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Refresh once; refresh right

Top 5 benefits of moving to an enterprise network that mimics cloud infrastructures

A different approach to building out the enterprise network you deserve

IT leaders simply want an access network that provides a seamless wired and wireless experience without the usual time, financial, and operational challenges associated with traditional deployment methods - similar to cloud infrastructures.

Often, the traditional approach of product-by-product upgrade cycles leads to a staggered approach, where the wired or wireless access network infrastructure is upgraded today and the other portion of the network in the coming years. This leads to a never-ending cycle of refresh projects that never allow the organization to reach its ultimate goal. The agility that IT organizations experience in the cloud never gets translated to the enterprise networks that sit across their campus and branch locations.

In this guide, we highlight the top 5 reasons why IT leaders are throwing out the old, staggered refresh playbook and instead are opting for a new approach with Nile.
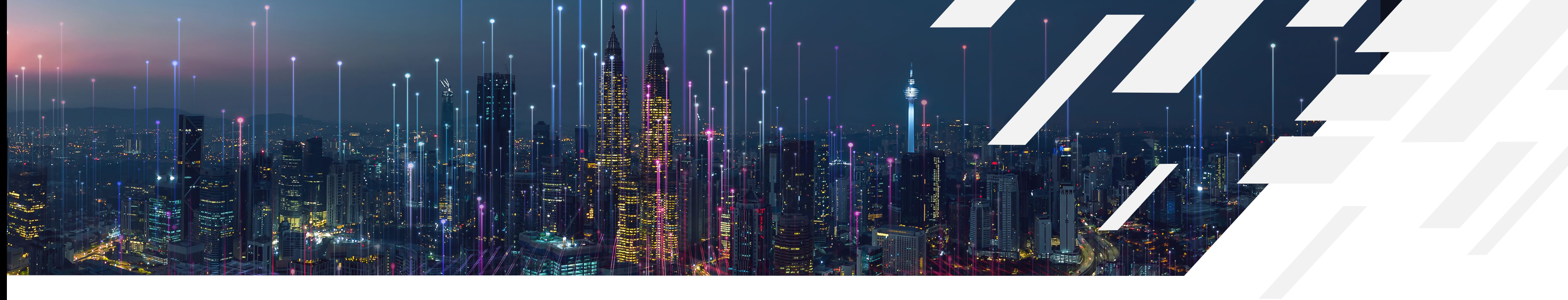
Reason #1

Transform high up-front hardware CAPEX into predictable OPEX to ensure financial stability and budget control.

Perhaps the biggest reason to elect for a staggered wired and wireless network refresh lifecycle is IT budgetary constraints. Staggered network upgrades have long been engrained within organizations, as they were the only way to receive enough capital to deploy enterprise-grade equipment, software licenses, professional installation services, and maintenance contracts.

Like cloud computing and software-as-a-service, Nile offers the opportunity to shift upfront expenses from CAPEX to OPEX, providing greater flexibility and financial efficiency. This provides far more budgetary flexibility to deploy a full stack wired and wireless network that's needed today without waiting for the next fiscal year to request additional funding. There's no longer a need to compromise.
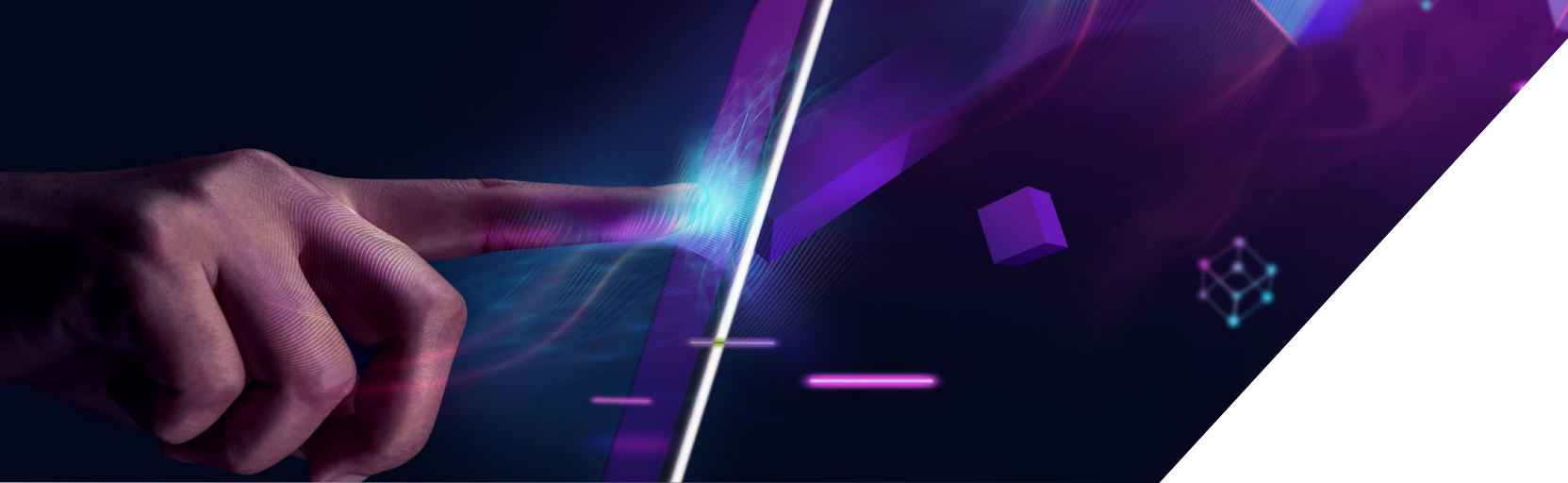
Reason #2

Deliver a unified wired and wireless experience to enhance the overall end-user experience by improving reliability and performance.

End users want consistent application and digital service experiences regardless of whether they are connected to a wired or wireless network. Using a staggered network refresh approach only exacerbates this issue. If only the wired or wireless network is refreshed with new hardware and features that lead to better reliability and performance, the shortcomings of legacy components become increasingly glaring.

Many IT leaders have concluded that this approach is not acceptable for their cloud infrastructures and should certainly not be for their enterprise networks. They realized that the only way to deliver the reliability and performance that their users and digital transformation endeavors demand is to conduct wired and wireless network upgrades simultaneously.

This not only removes many of the integration complexities and performance discrepancies, but it also eliminates numerous compatibility challenges inherent in environments that attempt to manage comingled new and legacy network components.

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Enhance IT efficiency and reduce costs by streamlining operations

IT leaders are beginning to examine ways to reduce operational costs. According to a Gartner report on IT Cost Optimization, "IT strategic cost optimization movies IT spending from reactive to proactive." The only way to accomplish this goal from a network operations perspective is to streamline and optimize IT processes to the point where they become highly predictable.

Performing staggered network upgrades creates an environment where the network's interoperability, reliability, performance, and scalability are inconsistent and overly complex. This leads to operations teams spending countless hours on unnecessary troubleshooting, complex workarounds, and scalability limitations. Achieving a proactive approach to IT cost optimization becomes an impossible task.

Safeguard integrity and reputation by upholding IT security compliance

Maintaining organizational or regulatory IT security compliance is essential in today's digital world. Strictly adhering compliance requirements:

- Protects against lost or stolen data
- Enhances trust with customers, partners, and stakeholders
- Ensures business continuity in the event of a security threat
- Avoids penalties, lawsuits, and regulatory sanctions
- Improves market competitiveness

Since the network serves as the foundation for accessing applications and digital resources, ensuring its security is paramount. Just like we cannot assume IT leaders would accept anything less than a highly secure cloud infrastructure for their digital initiatives, the same principles should be applied to infrastructures at the enterprise edge.

A staggered network refresh approach introduces several challenges to IT operators that significantly increase the risk of full compliance.

Examples where security compliance can go wrong when taking a staggered network refresh approach include:

- Compatibility issues between new and legacy equipment and software features
- Patch management complexities increase the amount of time and expertise required
- Limited end-to-end security control and visibility
- Increased attack surface, providing multiple entry points for cyber attacks

Addressing security compliance requires careful planning to ensure the overall security posture of the access network. This challenge intensifies exponentially when using a staggered network refresh approach.

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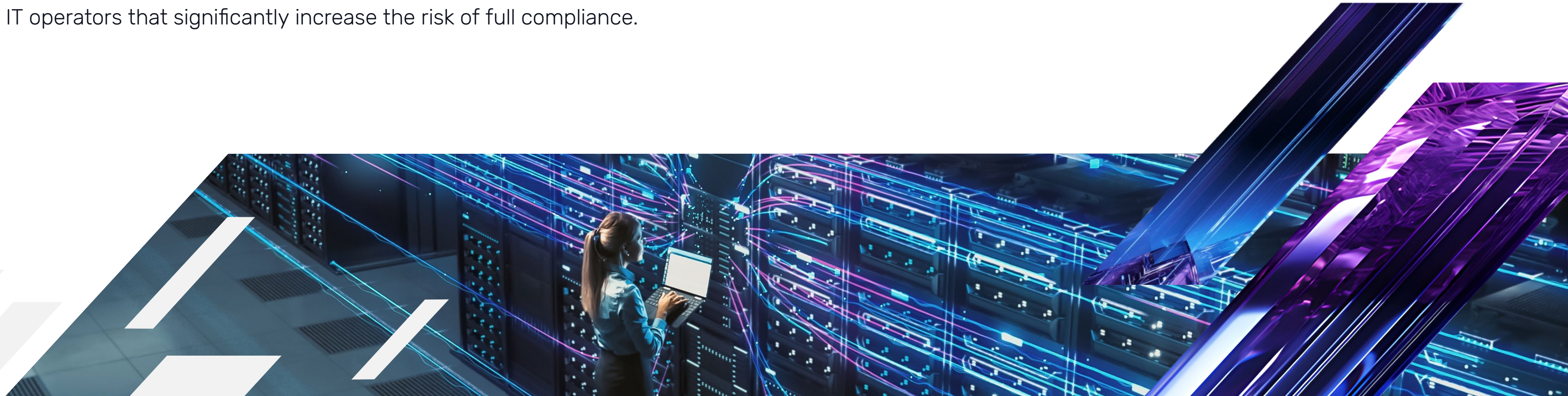
Avoid inefficient duplication of project management and implementation efforts

Project managers and in-house technical resources often spend countless hours planning and organizing infrastructure refresh projects including the access network. This includes the design, integration considerations, bill of materials (BOM) creation, staging, testing, and deploying. Often, the in-house resources needed for a network refresh project are already stretched thin. This leads to projects that quickly stall or are poorly executed. After completing the fractional upgrade, the cycle begins anew with the next phase of the staggered refresh rollout. It's a never-ending cycle.

Certainly, this entire process goes against the agile innovation principles adopted across best-in-class IT organizations with the arrival of cloud infrastructures. The goal should again be to translate these principles to the enterprise edge. Consolidating the implementation process into a single project that delivers a complete wired and wireless solution brings numerous time-saving benefits that are hard to ignore.

They include:

- A single design and planning phase
- Simultaneous deployment to reduce business disruptions
- Shortened implementation timelines
- Consolidated testing and validation phases

Ultimately, a single-phase upgrade approach allows the business to immediately realize the full benefits of their investment with unified performance, improved security, lower operational overhead, and fewer in-house resources. And with Nile, those benefits are further magnified as we deliver:

- A full stack and standardized network design using the latest enterprise technologies
- A unified and closed loop architecture that is continuously optimized using AI
- A single data store for complete wired and wireless lifecycle visibility

In the end, you get exactly what you want. A unified and reliable wired and wireless network that delivers guaranteed performance availability without the upfront capital expenditure, in-house resource commitments, and operational and security headaches.

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There are no capex spikes or overpaying of opex. We simply pay-per-user and scale as we go. This truly is a network-as-a-service.

- ADRIAN BROWN, VP OF SECURITY, IT, AND PRODUCT OPERATIONS

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