Broadband Forum extends principles of
network disaggregation onto Access Nodes

New specification accelerates the migration of control and management
plane functions in the Access Node to virtualized functions within the CloudCO

Greater choice for operators, OpEx and CapEx savings, and reduced time to market for products will become a reality thanks to the latest release from [Broadband Forum](#).

Broadband Forum's [TR-477 'Cloud CO Enhancement - Access Node Functional Disaggregation'](#) and [MR-477 'Access Node Hardware Disaggregation'](#) provide network operators with a migration path from one of their largest network investments – existing Access Nodes such as Optical Line Terminals (OLTs) and Multi-Service Access Nodes (MSANs) – to a new disaggregated software-driven model approach.

This approach will enable clear separation of the control and management planes, decoupling the hardware and centralizing the software investment inside a [CloudCO](#) architecture. When hardware is decoupled, network operators have greater choice when choosing a supplier for individual components of their solutions.

"SDN-enabled Access Node disaggregation introduces new flexibility in the deployment of the management and control planes by supporting legacy investment and extending the principles of disaggregation, as well as using whitebox hardware and software solutions for future Access Node architecture," said Bruno Cornaglia of Vodafone who also serves as a Broadband Forum SDN/NFV Work Area Director. "The latest standard will help network operators protect their

investments, diversify the supply chain, and accelerate the transition to new physical layer access technologies."

Access Nodes in a broadband network are the critical elements that are responsible for aggregating thousands of access lines and processing data packets once the connection is established for the customer. Traditionally this is one of the largest network element investments made by a broadband network operator.

The disaggregated Access Node integration to a common, centralized control plane function provides a single point for service provisioning that can be expediently rolled out to all subscribers, improving time to market and market reach. When Access Nodes are disaggregated, operations can be simplified by automation of workflows, configuration, and maintenance tasks through standards-based interfaces and the use of a single, common and software-defined Central Office.

"Network operators can compare different products and leverage a multi-vendor environment for financial or technical benefits," said Mengmeng Li of China Mobile who also serves as a Broadband Forum SDN/NFV Work Area Director. "Vendors can also be assured of a one-time development cost with standardized disaggregated Access Node architecture, interfaces, and protocols as it allows interoperability between control plane and user plane elements."

There are a host of business benefits behind the specification work that is promoted by a multi-vendor, multi-technology CloudCO architecture. CloudCO is a reference architecture which allows network operators to modernize central office infrastructure and undertake their journeys to disaggregated network functionality.

For more information about Broadband Forum, please visit: https://www.broadband-forum.org/.

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Broadband Forum is the communications industry's leading open standards development organization focused on accelerating broadband innovation, standards, and ecosystem development. Our members' passion – delivering on the promise of broadband by enabling smarter and faster broadband networks and a thriving broadband ecosystem.

Broadband Forum is an open, non-profit industry organization composed of the industry's leading broadband operators, vendors, thought leaders who are shaping the future of broadband, and observers who closely track our progress. Its work to date has been the foundation for broadband's global proliferation and innovation. For example, the Forum's flagship TR-069 CPE WAN Management Protocol has nearly 1 billion installations worldwide.

Broadband Forum's projects span across 5G, Connected Home, Cloud, and Access. Its working groups collaborate to define best practices for global networks, enable new revenue-generating service and content delivery, establish technology migration strategies, and engineer critical device, service & development management tools in the home and business IP networking infrastructure. We develop multi-service broadband packet networking specifications addressing architecture, device and service management, software data models, interoperability and certification in the broadband market.

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