

# BEYOND THE BUZZ

Your Guide to the Reality  
of IT Modernization





# Accelerate Modernization With an Adaptive Network

Secure and reliable network connections are the foundation of IT modernization—but static networks are difficult to maintain and require lots of time, money and manpower to keep up with ever-changing mission needs. Analytic-driven Adaptive Networks, the next evolution in networks developed by Ciena and CenturyLink, ease this burden because they configure, monitor and maintain themselves. Innovative IT directors are investing in Adaptive Networks to accelerate network modernization while reducing maintenance and operating costs.

## Adaptive Networks are built on three key foundational elements:

### **Programmable Infrastructure**

Securely manage a pool of virtual and physical network resources that can be dynamically configured to increase service velocity, provide network performance insights and scale to meet the demands of most applications.

### **Analytics and Intelligence**

Apply data analytics and machine learning to accurately predict network problems and threats while anticipating utilization—the result is a self-learning, self-optimizing network that adapts to proactively support your agency objectives.

### **Software Control and Automation**

Leveraging software-centric network technologies and multi-domain service orchestration simplifies the end-to-end management and automation of services across multi-vendor, multi-domain hybrid networks.

**Adaptive Network solutions are available on select best-in-class government contracts, so no matter what your IT modernization strategy demands, CenturyLink and Ciena have your connections.**

Visit us and explore more at [CenturyLink.com/TransformingNetworks](https://CenturyLink.com/TransformingNetworks)

## Industry Spotlight

# Tackling IT Modernization Step by Step Through Pace-Layered Transformation

**An interview with Dave Young, Senior Vice President for Strategic Government, CenturyLink & Jim Westdorp, Chief Technology Officer, Ciena Government Solutions Inc (CGSI)**

Crafting the right strategy is only half the battle when it comes to IT modernization. In addition to working toward the best possible state of IT, agency leaders face the challenge of keeping track of what systems and technologies they already have. This can make it especially difficult to ensure that new technologies can operate alongside old services or infrastructure – and even more difficult to adequately secure networks. Compound such challenges with antiquated acquisition processes, and federal IT modernization seems like an insurmountable challenge.

But pace-layered transformation – using scenarios and trials to break IT modernization into smaller, more manageable steps – is helping agencies better understand their baseline IT technologies and carve viable paths toward IT transformation. Gartner defines pace-layering as categorizing applications and systems according to the rate at which they need to change, as opposed to applying the same, tedious method to every IT project.

In an interview with GovLoop, Dave Young, Senior Vice President for Strategic Government at CenturyLink and Jim Westdorp, Chief Technology Officer of Ciena Government Solutions, discussed how the federal government can couple pace-layered change with smarter contracting vehicles to make IT modernization more achievable. CenturyLink specializes in helping federal agencies enable innovation and maximize their resources to attain IT modernization. Ciena specializes in software-defined technologies and helps agencies unlock the value of their IT. Both companies focus on understanding mission goals, solution alternatives and risk assessments.

CenturyLink and Ciena work together to support different IT models and allow agencies to manage and own more of their new systems. CenturyLink's portfolio utilizes a number of Ciena technologies. "Our corporate relationship underpins our ability to be more effective for the government customer," Young said.

In November 2017, CenturyLink won a sought-after spot on the General Services Administration's 10-year, \$50 billion Alliant 2 program. Alliant 2 is a multiple-award program that federal agencies can use to buy customizable hardware, software and IT solutions that can be purchased as a package.

The GSA contract helps federal agencies consider different methods for IT modernization bundled in a number of options. "GSA architected a portfolio of contracts with common and

overlapping scope," Young said. "The Enterprise Infrastructure Solutions contract is geared toward buyers who think about buying out of legacy telecom services. Alliant 2 appeals to users who think of themselves as buying simple solutions."

Federal agencies can decide which services and solutions they need from a wide set of choices that are already vetted and meet government security standards. This leads to easier purchasing and deployment with assurance of secured networks. Not only can agencies plan for immediate IT modernization needs, but they can also better plan for the future.

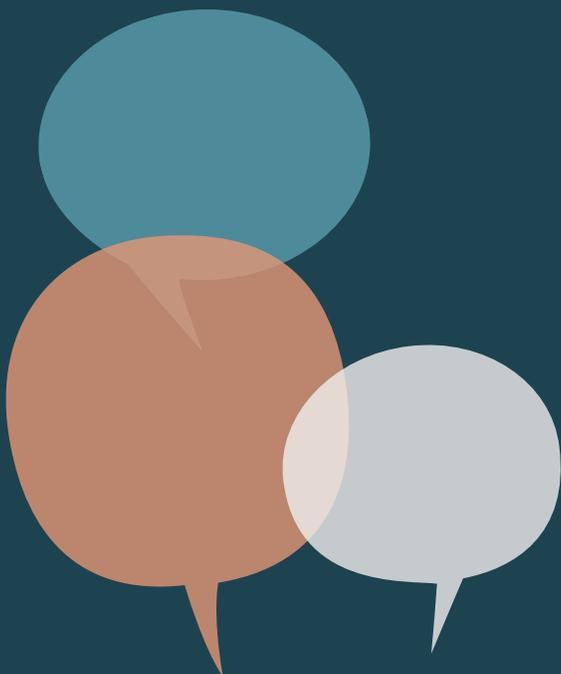
"The beauty of these contracts is that they anticipate evolving products and services to be added and made available over time," Young said. "So that means these contracts are not just meant for the moment and existing technology, but also for the evolving capabilities over the time."

Adding a pace-layering strategy allows agencies to be more agile in the procurement and deployment of apps and technologies. Agencies can move quickly on smaller projects that can be implemented easily and take the time they need on bigger projects without having to delay IT modernization.

"Chief information officers actually segment their IT portfolio into layers," Young said. For example, the bottom layer could be common, low-risk applications that can easily be standardized across the organization. The next layer is systems that are more mission-oriented and geared toward citizen services. The last layer Young described was innovation in terms of new capabilities and IT transformation.

To provide this flexibility across these layers, the federal government should consider software-defined networks for better performance. "A lot of the requirements that are needed for networks call for significantly greater capacities because new services are more data centric," Westdorp said. "Software-defined networking gives government agencies the flexibility to manage more of their network with tools that are standards-based and easier to maintain, and which can be moved as needed within the network."

Ultimately, with a pace-layered strategy for smarter deployments, innovative contracts for easier procurement and flexibility in managing networks, federal agencies can truly begin to tackle IT modernization.



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