CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A software platform for network communications comprising computer-executable instructions configured to generate:

a global overlay network, which enables an application to determine a network path through an underlying access network for data generated by the application, wherein:

the global overlay network:

is integrated with the software platform; and

comprises a plurality of nodes; and

the plurality of nodes are agnostic to at least one of:

network technology; or

network ownership of the underlying access network.

2. The software platform of claim 1, further comprising computer-executable instructions configured to enable an owner or a user of the application to set end-to-end policies independent of the underlying access network.

3. The software platform of claim 1, further comprising computer-executable instructions configured to enable an owner or a user of the application to set policies for end-to-end desired business results independent of the underlying access network.

4. The software platform of claim 1, further comprising computer-executable instructions configured to generate an API that enables an owner or a user of the application to set at least one of (1) end-to-end policies or (2) policies for end-to-end desired business results.

5. The software platform of claim 4, wherein at least one of (1) the end-to-end policies or (2) the policies for the end-to-end desired business results can be set or changed according to at least one of real-time conditions, triggers, or events.

6. The software platform of claim 1, further comprising computer-executable instructions configured to generate an API that provides

the application with end-to-end data, analytics and visibility of the application, regardless of networks traversed in the underlying access network.

7. The software platform of claim 1, further comprising computer-executable instructions configured to generate (1) one or more APIs and (2) one or more portals, that enable the global overlay network to communicate with the application in real-time, such that the application can change its behavior in order to meet application owner policies.

8. The software platform of claim 4, wherein the API enables the owner of the application to share policies with one or more other systems.

9. The software platform of claim 8, wherein the API enables the owner of the application to at least one of (a) accept the policies from the one or more other systems or (b) distribute (1) the end-to-end policies or (2) the policies for end-to-end desired business results to the one or more other systems.

10. The software platform of claim 1, wherein at least one node of the plurality of nodes is connected as a traditional networked node, as a peer-to-peer mesh node, or as a combination of a traditional networked node and a peer-to-peer mesh node.

11. The software platform of claim 1, wherein at least one node of the plurality of nodes is located in at least one of a public cloud, a private cloud, an Internet backbone environment, or an end user device.

12. The software platform of claim 1, wherein at least one node of the plurality of nodes is an application, a virtual network function, a standalone device running on a commodity computer, a purpose built appliance, or a service embedded in network infrastructure.

13. The software platform of claim 12, wherein the service embedded in the network infrastructure comprises a gateway or a session border controller.