As an IT leader, one of your main responsibilities is setting priorities. While this has always been the case, the stakes are higher for you now than ever before: The decisions you make today about which technologies to deploy, and which vendors to partner with, are absolutely vital to your future and the future of your company. Why are the stakes so high? Several reasons:

- **The pace of change is accelerating rapidly, much faster than ever before.** You have to ensure that your underlying technologies are agile, simple, secure and open so that the business can respond quickly and safely to new opportunities. If your technology infrastructure doesn’t allow you to move at the “speed of business,” you may find that the company is relying on business models that are suddenly obsolete.

- **IT budgets are not growing, but the number of strategic initiatives you must support are.** These include cloud computing, mobility, big data analytics, the Internet of Things, bring your own device (BYOD), social networking, desktop virtualization and more. You must decide which infrastructure technologies will enable these critical initiatives and how they will fit into your budgets.

- **In the next-generation cloud-enabled enterprise, everything must be connected in order to maximize business opportunities.** Having information or applications in separate silos is no longer viable. As you put more applications and business services into the cloud—whether private, public or hybrid—you have to give employees secure access to the resources they need wherever they are located, using any device they want, at any time of day.
In setting priorities, you want to make sure you are deploying infrastructure solutions today that enable a simple and secure path to the future. That being the case, one of the top priorities—for now and the future—must be your enterprise campus network. The network provides the connective tissue between all of your key applications and initiatives. It connects your employees to one another and to the resources they need. It is, in many ways, the foundation for the next-generation cloud-enabled enterprise.

If your network does not supply employees with secure access to the cloud; if it is not easily adjustable and scalable; if it is limited by the use of proprietary platforms; if it is not reliable, resilient, high-performing, agile and simple to manage—then every single strategic initiative in your organization will be jeopardized. As an IT leader and decision-maker, that is a risk you cannot afford to take.

**Critical Decision Points for the Enterprise Campus Network**

Recognizing the importance of the enterprise campus network is one thing; understanding what to do about it and choosing the right partner is another. One of the first steps in moving forward is deciding what you require and what your organization will support, both financially and culturally. Key questions you need to consider are:

- What type of cloud access will you need for employees – are you planning on using public clouds, private clouds, hybrid clouds or some combination of the three?
- Are you more comfortable with rolling upgrades, or are you ready for a forklift architectural change?
- Can you incorporate new architectures or vendors in an incremental manner, or are architectural changes too fundamental?
- How do you manage the tension between slow campus equipment upgrades and the rapid changes in campus requirements, such as new WiFi standards, mobility and BYOD?
- How important is it to have an open architecture so you can deploy best-of-breed third-party solutions, such as wireless LAN or Network Access Control (NAC)?
- What are the most important applications and initiatives you need to support with your campus network—business-critical legacy apps, cloud access, BYOD, enhanced mobility, the Internet of Things, big data analytics, social networking, desktop virtualization or “all of the above?”
- How do you deal with security threats and events, and how do you find the balance between maintaining a strict security posture versus moving at the speed of business?
of your enterprise campus network, all of which should be critical considerations in your decision-making process. These are:

• **Simplifying the infrastructure:** To adjust quickly to business opportunities your network must be agile, simple and scalable. When you need to add services, switches, nodes or anything else, the processes should be centralized and highly automated. The network design should be so simple that you should be able to manage the entire network as if it were a single logical switch. You should also make sure that your network vendor provides a clear model and path toward a software-defined network implementation.

• **Securing the network:** Your future and the future of your company are reliant upon the security of your network—particularly as you move toward a cloud-enabled deployment model. We’ve all heard of too many instances of IT leaders losing their jobs because of a single highly publicized breach. In deciding about security for your enterprise campus network, it is important to choose an architecture and vendor that enables end-to-end visibility along with innovative and unified solutions that combine to eliminate and mitigate threats.

• **Supporting an open framework:** The cloud-enabled enterprise is part of a new era in computing. Key differentiators include expanded pooling and sharing of resources; self-service deployment models; enhanced support for mobile workers and devices; and real-time decision-making that leverages big data analytics, social networking and the Internet of Things. All of this adds up to levels of agility in business that were unimaginable even five or 10 years ago. Clearly, in this era, any type of proprietary architecture is a remnant of the past that should be avoided at all costs. Only an open architectural framework will give you the agility you need for the cloud-enabled enterprise, along with the opportunity to deploy innovative, best-of-breed solutions wherever you deem appropriate.

### Key Decision Points For Deploying a Cloud-Enabled Campus Network

**The network design should be so simple that you should be able to manage the entire network as if it were a single logical switch.**

**Only an open architectural framework will give you the agility you need for the cloud-enabled enterprise, along with the opportunity to deploy innovative, best-of-breed solutions wherever you deem appropriate.**

### Partnering With the Right Vendor

Perhaps the most important decision you can make is which vendor to put your trust and faith in when designing, building and deploying your next-generation enterprise campus network. You need a partner with:

• Deep experience and knowledge in networking and how to secure networks, incorporating an integrated end-to-end approach to both.

• A clearly articulated vision to reduce complexity in the infrastructure.

• A centralized management platform with the tools you need to simplify and automate the tasks involved in provisioning, deploying and scaling.
• A comprehensive set of security solutions that are not only innovative in their design, but also work together to deliver a unified front against threats.

• A corporate commitment to an open convergence framework that enables you to choose best-of-breed partners throughout the network design.

As you go through your evaluations and decision-making processes, another factor to consider is your partner’s history of leadership, innovation and experience and its commitment to facilitating your success. As a long-time leader and innovator in building and securing enterprise networks, Juniper Networks has a clear vision designed to help you reduce risks and maximize the value of your enterprise campus network. The vision is built around a model of simplifying the infrastructure, securing the enterprise and offering choice through an Open Convergence Framework.

Please visit Juniper at www.juniper.net/unite to learn more about how Juniper can help you make the right decisions—for now and for your future.