



Provide integrated solutions for business customers within hours—not weeks or months



Free engineers' time to provide more value-added services



Get customers out of the infrastructure business and into a world of easy provisioning

Lumen Delivers the Right Clouds, Faster Than Ever

With VMware Cloud Foundation, Lumen has been able to reduce provisioning times for a full stack of compute, network and storage from weeks to hours. The integrated, pre-validated solution also frees time for Lumen engineers, allowing them to provide more value-added services and consulting to their customers.

Piece by piece vs. all in one

Global networking and managed services provider Lumen serves business customers with a full VMware stack, managed from its own data centers. The company is a VMware Cloud™ Verified partner, meaning they offer a complete VMware software-defined data center (SDDC) as a service, as well as value-added options such as disaster recovery and professional services.

“Customers need infrastructure faster,” says Steven Nolen, who manages private hosted cloud products for Lumen. That sums up the business and technical challenges for pretty much every cloud service provider in business today. Complexity, however, is the enemy of speed.

In the old days—a year or two in technology time—service providers had to spend weeks or months to get compute, storage and networking stacks integrated, validated and working together. When one product in the stack needed a patch or an upgrade, that meant more time retesting and revalidating.

LUMEN®

Lumen is an enterprise technology platform that enables companies to capitalize on emerging applications and power the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Lumen integrates network assets, cloud connectivity, security solutions, and voice and collaboration tools into one platform that enables businesses to leverage their data and adopt next-generation technologies. Lumen brings together the talent, experience, infrastructure and capabilities of CenturyLink, Level 3 and more than 25 other technology companies to create a new kind of company—one designed specifically to address the dynamic data and application needs to create the platform for amazing things.

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Faster, simpler infrastructure

With VMware Cloud Foundation, Lumen now has a solution that integrates compute, storage and network—VMware vSphere®, VMware NSX® and VMware vSAN™—in one pre-validated stack. “Instead of building all those as separate pillars, VMware Cloud Foundation allows me to do all that together within one interface,” said Nolen. “We can build out infrastructure in hours—where before, we were talking about weeks and months. That’s powerful.”

On top of VMware Cloud Foundation, Lumen uses the VMware vCloud Director® cloud service delivery platform and adds customizations to create their hybrid cloud offering, Lumen® Cloud Application Manager. Cloud Application Manager provides a single interface where Lumen customers can monitor and manage their VMware footprint across multiple public and private clouds, building out network, storage and compute as needed. The offering also includes dedicated 10-gigabit Ethernet connections for vSAN and VMware management traffic and customized automation. The Lumen offering can support more than 1,000 hardware configuration options for a wide variety of requirements.

“Customers have been asking for this for a while,” said Nolen. “They say, I need to be agile, I need to make changes fast. Now we have a platform that allows us to build a firewall in a few minutes versus ordering a firewall and getting it in a few weeks. Same for tools like VPN and server load balancing. To be able to do that quickly is important.”

Nolen cited the example of a recent project with a global financial company. This growing company needed an environment that had rock-solid security, yet was flexible enough to change as their business changes. Lumen began with VMware Cloud Foundation, then layered on additional services, such as storage and security, to meet regulatory and compliance requirements. “We provided a solid base with VMware Cloud Foundation to meet their future flexible growth needs and customized for them. Now, this customer can perform a critical task like micro-segmentation from one interface by clicking on a button.” VMware Cloud Foundation meets their needs today and will help them change or expand to meet future business requirements.

The company can also provide their customers with a simplified path to different clouds, such as migrating to VMware Cloud on AWS. VMware HCX® is an important tool for Lumen. “Over 20 years of managed hosting, we’ve done a lot of migrations,” said Nolen. “We’ve gone through a dozen different tools. HCX is a very powerful and capable tool. And because of our long-standing VMware partnership, we’ve been able to work with VMware to add functions to the product that we know will be useful to customers.”

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STEVEN NOLEN
MANAGER, PRIVATE HOSTED CLOUD PRODUCTS,
LUMEN



Experience in, better software out

Lumen has worked with VMware for more than 16 years. “They’ve grown with us and we’ve grown with them,” said Nolen. “We get engaged with product management, suggesting missing features to add, and they’ve put those on the roadmap. It’s a partnership that’s allowed us to continue to evolve and grow our business.”

That partnership has extended to helping develop VMware Cloud Foundation. “From the first release, when we found some challenges, we continued to work through them and had a good back-and-forth dialogue with VMware,” said Nolen. Those conversations paid off: Nolen noted that after Lumen upgraded VMware Cloud Foundation recently, “For a four-node stack, the new version reduced our build time from 40 hours to four hours. That’s huge.”

VMware’s broad range of products ultimately means providing better options for existing and potential customers. “A lot of service providers that do managed hosting, they say, ‘Here’s my three solutions, and if you go outside this list, we can’t help you.’ VMware lets us be flexible. Need VDI on top of VMware Cloud Foundation? We can add VMware Horizon®. Are you in the gaming industry? We can add GPU cards. It provides that flexibility to meet a much broader suite of solutions and opportunities for our customers.”



@lumentechco solves for complexity
with #VMware Cloud Foundation.
