

Google Join's Facebooks' Open Compute Project

Written by Marco Attard
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The Facebook effort in demystifying datacentre hardware gets a big name member in the shape of Google, who not only joins the Open Compute Project but will also provide new rack specifications.



The announcement is significant, since like many cloud giants Google is famous for shrouding the custom-built hardware powering its datacentres in mystery. But not any more, since OCP membership involves the sharing of such designs with a community of companies and consumers both big and small.

The first Google contribution to OCP is a rack design-- one featuring power distribution reaching 48V, up from the 12V used in most datacentres. Such an increase allows the use of more powerful equipment while reducing electrical conversion losses by 30%.

The rack design also features more compact form factor fitting the narrow aisles of Google datacentres, while still being compatible with OCP racks. The design already finds use in thousands of Google datacentre racks, meaning it is ready for widespread use.

Google has other OCP collaborations in the pipeline, including an alternative to SNMP (Simple Network Management Protocol) and better disk solutions for cloud-based applications.

Another big name also has a contribution for OCP-- Microsoft presents Software for Open Networking in the Cloud (SONiC), a collection of software networking components for the building of network devices. According to Microsoft, SONiC is "the final piece of the puzzle in delivering a fully open sourced switch platform that can share the same software stack across

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hardware from multiple switch vendors," providing a framework for open source network switch apps.

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