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Technology

Cisco's ex-CEO and former engineering chief unveil their years-in-the-works networking startup

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By **Cromwell Schubarth** – TechFlash Editor,
 Silicon Valley Business Journal
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John Chambers and fellow Cisco Systems Inc. vet Pankaj Patel are finally unveiling the networking startup they launched four years ago.

Nile Global Inc. claims to have overhauled both networking itself and how such systems are managed. The Santa Clara startup's service aims to address the growing amount of money companies spend on network operations, which already dwarfs what they spend on network equipment.

Chambers and Patel's new company relies on artificial intelligence and machine learning to manage data networks, instead of humans. And it's offering its service on a "pay-as-you-use" basis that can be adjusted to customer needs.

The current market, where network operation costs keep swelling "simply isn't sustainable," Patel, Nile's CEO, said in a news release Wednesday. Despite that, he added, "the entrenched incumbents have not responded (because they have) business models, ecosystems, and an installed base to



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OAC Services, Inc.

The startup has already been awarded or filed for 40 patents, according to the press release. It's also raised \$125 million in funding to date from investors who include Chambers' JC2 Ventures, March Capital, 8VC and Iconiq.

And it has Chambers and Patel.

Chambers is Nile's executive chairman. He was the longtime CEO and chairman of San Jose-based Cisco, leading it from a small networking company to a global giant. Patel's, meanwhile, had a 20-year career in the networking industry himself, much of it at Cisco, where he served as its chief development officer from 2013 to 2016.



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...industry," Chambers said in the press release.

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