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AT&T shifts 130K employees to focus on software networking transition

June 8, 2015 | By [Sean Buckley](#)

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AT&T's (NYSE: T) ongoing movement to control more of its network by software has required it to reorganize nearly 130,000 of its organization, including IT, network and operations staff, to focus on this new effort.

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One of the key elements of the employee training is the move towards DevOps, a software development method that it says focuses on collaboration between service developers and other IT workers. Out of this process, AT&T's employees will have to acquire new skills on how to work in a SDN-based network architecture and protocols, while applying cybersecurity in a virtual network environment.

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"We're trying to make sure we can evolve our capabilities and processes in a DevOps model to scale," said Scott Mair, senior vice president of technology planning and engineering for AT&T, in a *WSJ* article.

In order to carry out DevOps training, AT&T has developed a partnership with Georgia Tech and online education company Udacity. The service provider's online education program offers a course that will teach students about the development life cycle, design processes and software testing, while another class teaches software-defined networking, data center networking and content distribution.

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The global roll-out of LTE has been beneficial to all parties involved although, there is a danger that some operators

This training process is part of the company's ambitious goal to have 75 percent of its network controlled by software by the year 2020.

Progress on the software transition goal continues to ramp. Earlier this year, AT&T said it is close to reaching [5 percent of the 75 percent goal](#). In 2016, the software transition progress will continue to ramp.

What's driving AT&T and other large telcos to make the transition to software is to be able to deal with the unexpected traffic bursts caused by users streaming music and video content on their devices throughout their homes and offices.

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This story was updated on June 8 to reflect amount of employees across AT&T's organization that are participating in its software effort.

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