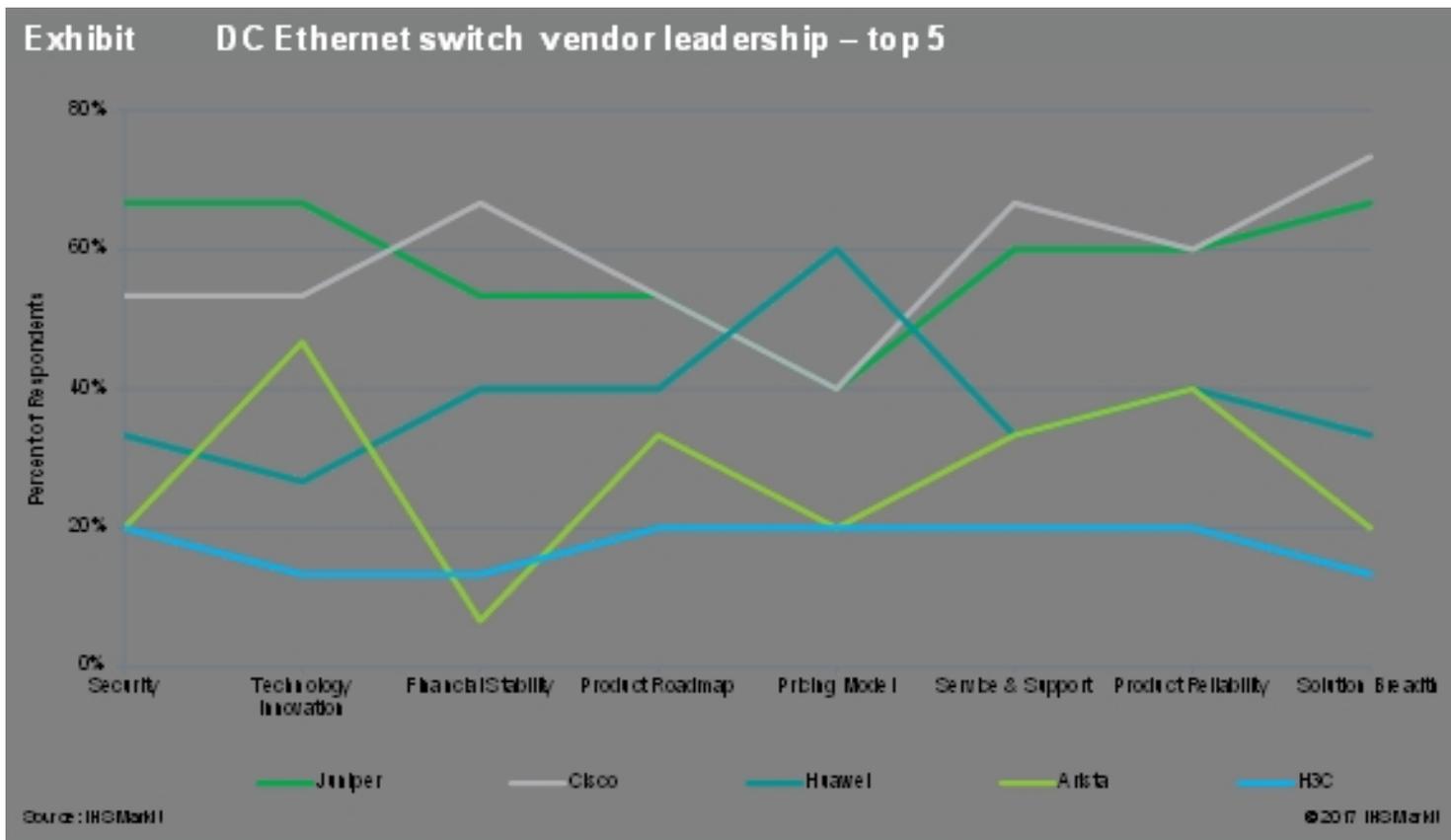


Service Providers Invest Further in Datacentres

Written by Alice Marshall
10 August 2018

IHS Markit reports service providers are investing in datacentres to improve scalability, deploy applications rapidly, enable automation and harden security, pointing out an opportunity in the server and networking hardware markets.



The findings come through the IHS Markit Data Center Strategies and Leadership Global Service Provider Survey. Respondents state plans to take advantage of new options from server vendors, such as ARM-based servers and parallel compute co-processors, to better match servers to workloads. Said workloads deployed by respondents are IT applications (including financial and online transaction processing), ERP and generic VMs on VMware ESX and Microsoft Hyper-V. As for top requirements, service providers mention speed and support for network protocol virtualisation, as well as SDN.

“Traditional methods for network provisioning to provide users with a quality experience, such as statically assigned priorities (QoS) in the DC network, are no longer effective,” the analyst

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says. "The datacentre network must be able to recognise individual application traffic flows and rapidly adjust priority to match the dynamic nature of application traffic in a resource-constrained world. New requirements for applications delivered on demand, coupled with the introduction of virtualisation and datacentre orchestration technology, has kicked off an unprecedented transformation that began on servers and is now reaching into the datacentre network and storage."

Datacentres will always need physical networks as a foundation for the high-performance connectivity applications demand. Survey respondents list Cisco, Juniper, Huawei, Arista and H3C as the top 5 datacentre ethernet switch vendors in each of 8 selection criteria. These vendors have a long history in hardware, and respondents weigh factors such as product reliability, service and support, pricing model and security when buying a switch.

In addition, respondents expect a 1.5x increase in the average number of physical servers in their datacentres by 2019, and mention scalability (a driver for 93% of respondents), rapid application deployment (87%), automation (73%) and security (73%) as top investment drivers. An average of 90% of servers should be running hypervisors or containers by 2019, up from 74% in 2017.

The most popular datacentre fabric features are high speed and network virtualisation protocol support (80% of respondents each) and SDN, and all respondents plan to invest more in SSDs. Software-defined storage is in the plans of 80% of respondents, and NAS is in 67%.

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