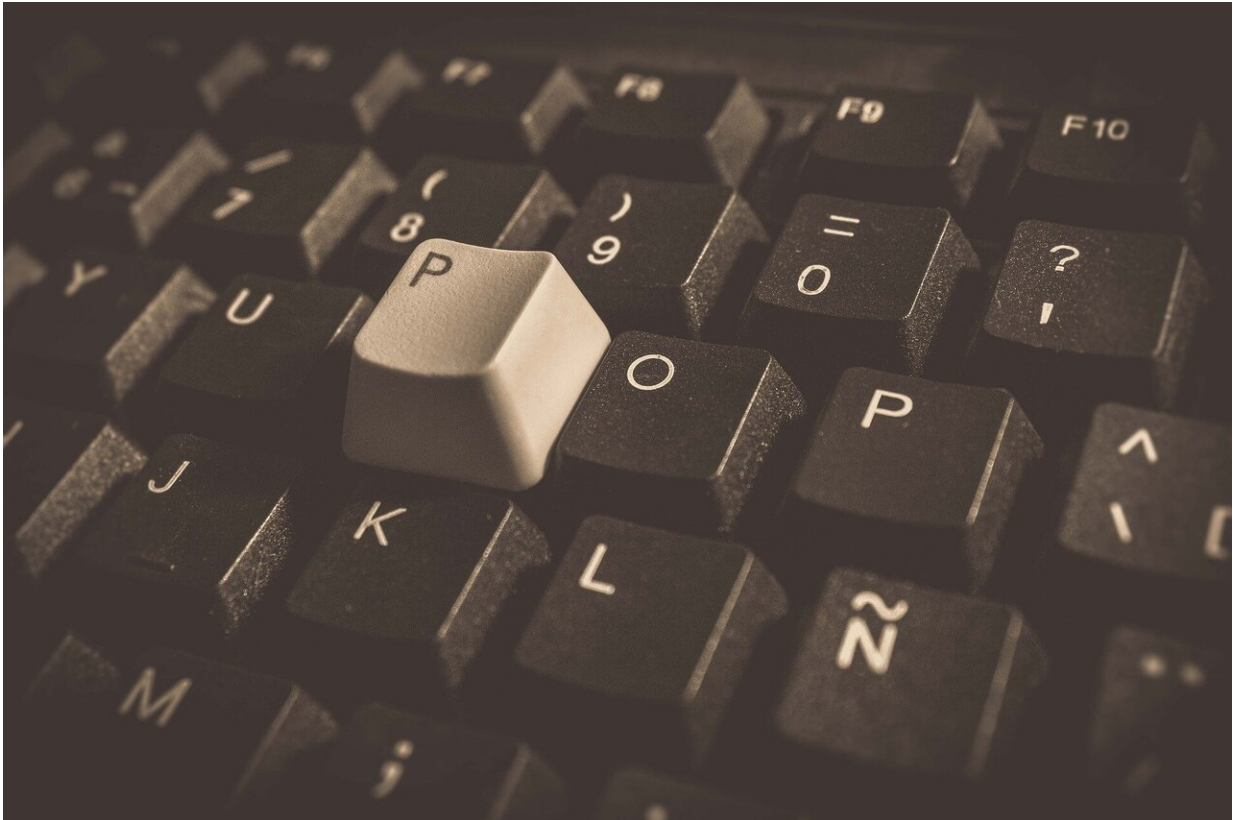


# Microsoft debuts Open Service Mesh

August 11 2020, by Peter Grad

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Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Microsoft will turn over control of its new service mesh to a group specializing in cloud native open source software support.

The new [service](#) is called Open Service Mesh (OSM) and it is designed to assist companies with coordination of microservices. Such services

are rapidly becoming popular in business circles, allowing developers to create smaller, simpler task-specific apps as part of larger operations. The individual apps can be modified and updated more quickly than if their services were part of a single huge operational program.

As Red Hat defined service [mesh](#): "Like the open source project Istio, [a service mesh operation] is a way to control how different parts of an application share data with one another. Unlike other systems for managing this communication, a service mesh is a dedicated infrastructure layer built right into an app."

Microsoft said OSM will be open source and management of its operations will soon be transferred to the Cloud Native Computing Foundation (CNCF). The CNCF, according to its mission statement, "builds sustainable ecosystems and fosters communities to support the growth and health of cloud native open source software."

The move comes in the midst of controversy over mesh operations. Google's recent decision to hand over the trademark of its open source Istio mesh project to an organization created by Google rather than to an already established open source groups angered some in the [open source](#) community. They are concerned about future restrictions on their right to use the Istio name on projects that may stem from the mesh service.

Google had earlier promised to move control of Istio to CNCF, but earlier this month instead transferred the trademark to Open Usage Commons, a group created by Google the same week.

Microsoft's latest move is seen as a means of earning good will from alienated Istio users.

Google's Istio is the most well-known mesh service, but other players such as Kong Inc.'s Kuma and Bouyant Inc.'s Linkerd and Citrix Service

Mesh are vying for a piece of the lucrative mesh pie.

Gabe Monroy, a director of product management at Microsoft Azure, called Microsoft's new Open Service Mesh a lighter-weight, easier-to-learn version of Istio. The Google mesh system is considered quite complex and more difficult to master.

"What our customers have been telling us is that solutions that are out there today, Istio being a good example, are extremely complex," Monroy said.

In its announcement last week, Microsoft said in a blog post, "OSM enables users to uniformly manage, secure and observe service-to-service communication in highly dynamic microservice environments. We hope for OSM to be a community-led project that it will spur collaboration on new and existing APIs for SMI [a standard interface for mesh services]."

**More information:** [openservicemesh.io/blog/](https://openservicemesh.io/blog/)

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