linux Foundation could provide a way to eventually merge these two projects, or at least foster greater collaboration between them, says Renaud.

To complicate things further, the Linux Foundation also hosts the [Open Platform for NFV Project \(OPNFV\)](#), which was created in September 2014.

ONOS could have courted a different foundation, such as the [Apache Foundation](#) or the [OpenStack Foundation](#).

As far as ONOS joining with the Apache Foundation goes, Renaud says, "That's a good idea. But what it comes down to is real traction in the market. I think the friction and competitiveness is good because multiple groups keep things from getting complacent. I don't think it's good they all have so many of the same members."

With so many open source organizations active, it can get confusing to keep track of them and the work they're doing. Many of these organizations even have the same company representatives as members.

Martin Lund, the [new CEO at Metaswitch](#), says the company allows its engineers to participate in open source groups. As far as the open source field being crowded, Lund says, "Yes, it's a lot to keep track of. But it's always like this. The curve is peaking. Over time, historically, a few get stronger, and the rest fall into a support role. I think there will be consolidation."

Just yesterday, [SDxCentral reported](#) that the [Open Networking Foundation \(ONF\)](#) is doing a bit of soul-searching itself.



About Linda Hardesty

Linda Hardesty is a Senior Editor at SDxCentral where she covers service providers and their use of SDN and NFV. Hardesty has been a trade journalist since the mid-1990s, alternately writing about telecommunications and energy. Most recently, she was editor of Energy Manager Today, a business-to-business publication covering energy efficiency and renewables. Previously, she wrote for Cable World magazine and Communications Technology, covering cable and broadband technology. She has a B.S. degree in Economics from Missouri University of Science and Technology and a B.A. in Journalism from Metropolitan State University of Denver. Hardesty can be reached at lhardesty@sdncentral.com



Comments



mfaisalk@yahoo.com says
October 2, 2015 at 12:53 pm

Are we rushing to form too many Open source bodies, when the end outcome is merging the in the end ?

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Linda Hardesty says
October 2, 2015 at 1:41 pm

According to Martin Lund at Metaswitch it's all part of the natural order of how things work.

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Dip Saikia says
October 3, 2015 at 11:59 am

ODL + ONOS would really be something. Considering both of them forked out of floodlight, it is certainly possible.

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