OpenFlow: What is it and Where is it going?

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NANOG 53

big switch networks

Talk Outline

- Background and Problem
- What is OpenFlow?
- Use Cases
- Standardization:
  - Open Networking Foundation (ONF)
  - Interoperability
- Deployments and Adoption

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM

Many People's Ideas in This Talk

- OpenFlow is a much larger movement
  - Scott Shenkar, Nick McKeown, Guru Parulkar
  - Martin Cassado, Guido Appenzeller
  - Jean Tourrilhes, Dan Pitt
    - Many more in the ONF WGs
- About Me:
  - Three years working "in the trenches" on OpenFlow
  - Currently at OpenFlow startup, Big Switch Networks
  - Wearing my "OpenFlow Evangelist" hat

Don't All of Our Problems Have Solutions?

Problem	Optical	L2	L3
Virtualization	WDM	Vlans, QinQ	NAT, MPLS, VRF
Load balancing	*proprietary*	TRILL, LAG, VM placement	MPLS-TE, ECMP, BGP prepending
Reservations	Manual provisioning	Vlan pcp, FCoE flow control	DiffServ, MPLS AutoBandwidth
…. More problems	…. Litany of RFCs	…. More standards	…. Alphabet soup

- but what is the *solution* to the solutions?

Complexity *is* the Problem

- A new solution for each problem doesn't scale
  - We've had 20+ years of problems + solutions
  - Probably can't handle another 20 more years
- Complexity compounds:
  - Feature * Layer interaction = more headaches
- Complexity costs $$$
  - Longer to qualify/deploy new features
  - Longer to debug problems

How Do We Reduce Complexity?

- Find better abstractions
  - Make individual config changes less complex
  - Stop solving the same problems at different layers
  - Extract commonality among similar solutions

- Reduce # of management "touch points"
  - Make config changes in fewer places
  - You pay $$$ for multi-chassis systems for a reason
  - Decouple control from forwarding

What Can We Abstract?

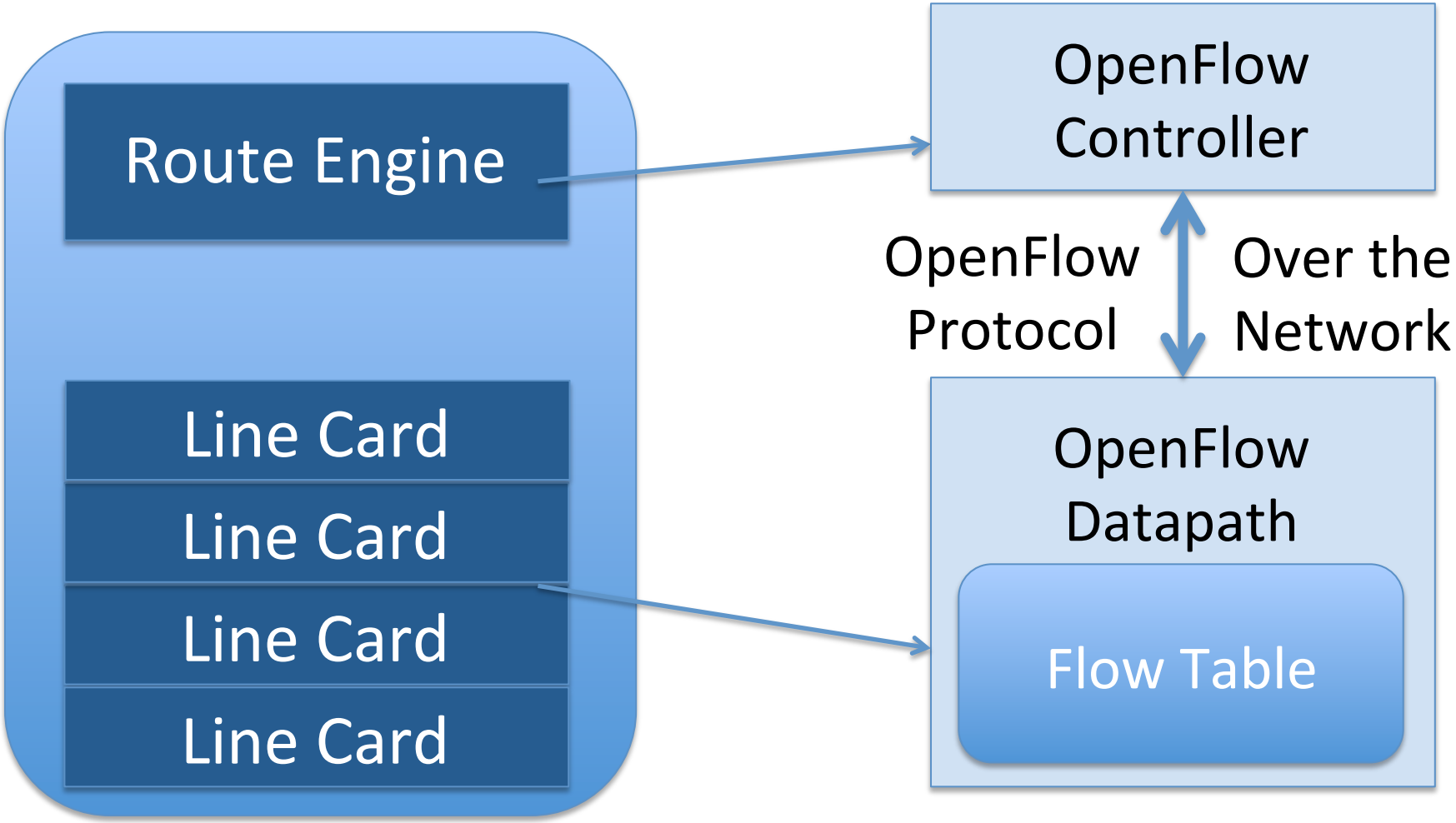
Exact Same Process for:

L2 MAC Learning

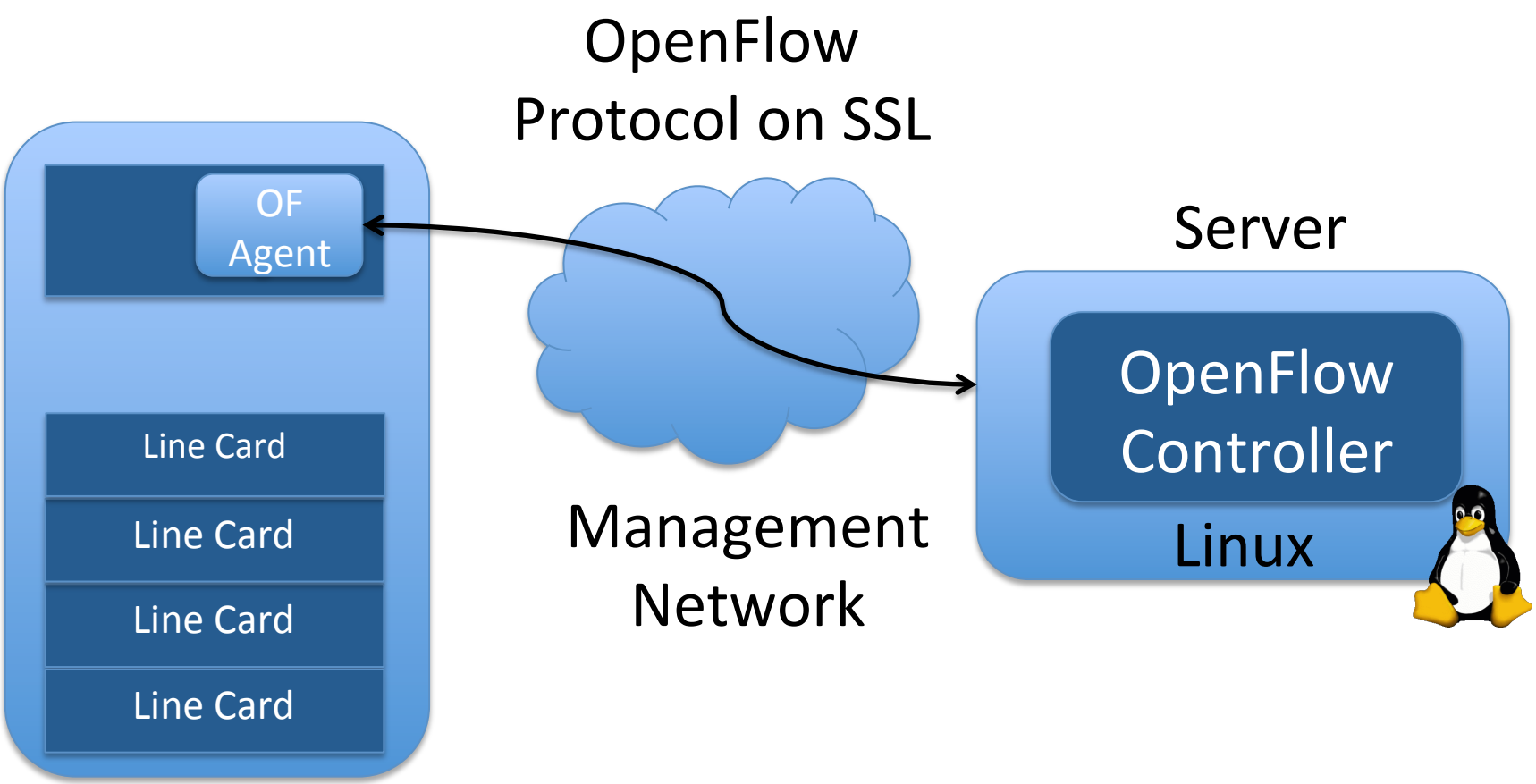
"128.8.0.0/16"

WHAT IS OPENFLOW?

OpenFlow is an Abstraction and API



OpenFlow in Practice



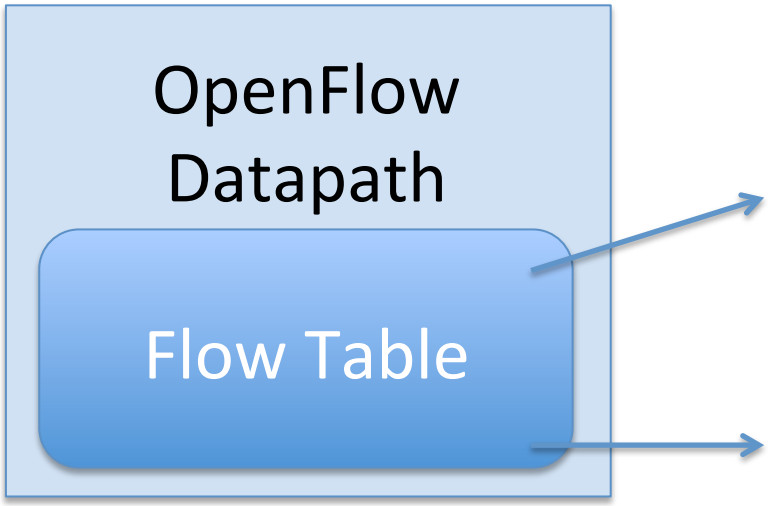
OpenFlow in Practice

- Controller is independent from datapath
  - E.g., on an external server, blade, etc.
- Datapath = existing box + OpenFlow firmware
  - Requires vendor to ship OpenFlow firmware
- Communication over network to datapaths
  - Use TLS/SSL for mutual authentication
  - Out-of-band management network simpler
  - In-band schemes exist
- Open Standard
  - Could write your own controller! (IF inclined…)
  - Growing open source controller ecosystem

OpenFlow API Highlights

1. Punt packets up to controller
2. Send packets down to datapath
3. Add/Del/Mod forwarding entries in datapath
   - Capabilities of forwarding table next slide
4. Query stats
   1. Interface counters
   2. Flow counters
   3. Forwarding table usage

Flow Table Abstraction

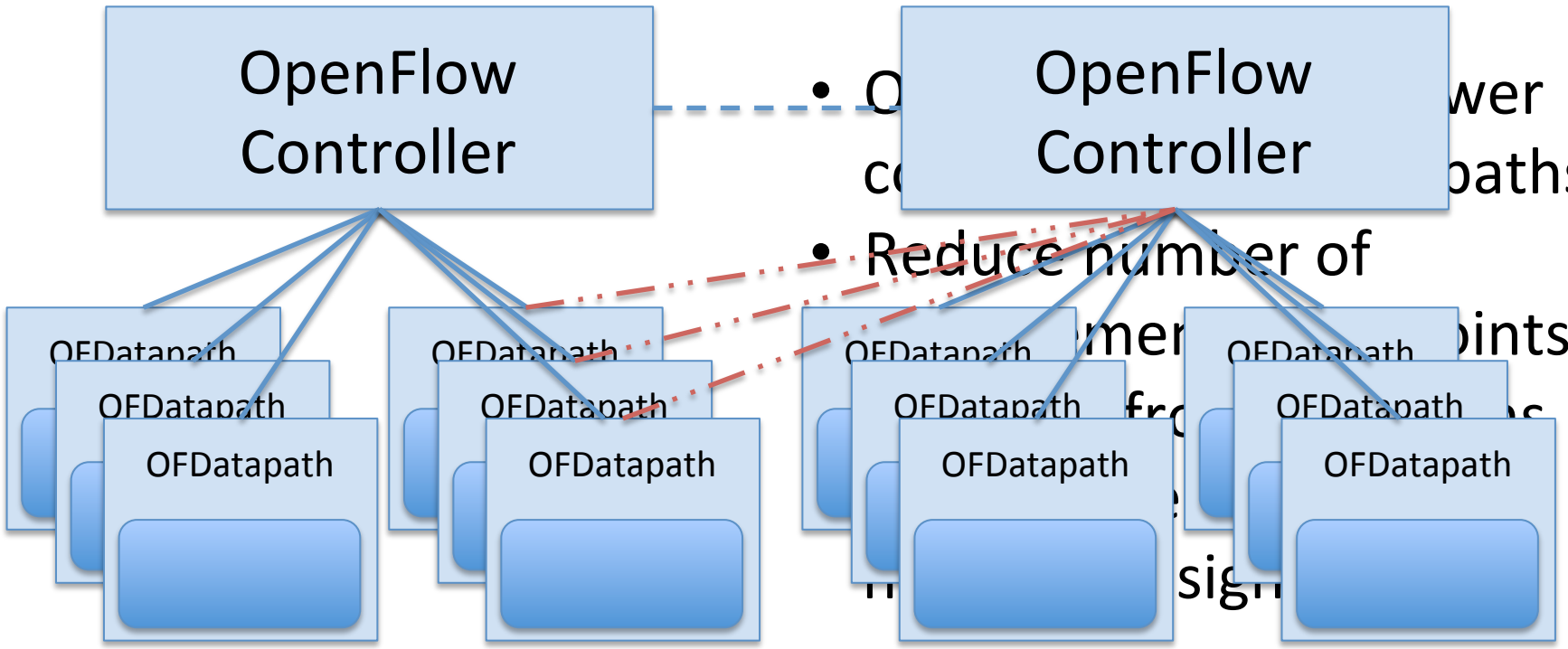


Priority	Match	Action List
500	TCP.dst=22	TTL--, Fwd:port 3
200	IP.dst= 128.8/16	Queue: 4
100	*	DROP

Flow Table Abstraction

- Simplifies cross-layer and feature interaction
  - Switching: match L2.dst, forward out port
  - Routing: match L3.dst, dec TTL, forward port
  - NAC: match *ACL*, DROP
- Multiple tables for more complex features
  - VRF, PseudoWire, Policy routing
- Match on most packet fields: L1, L2, L3, L4
- Lots of action types: Vlan, Mpls, IP, QoS, etc.

Decouple Control from Forwarding



- O… …wer co… …paths
- Reduce number of …mer… …oints …fr… …s
- …sign…

OpenFlow does *not* imply centralized control!

Allows load balancing and failover

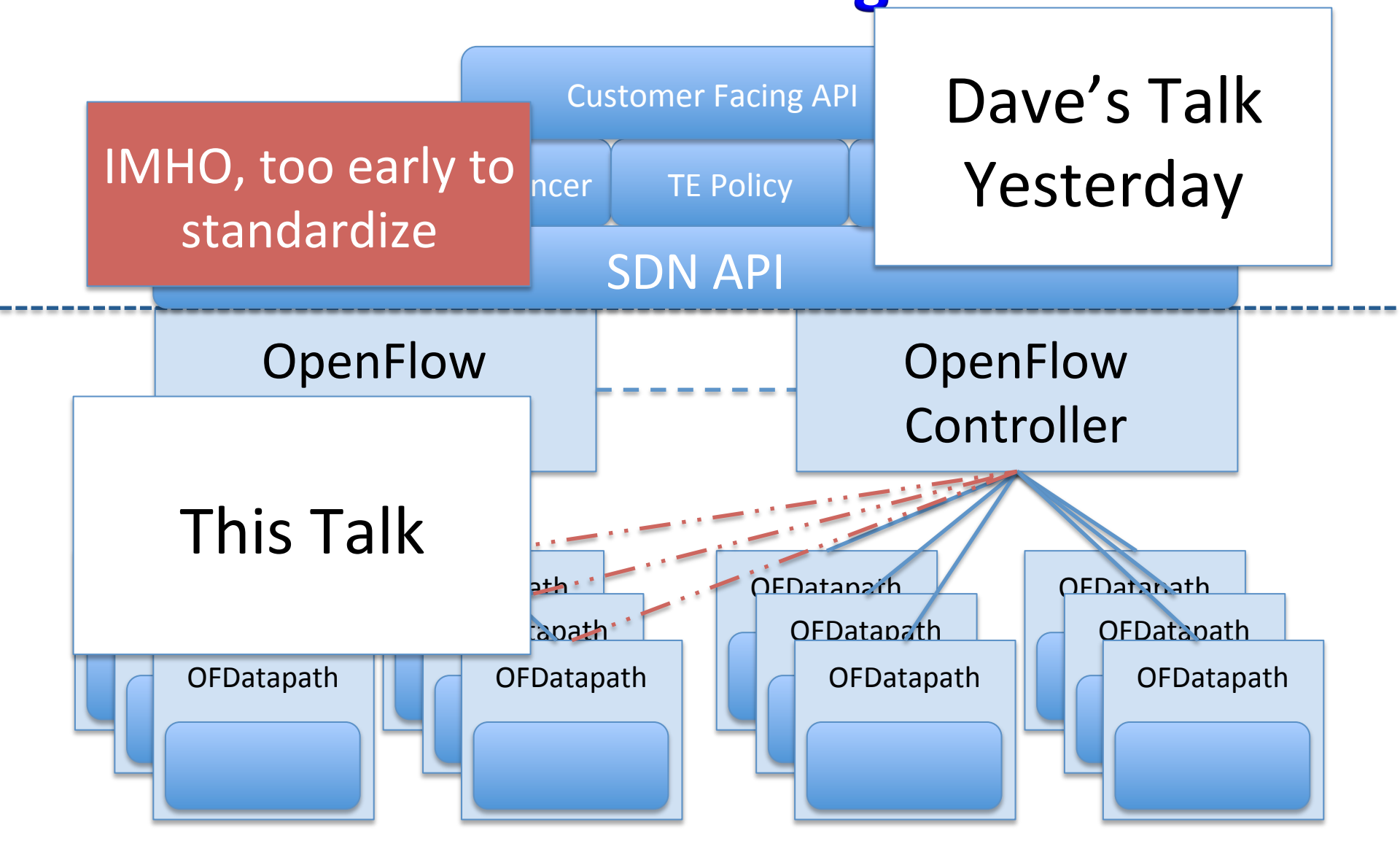
New Network Design Questions

- Traditional networks assume one-to-one forwarding to control plane mapping
  - Is this right for everyone?
- How many controllers do I need?
  - Balance between touchpoints and control traffic load
  - How many backup controllers ? Hierarchy?
- Where do I put controllers?
  - Controllers per: POP, region, continent?
- Similar questions to BGP Route Reflectors
- Likely no “one-size-fits-all” solution

Protocol Between Controllers?

- By design, not specified by OpenFlow
  - Controller is software: evolve independently
  - Likely no "one-size-fits-all" solution
- OpenFlow: building block to a larger solution
- Depends on each network's requirements
  - Failure recovery time
  - Management network
  - Number of forwarding nodes

Bigger Picture: Software Defined Networking



OpenFlow is just the same as *XXX*!

- 'XXX' = LISP, MPLS-TE, policy routing, etc.
- Broad answer:
  - OpenFlow is a very-low level abstraction/API
  - Could probably implement *XXX* using OpenFlow
  - Could not implement OpenFlow using *XXX*
- If *XXX* meets my needs, why use OpenFlow?
  - More holistic network view
  - Reduced complexity from feature interaction

More Information

- www.openflow.org
  - Public specifications and white papers
  - On-line tutorials
- http://openflow.stanford.edu
  - FlowVisor: OpenFlow hypervisor tool (mine :-)
  - Beacon: Open Source Java-based Controller
  - Mininet: OpenFlow network emulator in a box
- http://noxrepo.org
  - Open Source C++/Python Controller

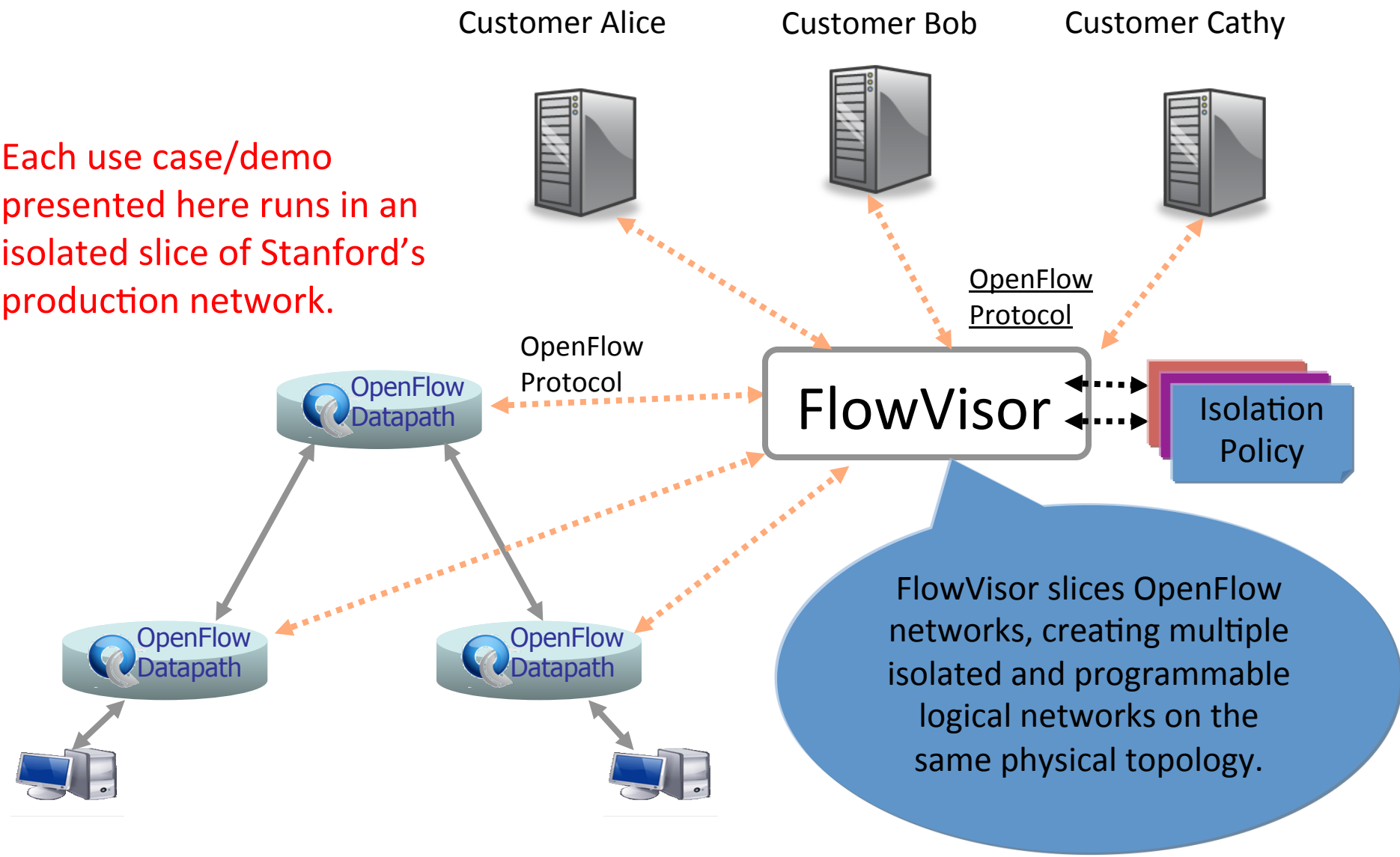
OPENFLOW USE CASES

Use Cases Outline

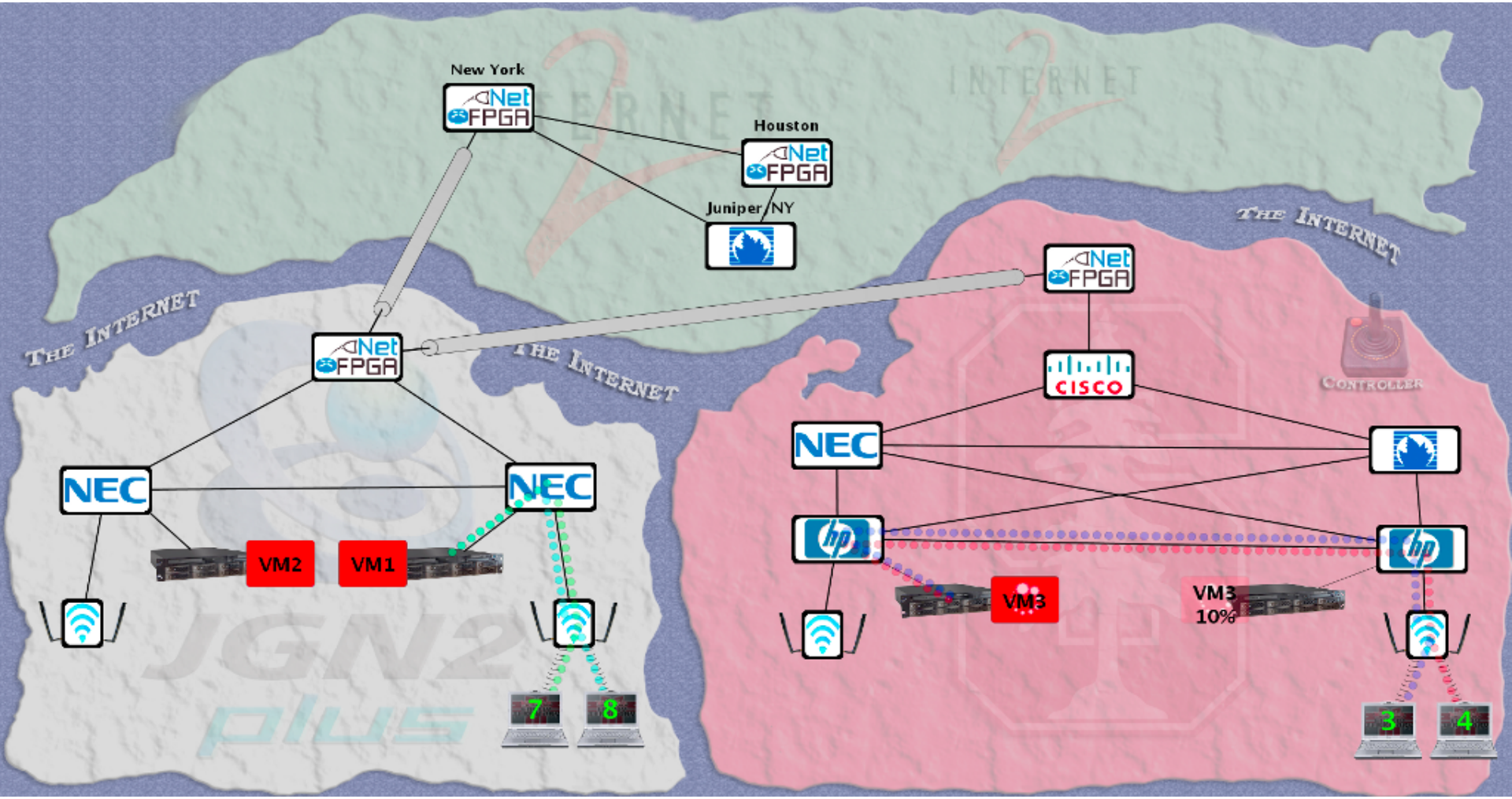
- OpenFlow is an enabler – the sky is the limit
- To spark your imagination, this talk:
  - Cherry-picked use cases for the NANOG crowd
  - Emphasis on service provider networks
  - Demonstrations from Stanford University
- Online:
  - Lots more use cases, demos, and videos
  - http://openflow.org/videos

Virtualized Control Plane

Each use case/demo presented here runs in an isolated slice of Stanford's production network.



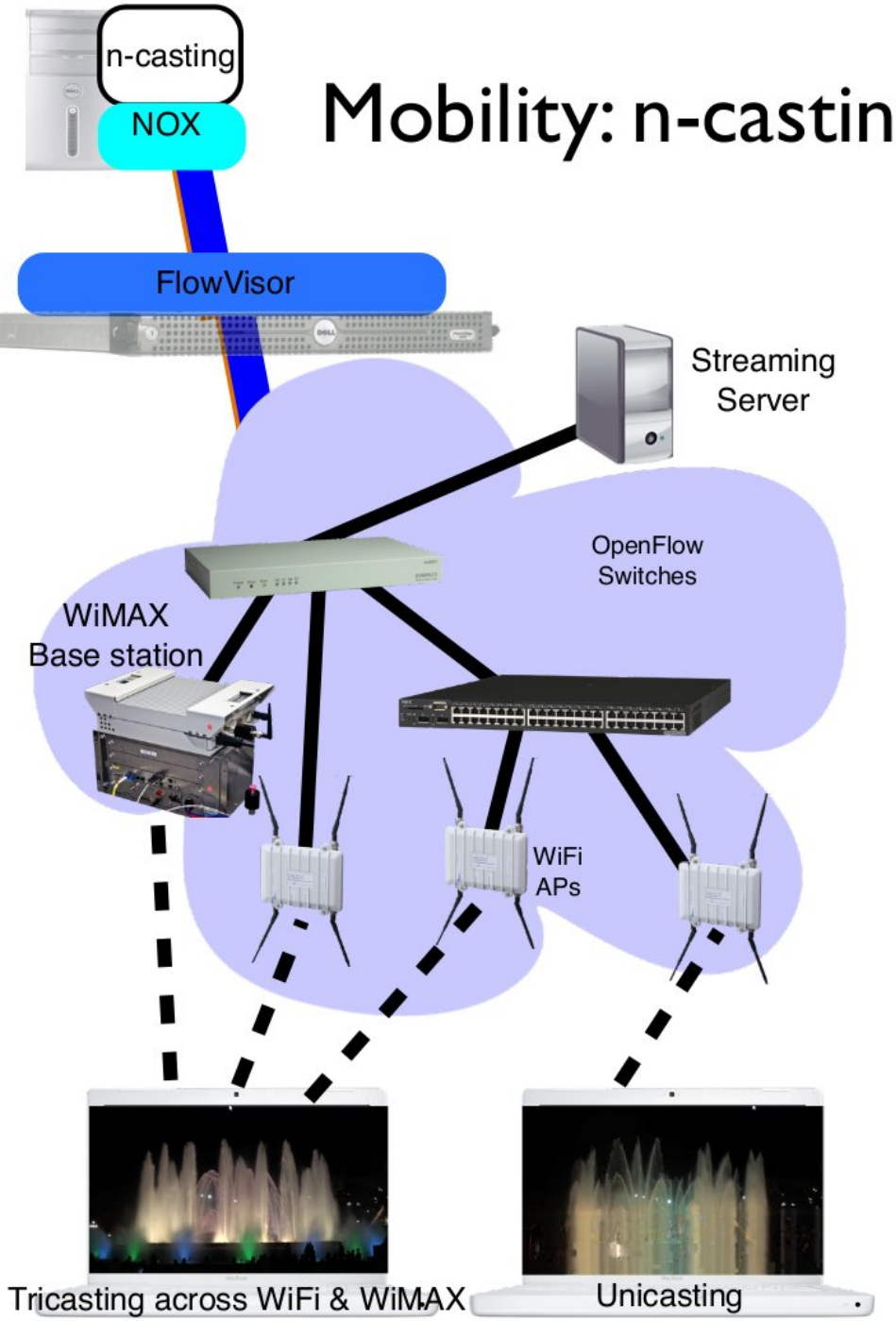
WAN VM Migration



Moved a VM from Stanford to Japan without changing its IP.

VM hosted a video game server with active network connections.

Mobility: n-casting with OpenFlow

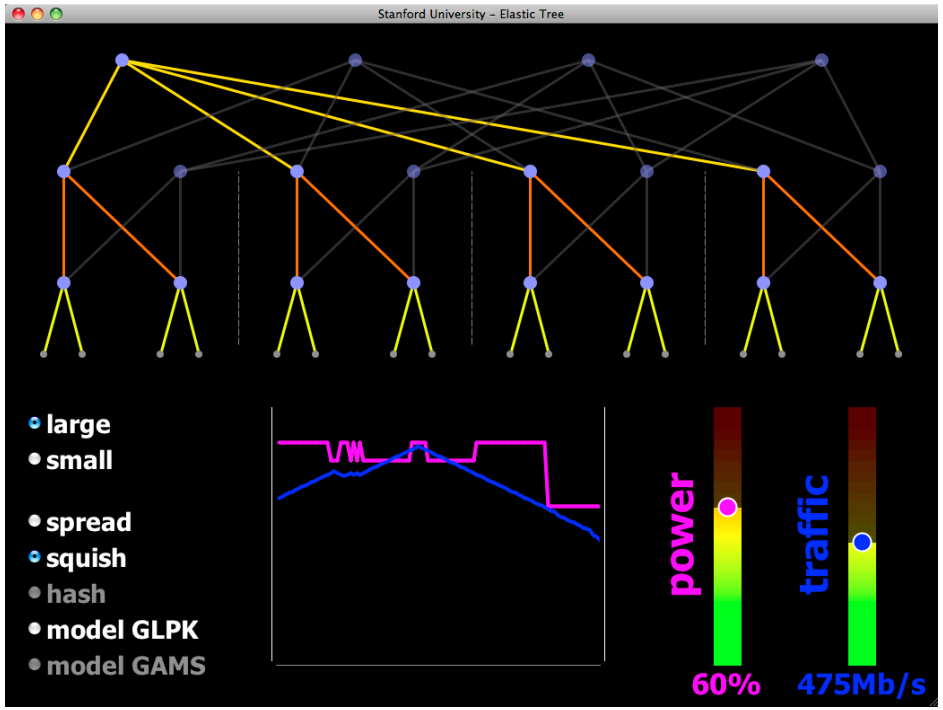


- Demonstrate what flexibility of routing enables in mobile networks
- Show how technology agnostic handover can be easily achieved
- Customized network services for applications, devices and technologies
- Simplify control and services
- Unified control for wireline and wireless networking equipments

- Demonstration: n-casting
  - Reroute flows between WiFi and WiMAX without additional logic
  - n-casting provided over for video streaming where application handles duplication well
  - coded in 227 lines of C/C++

Reducing Energy in Data Center Networks

- Shuts off links and switches to reduce data center power
- Choice of optimizers to balance power, fault tolerance, and BW
- OpenFlow provides network routes and port statistics



- The demo:
- Hardware-based 16-node Fat Tree
- Your choice of traffic pattern, bandwidth, optimization strategy
- Graph shows live power and latency variation

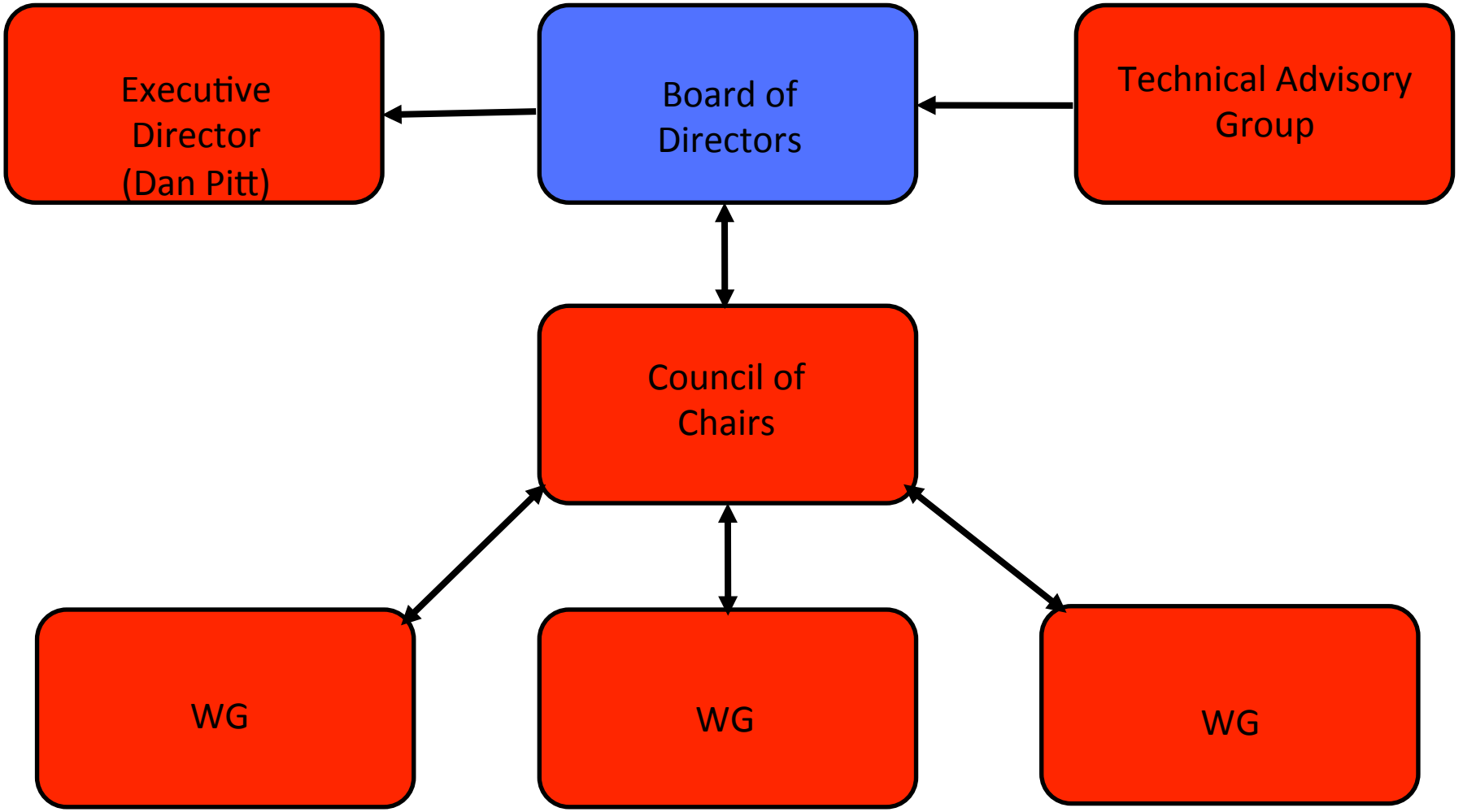
demo credits: Brandon Heller, Srini Seetharaman, Yiannis Yiakoumis, David Underhill

STANDARDIZATION

Open Networking Foundation

- ONF now maintains OpenFlow
  - Plus related protocols
  - Stanford not setup to be a standards body
- Composed of “Promoters” and “Adopters”
- Cross-license all IPR, royalty free
- Non-profit industry consortium [501(c)(6)]
- Founded March 22, 2011
  - NY Times + other press releases

ONF Organization



ONF Board Compostion

8 Board members/6 "promoter" member companies

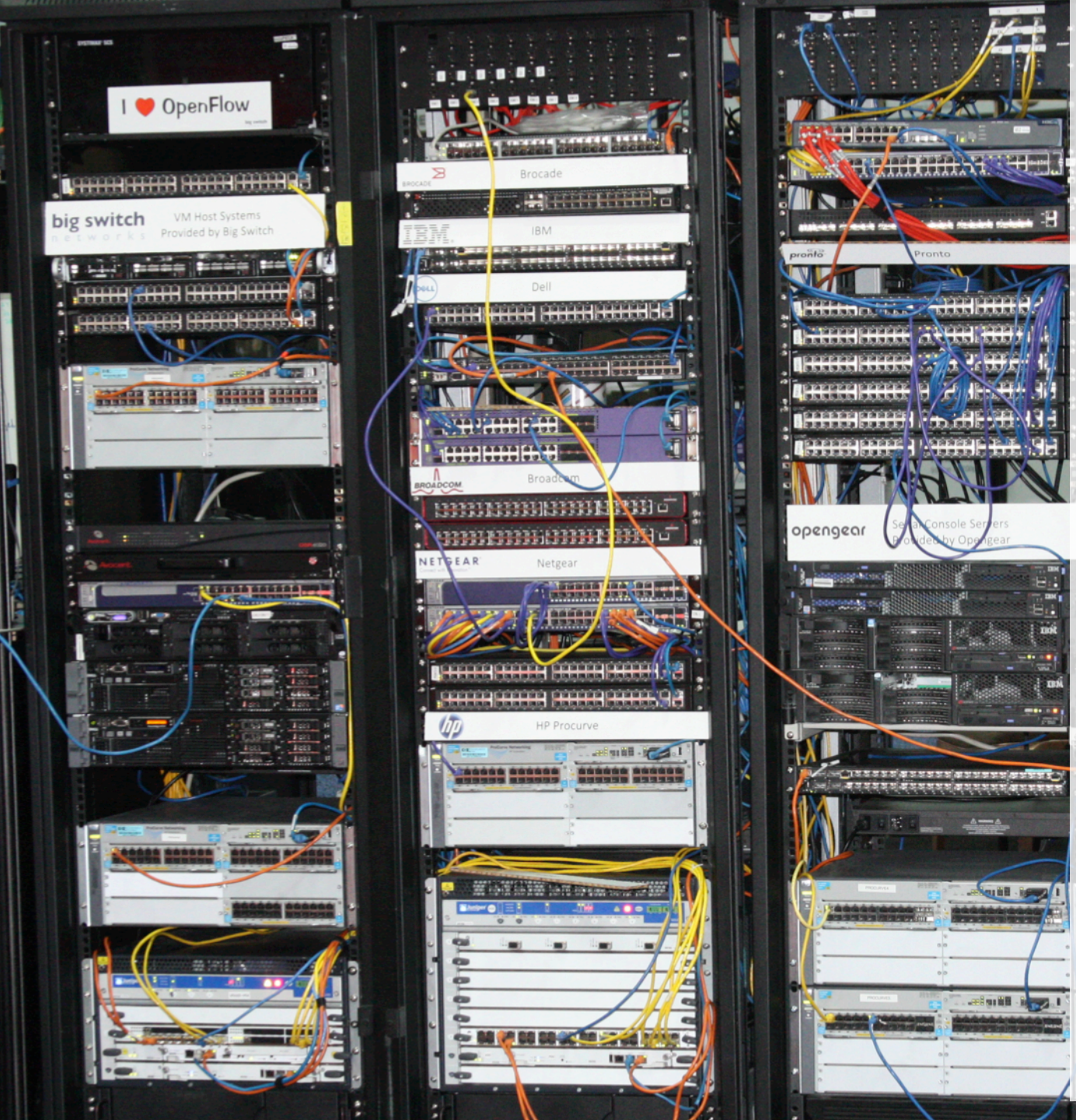
- Urs Hölzle (Sr. VP, Engineering, Google), chairman, president
- Jonathan Heiliger (VP, Technical Operations, Facebook), secretary
- Adam Bechtel (VP, Infrastructure Group, Yahoo)
- Stuart Elby (VP, Network Architecture, Verizon)
- Arne Josefsberg (GM, Windows Azure Infrastructure, Microsoft)
- Bruno Orth (VP, Strategy and Architecture, Deutsche Telekom)
- Nick McKeown (Professor, EE and CS, Stanford)
- Scott Shenker (Professor, EECS, UC Berkeley and ICSI)

36 “Adopter” Member Companies

- Big Switch Networks
- Broadcom
- Brocade
- Ciena
- Cisco
- Citrix
- Comcast
- CompTIA
- Dell
- Ericsson
- Extreme Networks
- Force10 Networks
- Fujitsu
- HP
- Huawei
- IBM
- Infoblox
- Intel
- IP Infusion
- Ixia
- Juniper Networks
- Marvell
- Mellanox
- Metaswitch Networks
- Midokura
- NEC
- Netgear
- Netronome
- Nicira Networks
- Nokia Siemens Networks
- NTT
- Plexxi Inc.
- Pronto Systems
- Riverbed Technology
- Vello Systems
- VMware

OpenFlow Interop-fest at Interop

- Interop: 13,000 attendees, 350 vendors
- 30′ x 40′ OpenFlow “Interop Labs” booth
- 14 vendors with OpenFlow datapaths
  - Various stages of prototype
  - Few commercial products
- Inter-operated under a single FlowVisor
  - … for the most part, eventually



INTEROP LABS

Rack 1 (controller):
Big Switch Controller

Rack 2 (switches):
Brocade
IBM (Blade)
Dell
Quanta (Pronto)
Broadcom (Reference)
Netgear
Extreme
HP Procurve
Juniper (MX240,480)

Rack 3/4 (switches):
Citrix (OVS)
Fulcrum (Reference)
NEC

Upstairs:
Marvell (Reference)

OpenFlow Demos @ Interop

- NEC (Programmable Flow Demo)
  - Winner of “The Best of Interop 2011”
  - Category: infrastructure
- HP: Per-flow QoS demo
- Pronto: OpenFlow-enabled switches:
  - 48 X10GE, 48X10GE+4X40GE, 16X40GE 1U models
- Brocade - Service provider group
- Big Switch Networks: big virtual switch controller demo
- Juniper Networks: bandwidth calendar application
- … plus standard Stanford demos

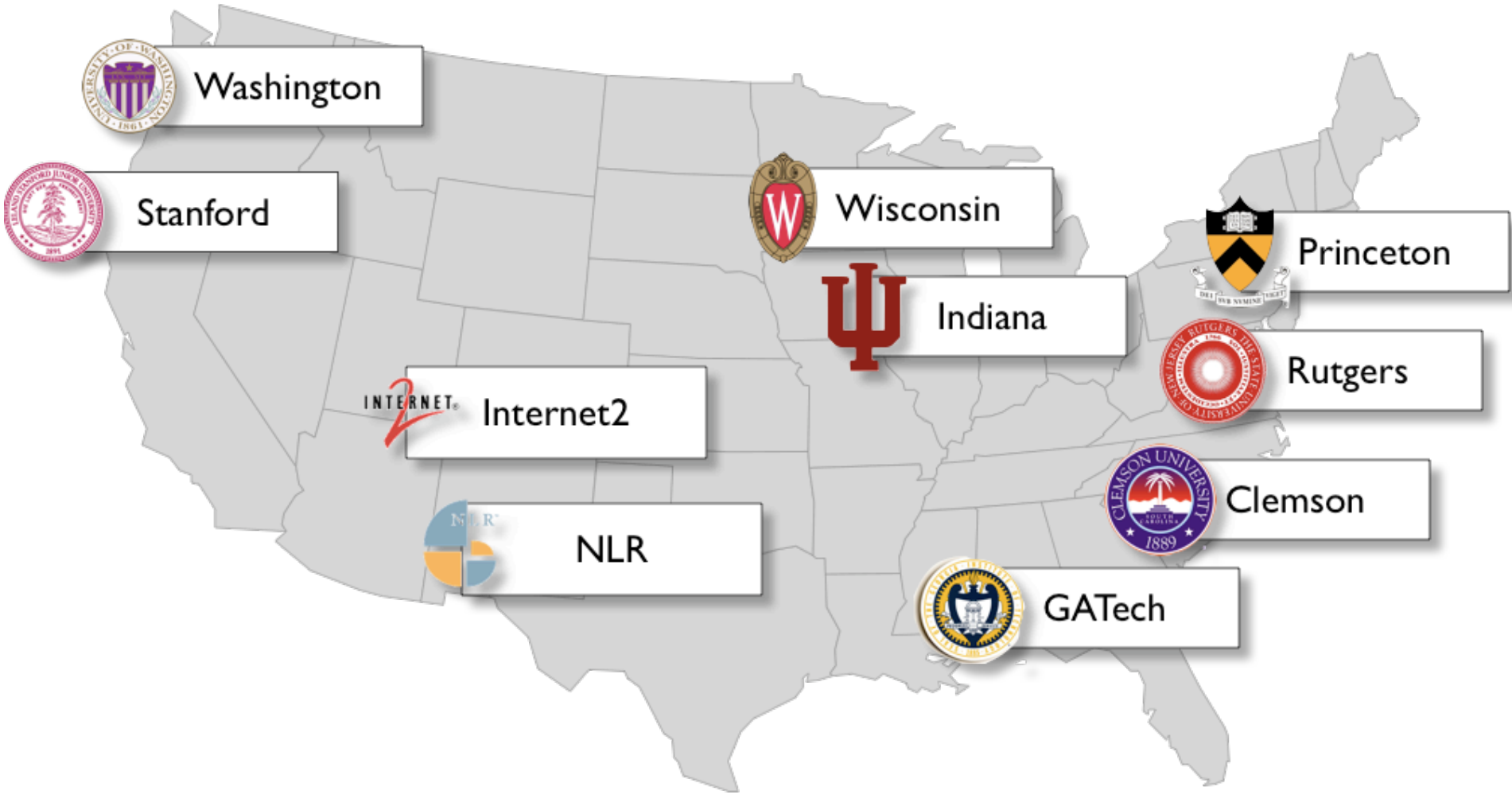
OPENFLOW DEPLOYMENTS

Deployment Overview

- Most *public* deployments are R&E Networks
  - OpenFlow did start in the R&E community
- Many interesting private deployments
  - Details are scarce and non-public
  - Best bet is to talk to ONF member operators

70+ World-wide Public Deployments

NSF GENI: 9+ Sites



Planned: 34 POPs in Internet2

OFELIA - Aim and Partners.

Federation of five islands

- 5 OpenFlow-enabed islands at academic institutions:
  - Berlin (TUB) – partial replacement of existing campus network with OF-switches
  - Ghent (IBBT) – central hub, large-scale emulation wall
  - Zürich (ETH) – connection to OneLab and GpENI
  - Barcelona (i2CAT) – experience with facility projects (IaaS, FEDERICA)
  - Essex (UEssex) – national hub for UK optical community; L2 (Extreme) switches, FPGA testbed
- NEC provides homogeneous L2 hardware platform (OF-enabled Ethernet switches)
- ADVA as major vendor of optical access and data center equipment
- Different external vendors (HP, Extreme, Juniper)

Partners with complementary technological strengths and user groups from five countries with strong research communities in networking.

partner	L2	L1/optics	L3	Wireless	emulation	Control SW	processing	US connections	MM source
iBBT	X				X		X		X
TUB	X			X					
I2cat	X		X			X			
UEssex	X	X				X	X		X
ETH	X							X	

Conslusion

- Networking needs better abstractions to reduce complexity
- OpenFlow is an abstraction and API
  - Time will tell if it is the right answer
  - … but is probably asking the right questions
- Lots of use cases for operator community
- It's on it's way to wide-spread adoption
  - Newly formed ONF
  - More deployments than I can count

http://www.openflow.org

Thanks you!