To keep pace with exponential data digitization and rapidly increasing internet traffic—both of which were accelerated by COVID-19—large-scale organizations are increasing their third-party data center colocation spends at unprecedented levels.

Increasing reliance on advanced digital technologies to support new ways of working, communicating and doing business is expanding our day-to-day and even minute-to-minute reliance on data centers. Key drivers of this uptick include video conferencing, smart homes and building, streaming, cloud apps, and disruptive technologies like blockchain and Bitcoin.

As a result, the cost of delivering new computational-intensive technologies and digital content is approaching parity with colocation spend, putting customers under pressure to marginalize expanding interconnection costs. Savvy customers are partnering with leading data center providers that offer built-in connectivity ecosystems enabling low cost cross-connect access to the networks and clouds they require – thus ensuring every dollar spent at the data center is providing a better overall return on their investment.

Similarly, as businesses deploy more equipment and engage a growing portfolio of network and cloud options, effectively managing this environment also becomes more complex. To optimize their IT environments and interconnection strategies, organizations require on-demand, real-time insight and access into their data center operations and easy access to the networks they require to deliver digital services to their end-clients, partners and associates.

QTS’ Smart, Connected Data Centers provide the visibility and control our customers need to optimize their IT environments and provide the essential parity customers demand between colocation and connectivity investments.

Sanford McMurtry, VP, Interconnection, QTS

When Smart Meets Connected

QTS, an industry leader in data center innovation, visibility and connectivity, is bringing the “smart” capabilities individuals have become accustomed to in their daily lives to the data center. Similar to the Smart Home that allows users to adapt the temperature, adjust lighting and remotely monitor and protect their homes, the QTS Smart, Connected Data Center digitizes the data center to deliver a new level of awareness, predictability, convenience and efficiency.

The traditional data center model, which operates as a server warehouse and relies on carrier hotels to make critical connections, cannot meet these requirements. Without access to real-time visibility, organizations lose the ability to understand the full end-to-end economic impact of their comprehensive solution.

“Organizations can operate data center environments and interconnection strategies far more efficiently if they do things in a ‘smart’ way,” said Brent Bensten, Chief Technology Officer for QTS. “Access to the necessary levers and dials customers need in order to make smarter, more informed decisions requires a commitment to full data transparency — something conventional data centers with set-it-and-forget-it mentalities do not embrace.” Brent Bensten.

QTS’ Commitment to the Smart, Connected Data Center

For more than a decade, QTS has supported the intense needs of the Federal, hyperscale and enterprise markets. To provide these multi-megawatt customers with the insight, access and control they need, QTS has evolved the data center beyond a physical building to set the bar for the modern data center experience.

By layering intelligence and advanced technologies on top of the digitized data center, QTS provides customers transparency and control of their data center ecosystem. These capabilities offer opportunities to create new operational efficiency, minimize costs and risk, embolden security and speed delivery of digital services to end-clients.
Key to this strategy is the pairing of its robust and continually expanding interconnection ecosystem that enable organizations to directly connect with the carriers, networks and clouds they need from the QTS data centers in which they are deploying more and more equipment – enabling financial efficiencies and reducing risks associated with traversing thru carrier hotels.

“We’re challenging the historical architecture of the internet and cloud networks, eliminating the need to traverse carrier hotels and enabling simple cross-connect access,” said Sanford McMurtry, VP, Interconnection for QTS.

The Value of Smart

“QTS is flipping the data center industry on its head,” said Bensten. “We are developing technology and solutions that connect our customers to our smart facilities through software. The smart trappings we offer represent the cloudification of the data center. They enable not only a fluidity between colocation and cloud, but the visibility and intelligence to feel cloud-like and achieve even greater insight than is available from an internally operated facility or cloud.”

Through a growing suite of visualization and digital apps and cross connect access to a vast interconnection ecosystem, customers across all markets can proactively monitor, analyze, normalize and connect environments creating more effective use of their capital and resources.

We are developing technology and solutions that connect our customers to our smart facilities through software. We call it the cloudification of the data center.

Brent Bensten, CTO, QTS

The actionable data, analytics and suite of digital tools and applications offered by the Smart Connected Data Center are accessible via QTS’ Service Delivery Platform (SDP™), a fully-automated, self-service digital platform that allows customers to view and manage their IT environments in real-time from any location, on any connected device.

Among the smart-enabled modules SDP provides access to are Power Analytics, SmartCam, SmartCart and QTS Huddle.

Power Analytics. Allows organizations to view their power consumption and make crucial operating decisions that would otherwise be impossible. Armed with this insight, customers can decipher exactly how much power they are consuming at any given second, allowing them to create availability and move workloads between racks or facilities during peak activity; determine if they have the capacity to operate a workload or if they need to send it to the cloud, and then self-provision to AWS, Azure and Google clouds in less than ten minutes; use the data to better utilize existing capacity rather than spinning up additional racks.

SmartCart™. Using QTS SmartCart, the industry’ first digital crash cart, customer technicians can remotely troubleshoot, configure and test physical assets from their offsite workspaces eliminating travel expenses.

QTS Huddle™. For customers that do not have on-site presence, Huddle is used to collaborate with up to eight subject matter experts and QTS technicians to scope issues or oversee builds at the data center. The service syncs real-time video, audio and chat sessions so that stakeholders see the same scenario at the same time – resolving problems quicker.

The QTS Connected Data Center Strategy

QTS understands that a well-connected data center is essential to efficiently deliver its customers’ digital services. As a result, the mega-scale data center company has been actively expanding its connectivity ecosystem, collaborating with key carriers, cloud providers and networks to strategically build more network routing infrastructure inside its smart facilities for high-performing, lowest latency connections. This modern, connected data center approach bucks the traditional, outdated carrier hotel model that introduces unnecessary costs and risk.

“When you get a critical mass of networks that are all trading traffic in the same building, you become a major connection ecosystem player, nationally and globally,” said McMurtry. “QTS is continually introducing new networks.
into its ecosystem to develop network gravity and ensure our customers are only a cross connect away from whatever network services they need.

Building a Connected Hybrid IT Environment
Providing full transparency into its interconnection ecosystem is as essential as building its portfolio of connectivity options. QTS Connectivity Marketplace provides access to on-net carriers, network options and the endpoints of these networks. Using SDP, customers can visualize their colocation environment and carrier density to better manage their IT solution across multiple infrastructures and a growing number of providers and services. This is particularly relevant for customers with all-in cloud strategies as workloads continue to increase.

"As organizations grow and consume more resources in a cloud environment, they reach a point where they are spending more than they need to," said McMurtry. "The Smart, Connected Data Center enables organizations to build a hybrid model that introduces third-party colocation to help capitalize more of their IT budget and better meet evolving needs."

The Essential Parity Between Colocation and Connectivity
With a commitment to digital innovation and a deep history serving diverse, large-scale customers, QTS is ahead of the digital curve. This allows the mega scale data center company to continue to enhance its dynamic ecosystem of connections and intelligent capabilities to more quickly respond to customers' evolving demands.

The ongoing focus on smart capabilities and carrier density builds an essential parity between colocation design and connectivity—each of which represents a significant portion of customers' IT spends. The visibility offered by the digitized data center ecosystem and QTS interconnection ecosystem allows customers to assess the end-to-end economic impact of their comprehensive data center solution and create operational leverage that moves beyond cost management to drive availability, minimize risk and encourage any number of operational efficiencies that deliver added value for the customer.

ABOUT QTS
QTS Realty Trust, LLC is a leading provider of data center solutions across a diverse footprint spanning more than 9 million square feet of owned mega scale data center space within North America and Europe. Through its software-defined technology platform, QTS is able to deliver secure, compliant infrastructure solutions, robust connectivity and premium customer service to leading hyperscale technology companies, enterprises, and government entities. QTS is a Blackstone portfolio company. Visit QTS at www.qtsdatacenters.com, call toll-free 877.QTS.DATA or follow on Twitter @DataCenters_QTS.