

Sea Street looks to automate SD-WAN, SASE services for operators

By Mike Dano, Editorial Director 5G & Mobile Strategies

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Sea Street Technologies was founded in 2012 by Cisco's former CTO with the goal of automating network services for operators. Now, the company is stepping more fully into the space with the launch of a new product initially aimed at the market for SD-WAN and secure access service edge (SASE) services.

CEO Harley Stowell said his efforts today stem from the problems he saw among Cisco's service provider customers.

"What I saw was our carrier customers were spending literally hundreds of millions of dollars on cloud computing, integrated infrastructure, which had a software stack on board, which was yesterday's architecture," he told Light Reading. "And that architecture was constrained and siloed to fulfillment. It couldn't manage and automate the lifecycle of dynamic services, which is a fundamental requirement of a cloud platform, which is globally distributed now."

He continued: "So the requirement for a completely new architecture for developing service products and then delivering and managing them became apparent to me at the time."

That was the impetus behind Sea Street Technologies.

During the past few years – which included \$60 million in venture funding – Stowell said Sea Street tested out its technologies via a handful of market deployments with big-name operators (ones that Stowell declined to name). In one effort that involved a cable operator, Sea Street reported that its autonomous services were able to speed up video delivery by a factor of ten while concurrently cutting operating expenses by 70%.

Now, following those tests, Stowell said Sea Street is formalizing its autonomous efforts under the StratOS brand and will initially sell it to network operators in the SD-WAN and SASE space.

"What we're really trying to do, aside from the technology capability, is re-engineer the economics of long-term contract value for providers. It's the business model of choice, and we're deploying these services so they can scale massively and strip all that opex out to impact that bottom line," he said. "Nobody wants to own and operate technology anymore. They want to operate and deliver high-value services to the edge. So we're really focused on re-engineering that financial model at hyper scale right now."

Sea Street of course is not alone. A wide range of other vendors have touted similar advances in the realm of autonomous, zero-touch network operations – the overall goal of which is to remove the human element in order to speed operations and cut costs.

The dramatic reductions in network operators' employee counts around the world are likely a testament to the success of such products.