Connect the Dots

As most people that know me, one of my favorite expressions in life is to connect the dots. Simply put, I've observed that the data is there, the trend is there, but people simply ignore the obvious. That's connecting the dots.

I can never understand why. It doesn't make me a genius, but I noticed back in the mid '90s that the telecom world was being transformed. Internet and wireless surpassed dial-up (AOL) and massive cell phones (I still remember my clunky Motorola phone and roaming charges). I started seeing that the service providers were more interested in the sexy wireless and fiber - internet based services rather than the traditional TDM wireline world. Not that this was a mistake, but I along with a few others saw that the old equipment which was deployed in the 70s, 80s and the 90s was being ignored but not replaced. It made sense that there was an opportunity to continue to maintain the old equipment and simultaneously develop the next generation products that would replace them.

Ironically, most of the next-gen stuff was a forklift replacement, very expensive, and foreign to most service provider maintenance personnel. In 1998, I helped create Datatek Applications, along with Fran Brophy and Sue Stultz of Bell Laboratories to help maintain and support a legacy data product called Datakit VCS. Back in those days, I used to say that I would retire on September 1, 2012 when the Datakit product line is completely gone from the network. Ha! It's still there because Datatek has done a great job of supporting it, and at the same time creating a migration path to newer products. This has ensured that Datakit will continue to be a productive and viable product for many years to come. It was obvious then and it's still obvious now for many of the older legacy products. The objective should be to continue the support of legacy products, while building a bridge to the future. All we did was connect the dots.

Mike Dazio