

# Grow Your Business With ConfD from Tail-f

More flexibility helps NEPs focus on business

In mature forests, fully grown trees can form a dense canopy that restricts the amount of sunlight reaching the ground. This can make it difficult for smaller plants and young trees to flourish, often requiring a significant event such as a forest fire to clear the way for new growth.

Today's technology startups may feel like a sapling stretching for any sunlight they can get. And indeed they face a daunting task in creating the right environment to find their footing and begin showing a profit. It's vital that they develop the ability to deliver their products as quickly and cost-effectively as possible.

This situation is particularly true in the network equipment provider (NEP) space. Because the telecom industry is rapidly evolving, requiring new interfaces and functionality for the providers, NEP startups face unique challenges when it comes to delivering the next generation of network management solutions to their customers.

## Evolving industry requires new functionality

NEP startups face unique challenges that can be overcome by maximizing flexibility from the beginning

## Challenges

- **Limited Time:** Whether the NEP was funded by venture capital or other investment channels, it's important to get up and running as quickly as possible. A startup doesn't have a stable of established customers and product lines to buy the time for a lengthy product development process. If the product takes too much time to get to market, they may find that the market has outpaced them and that larger competitors have already met the customer's needs – or worse, their funding may dry up and they will be left with unfulfilled business goals.
- **Limited Funds:** Closely tied into the need for quick development is the need for efficiency to keep overhead to a minimum. The NEP can't afford to spend too much money on the management plane development in particular, when other areas of the product such as control plane and data plane functionality will let them fully showcase their capabilities and make their mark in the industry.

- **Limited manpower:** A lean, agile startup has limited resources when it comes to programming. They can't afford to write the code for a single interface such as SNMP and then have to start from scratch to program a CLI, only to start over for additional interfaces. A siloed approach to management interface development can cost them dearly.
- **Need for flexibility:** Network requirements are changing rapidly, and telecom providers constantly find themselves needing to support new application and features. Building management products that will not only meet current requirements but will also support ongoing development is a high priority for today's network equipment providers.

These are a few of the laundry list of items that an NEP startup needs to address in order to make headway in the telecom marketplace. With so much riding on their initial product development, they need capable third-party products that will simply help them succeed. How can ConfD from Tail-f help them meet their goals?

## The Solution: ConfD

ConfD is a management plane solution created specifically to help NEPs simplify the product development process and get their equipment to market faster. Its flexibility and forward-thinking features make it the only off-the-shelf solution that can effectively ease the burden on startups and help them more quickly meet the key business benchmarks that can make or break a new company. ConfD delivers these key advantages:

- **Support for the latest interfaces:** In particular, YANG is now in high demand among telecom providers, driving a lot of established NEPs back to the drawing board for major overhauls to their products. A nimble startup can incorporate YANG functionality from the ground up, rather than attempting to incorporate it through rewriting the code for their existing boxes.
- **Efficient use of resources:** With limited resources, it's vital for a startup to be able to reuse code wherever possible, particularly in the management plane. Tail-f understands this need, with the mantra "program once, use many." Developers can program the initial interface and reuse that code for additional interfaces, whether they are developing a modem, switch or router. ConfD then allows them to apply that same code to every northbound interface, saving them a tremendous amount of time.
- **Lack of compatibility issues:** Starting from scratch, today's startups can avoid issues common to larger companies with the need to support legacy systems from previous versions of their product suites and bloated sets of applications.
- **Third party integration:** In addition to ConfD's ability to simplify development of the management plane of network equipment, ConfD has developed a healthy partner ecosystem with other providers. The fruits of these agreements are optional TailPacks. These bundles of add-on software allow ConfD to work seamlessly out of the box with other leading providers of networking solutions such as Metaswitch and IP Infusion. This makes the time to market even shorter for schedule-conscious startups.

## ConfD: Simplify the Management Plane

### Key advantages

- YANG functionality from the ground up, instead of rewriting code
- Apply the same code to every northbound interface
- Avoid need to support Legacy systems and bloated applications
- Simplify development with optional TailPacks
- Futureproof code

- **Support for product differentiation:** Because ConfD greatly simplifies the management plane, the product development process can focus more on what will set the NEP apart from the competition. The time savings allows them to improve product capabilities and support their customers' primary requirements.
- **Futureproofing:** One of the major issues facing NEPs today is the need to update the code for existing products with each new interface or feature that is added. This results from the siloed approach common to providers. With the simplicity offered by ConfD, a single model is used to develop any number of management interfaces, supporting current and future deployments.

The need for new functionality in today's networking equipment, such as including additional interfaces, is the "forest fire" opportunity startups have been waiting for. By maximizing flexibility from the very beginning, and incorporating the most cutting-edge technology into their products, young NEPs can avoid many of the challenges faced by established providers.

ConfD makes technological and operational sense for today's startups. It simply allows them to focus on their core competencies and get their products to market more quickly, meeting critical operational and profitability goals that foster stability in the industry. Simplified product development means they can bask in the glow of success, worrying less about the competition and more about how to keep innovating.



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