

IN THIS WEEK'S ISSUE: Don't Make The Sale, Make The Relationship; IT Vendor Or Diet Pitch? Please remember to enable the images; the magazine looks a lot better that way!



PACKETPUSHERS

Human Infrastructure Magazine

A Newsletter About a Life in Networking

Table of Contents (aka The Project Plan)

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- [1. Don't Make The Sale, Make The Relationship](#)
- [Sponsor: Apstra](#)
- [2. The Common Language Of IT Vendors & Diet Schemes](#)
- [Internets Of Interest](#)
- [Product News](#)
- [PacketPushers.net - The Last Five](#)
- [Quick Survey: Airplane Wi-Fi](#)
- [Last Issue's Survey Results](#)

The "Transformation" issue.

Thought For The Week:

No one expects the Spanish Inquisition!

1. Don't Make The Sale, Make The Relationship

by Ethan Banks

Russ White and I were recently commiserating about the dearth of engineer-oriented conferences these days. While there are some, most of the conference heads seem to think that they have to target so-called decision-makers.

In IT, what is meant by “decision-makers” is “people with signing authority.” In other words, if you’ve got a budget, then obviously, you make the decisions. If you make the decisions, then a conference can be built around you. Why? Because vendors with marketing budgets to spend will get all excited that you’re going to be at the conference, and throw their money at the conference for the ability to shill for their products. And so the gears of commerce grind.

Vendors and conference leaders, this is wrong-headed for a lot of reasons, but one critical one. **So-called “decision makers” don’t act on their own.** Instead, the managers with the budgets who sign on the dotted line to buy things base their decisions on what their engineering staff tells them will work.

Wait. Is that right? Or is it more true that decision makers buy whatever their incumbent vendor sales person who takes them out for a nice lunch a few times each year tells them to buy? I’m not a stupid man (arguably). I know that sometimes the business of IT gets done because of a handshake. A subtle bribe. A nice lunch. Box seats at the sportsball stadium. I get it.

Despite that, I can also say that I’ve never had a decision maker make an IT infrastructure investment without me telling him or her that it was the solution needed. In those cases, I was the lead engineer. Or the technical team lead. Or a trusted consultant. I analyzed the business problem. I recommended a solution. I modified as necessary to match budget. That’s what we bought.

There are a couple of things at work here.

1. **I was a trusted resource.** I had proven my technical worth to the company I worked for. Therefore, decision makers were reluctant to buy anything without my involvement. Not every engineer has that trust. Fair enough. But in almost every organization, there are technical resources who do indeed play that role.
2. **I was, in effect, the decision maker.** I might not have always had a budget or signing authority, but I moved the hand that did the signing.

Interestingly, I sometimes dealt with the same vendors or VARs from company to company. Alternately, I'd run into the same people repeatedly and I and they moved around into different roles. Regional tech is like that. We know each other. We've probably been working together for years.

And that brings me to highlight a point Russ made in our chat. **Don't make the sale. Make a relationship.** The relationship you make with the engineer will ultimately affect the decision maker you think you're supposed to be targeting. Not only that, but the engineer of today is the decision maker of tomorrow. If you have the relationship now, you'll keep the relationship later.

The end game is a human one. Build real relationships with real people, working with them where they are at. Respect them not only for the role they have and the influence they exert, but also for the role they'll play tomorrow.

If you burn them now by going over their heads or ignoring the value they bring, they'll never forget it. Engineers have long memories. However, if you leverage their input and speak to them directly, you'll help them succeed now. They'll be more likely to trust you in the future. Sure, you might not make the sale today. But perhaps you'll make it tomorrow.

Relationships are like that. Sometime it takes a while for an investment of time to payoff. But when it does, it's worthwhile.

Sponsor: Apstra

Join Apstra and the Packet Pushers at Cisco Live!



*The Intent
to Party
Party*

Monday June 26, 7:00 - 9:00 pm

apstra

PACKETPUSHERS
Where Too Much Networking
Would NEVER Be Enough

If you're going to be at Cisco Live in Las Vegas this June, we'd love to see you at the Apstra Intent to Party Party.

Join the Packet Pushers and Apstra for dinner, drinks, and great conversation. This is an invitation-only event, so if you'd like to participate, please [click here to request an invitation](#).

[Request your invitation here](#) and we'll see you in Vegas!

When: Monday, June 26, 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Where: The Border Grill at Mandalay Bay Resort

2. The Common Language Of IT Vendors & Diet Schemes

by **Drew Conry-Murray**

Is your data center feeling bloated? Have you packed on a few extra terabytes? Does your IT organization want to shed processes and get more agile?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, it's time to try **Digital Transformation!**TM

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The Network Break



Network Break is a weekly podcast that delivers news & analysis on the networking industry in a fun, fast-paced style. [Subscribe here!](#)

Internets Of Interest

A collection of pre-loved links that might interest you. "Pre-loved" because I liked them enough to put into this newsletter. It's not *true* love.

By Greg Ferro and Drew Conry-Murray

Take The Packet Pushers' SD-WAN Survey

The Packet Pushers have talked about SD-WAN a lot over the past couple of years, so we thought it might be a good idea to shut up and give you a chance to tell us what you think about it.

We [put together a survey](#) to get an idea about your interest in SD-WAN. Our goal is to get some vendor-neutral data on questions like current and potential adoption, WAN challenges, and relevant features and functions. If you have a few minutes, we'd appreciate your responses.

[LINK](#)

The Ridiculous Bandwidth Costs of Amazon, Google and Microsoft Cloud Computing

A [blog post at Arador.com](#) examines the bandwidth costs for transferring data out of two Amazon services, Google, Microsoft. He also shows pricing for a colo service and Google Fiber to provide a comparison. The results speak for themselves:

"Amazon EC2, Microsoft Azure and Google Cloud Platform are all seriously screwing their customers over when it comes to bandwidth charges."



WEEKLY SHOW

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Priority Queue

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Priority Queue tackles niche and nerdy tech topics and cutting-edge research projects. [Subscribe here!](#)

Product News

Find out about interesting new products, or get essential information about things you might already be using.

Cumulus Networks Launches NetQ Telemetry Application To Monitor Network State

Cumulus Networks is rolling out an agent called [NetQ](#), which streams network telemetry in real time to provide system-wide visibility into

network state and make it easier for network operators to validate configuration changes and troubleshoot problems.

[LINK](#)

Uila Adds User Experience Tracking To Their Monitoring Platform

Uila (a Hawaiian word pronounced “wee-la”) is a full-stack monitoring company. That is, Uila monitors all aspects of your data center infrastructure, including networking, storage, and virtualization. These aspects are correlated to application performance. When there is a problem within the infrastructure, the Uila interface is designed to make it easy to find the root cause with a high degree of certainty.

[LINK](#)

Recent Podcasts

The last five podcasts published on Packet Pushers

PacketPushers.net - The Last Five

[PQ Show 118: IETF & The Enterprise Data Center Operators Group](#)

[Datanauts 087: The Future Of Infrastructure Security](#)

[Network Break 138: AT&T Buys Vyatta; BA Grounded By Outage](#)

[Show 342: Big Ideas About Networking](#)

[PQ Show 117: VMware NSX & Container Networking \(Sponsored\)](#)



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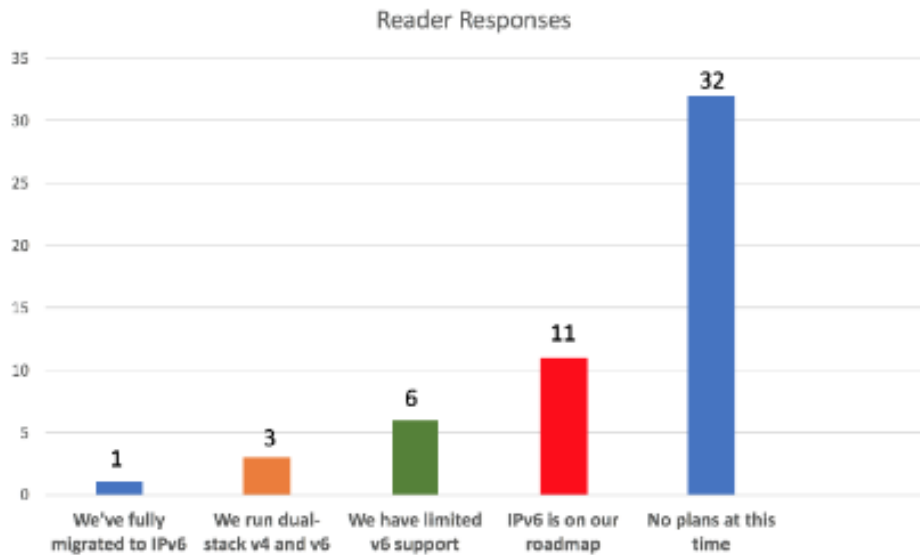
Quick Survey: Airplane Wi-Fi

Do you use Wi-Fi on airplanes?

- [A. Yes, and it's generally good](#)
- [B. Yes, but it sucks](#)
- [C. Rarely](#)
- [D. No](#)

Last Issue's Survey Results

Do you support IPv6 in your organization?



Source: Packet Pushers Human Infrastructure Survey May 25, 2017. 53 respondents

Did We Miss Something?

Got an link or an article to share? Email it to humaninfrastructure@packetpushers.net

The End Bit

Sponsorship and Advertising - Send an email to humaninfrastructure@packetpushers.net for more information. You could reach 5,013 people.

Human Infrastructure is bi-weekly newsletter with view, perspectives, and opinions. It is edited and published by Greg Ferro and Drew Conry-Murray from PacketPushers.net. If you'd like to contribute, email Drew at drew.conrymurray@packetpushers.net.

We don't give away your email address or personal details because that would suck.

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