DevOps Approach

In 2018, AT&T set out to be the first to launch mobile, standards-based 5G. The AT&T Technology and Operations teams gathered in Redmond, WA to develop the action plan for the 5G Packet Core. To move at the speed that was required, the team decided its priorities would be security, simplification, and automation. And a DevOps approach – with the operations teams working hand in hand with the development team during the design and development of the solution – was the only way the team could move fast enough.

The cloud architecture and development teams had already been incubating an open source first platform to enable a simplified network cloud that could be deployed faster and at a lower unit cost, while being more predictable for operations and for the tenants. They proposed this solution to the 5G Packet Core team, who were in complete alignment with the primary principles. Other leaders from the operations side of the business joined the leadership team. Together, this group of technical leaders worked with their teams to develop a multi-phased approach to delivering the 5G Packet Core on our new Network Cloud at record velocity.

Airship

AT&T took this collaboration between operations and development further and made it formal by creating the Network Cloud and Infrastructure organization. One of the biggest innovations in the new Network Cloud was an under-cloud platform called Airship.

Airship is a collection of loosely coupled, but interoperable, open source tools that declaratively automate cloud provisioning and life-cycle management leveraging containers as the unit of software delivery. AT&T, SKT, and Intel jointly launched Airship as an Open Infrastructure pilot project in May of 2018, and the Airship open source community released its first enterprise-grade release in April of 2019.

On Airship, the collaboration and the new organizational structure between development and operations were key to delivering into production a new Network Cloud Platform and a new 5G Packet Core in record-setting time.

Learn more about Airship.