Frequently Asked Questions

Lumen + Alkira

One network. Every cloud. Total control.

Lumen + Alkira provide enterprise networking for today's cloud complexity, radically simplified – one control plane over Lumen's advanced, world-class network. This FAQ answers common questions about how the combination adds value, what it means for customers today, and the vision for a unified control plane for all networking and service needs.

Deal Overview and strategic vision

What did Lumen complete?

Lumen has acquired Alkira, strengthening its ability to deliver a unified, programmable approach to networking. The combination simplifies how connectivity is delivered and managed across multicloud and distributed environments, introducing a more unified way to operate networking at global scale, backed by Lumen's network.

What is Alkira?

Alkira, a Lumen Connect solution, is the on-demand platform that connects clouds, sites, partners, and AI workloads with agility and simplicity. It provides one cloud-native control plane to design, connect, route, segment, secure, observe, and operate highly distributed and complex environments without deploying hardware, managing software, or stitching together separate tools and providers.

How does Alkira fit into Lumen's strategy?

Lumen provides the **high-performance global network foundation**, including private connectivity, cloud on-ramps, and multicloud transport for both **north–south (to/from cloud)** and **east–west (between clouds, data centers, and AI workloads)** traffic. Alkira adds a **single control plane to design, connect, secure, and operate across clouds, data centers, and partners.** Together, Lumen and Alkira are **building one platform to connect, secure, and operate globally**.

How does the Alkira platform work?

Alkira Platform works by turning network infrastructure into an on-demand, software-defined service. Customers use a unified interface (Alkira Portal, MCP, APIs, or SDKs), to design connectivity, security, segmentation, and policy. Alkira then deploys those services through globally distributed Cloud Exchange Points, giving enterprises a consistent way to connect and operate across data centers, cloud environments, on-premises sites, remote users, partners, applications, and workloads without managing the infrastructure themselves.

What benefits do Lumen + Alkira provide?

Lumen + Alkira provide the following benefits:

- **Fast, on-demand consumption** – deploy connectivity and services in minutes, not months
- **Greater visibility and control** across distributed environments and traffic flows
- **Built-in security and segmentation** with zero-trust principles
- **Flexibility and choice** with a cloud- and carrier-agnostic approach

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Customer continuity

What does the acquisition mean for current Lumen and Alkira customers?

Lumen and Alkira are now one company. Lumen infrastructure and programmable network and the Alkira platform continue to operate and be supported exactly as before. **There is no disruption to current services, support, or day-to-day operations:**

- Customers can continue using their existing Lumen and Alkira solutions as they do today
- Over time, customers will gain access to a more unified and programmable experience
- Customers can adopt new capabilities at their own pace as integration evolves

Will pricing, contract terms, or service levels change?

No. Existing pricing, contract terms, and service levels are unaffected by the acquisition.

Do customers need to change their current network architecture or services?

No. Current customers do not need to change their network architecture or services. Existing Lumen and Alkira services continue to be supported, with no forced migration or required architecture change.

- **For Lumen customers**: Existing Lumen services continue to operate as they do today. Alkira, as an on-demand control plane, can help manage connectivity, policies, segmentation, and visibility across cloud and hybrid environments as the combined platform evolves.
- **For Alkira customers:** Alkira continues as the same cloud-native, cloud- and carrier-agnostic platform, with no required change to the current control plane and no forced migration. Existing Alkira environments can continue operating as they do today, while gaining access over time to Lumen's network foundation, private-network performance, and direct cloud connectivity.

How Lumen, Alkira, MCGW, and Lumen Connect Work Together

What's the difference between Lumen Network-as-a-Service (NaaS), Lumen Connect, and Alkira?

Each plays a different role in the combined experience:

- **Lumen NaaS** is the programmable, on-demand networking model. It provides dynamic connectivity services and a high-performance foundation across enterprise locations, data centers, and cloud environments.
- **Lumen Connect** is the digital experience customers use to access and provision Lumen network services, including Multi-Cloud Gateway, Internet On-Demand, Ethernet Fabric Connect, and Lumen Cloud Interconnect.
- **Alkira, a Lumen Connect solution,** is the on-demand control plane that helps customers design, connect, route, segment, secure, observe, and operate across clouds, data centers, sites, partners, and services from a more consistent operating model.
- **Multi-Cloud Gateway** is the private network foundation for multicloud environments, enabling customers to connect across clouds, data centers, and on-ramps using private, high-performance connectivity on the Lumen network.
- **Lumen Cloud Interconnect** is the hardened link to a specific critical cloud region, providing redundancy through multiple diverse dedicated paths engineered for that specific cloud.

Together, these capabilities help customers consume networking more like cloud: with more flexibility, centralized control, and the ability to scale across distributed environments without managing each connection, policy, or service in isolation.

How does Alkira work with or complement Lumen Multi-Cloud Gateway?

Multi-Cloud Gateway and Alkira are complementary. Multi-Cloud Gateway provides the private connectivity foundation that helps traffic move across clouds, data centers, on-ramps, and AI destinations. Alkira adds the cloud-native control layer that makes that fabric easier to consume, automate, secure, segment, observe, and operate.

Traditionally, multicloud networking often required managing individual ports, circuits, cloud connections, routing policies, and services separately. **That model can become harder to scale** as applications, data, AI workloads, partners, and services spread

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across more environments.

Together, Lumen and Alkira help shift multicloud networking from a collection of separate connections and tools to a more consistent operating model for connectivity, control, policy, services, and visibility.

In simple terms: **Multi-Cloud Gateway provides the private multicloud connectivity fabric. Alkira makes that fabric more consumable, automated, policy-driven, and service-rich.**

If Alkira provides the control plane, what role does Lumen play?

Alkira provides the cloud-native control plane, while Lumen provides the network foundation underneath it. That includes private connectivity, direct cloud access, Multi-Cloud Gateway, and the performance and reach needed to move traffic across clouds, data centers, sites, partners, and services. This matters because control and orchestration still depend on reliable connectivity. Lumen brings the private-network performance, scale, and cloud access that help support the Alkira-powered operating model.

Will Alkira remain cloud- and carrier-agnostic after the acquisition?

Yes. Alkira remains a cloud- and carrier-agnostic platform, and customers can continue using it across their existing environments. **This does not change with the acquisition.**

Alkira already works across multiple environments, including Lumen. As part of Lumen, the platform will have the option to more closely align with Lumen's network over time, bringing the control plane and underlying infrastructure into a more integrated experience while preserving customer choice.

Customer value, use cases, and outcomes

How does Alkira expand what Lumen customers can do today?

Enterprise networking is no longer just about connecting to a single cloud. As applications, data, AI workloads, partners, and services span across environments, connectivity becomes more dynamic and distributed.

Lumen already provides a high-performance connectivity foundation across clouds, data centers, and enterprise locations. **Alkira extends that foundation** with a cloud-native control layer that brings orchestration, policy, segmentation, visibility, and automation into a single interface across environments.

The result is a simpler, software-driven model for multicloud and AI-ready environments.

What are the primary use cases for Lumen and Alkira together?

Lumen and Alkira are especially relevant for customers looking to cover the following use cases:

Cloud Networking

- **Challenge:** Every cloud brings its own network and policy model — and none of them speak the same language. The result is incompatible complex configurations multiplying with each new environment.
- **Solution:** Lumen + Alkira delivers one governed connectivity model spanning clouds, data centers, and private networks with direct cloud on-ramps and high-performance transport unified beneath a single on-demand network.

Instant Extranet

- **Challenge:** Connecting external partners is a one-off every time, making them slow to stand up, hard to govern, and impossible to scale.
- **Solution:** Lumen + Alkira makes partner onboarding repeatable, governed, observable, and lifecycle-managed from day one, with built-in segmentation and policy on private, high-reach connectivity.

Colocation Simplification

- **Challenge:** Colocation architecture has become complex, hardware-heavy hubs that backhaul traffic, inflate cost and slow expansion.
- **Solution:** Lumen + Alkira can reduce the colo dependence with an on-demand fabric on top of fiber, waves and route diversity. Replacing device sprawl and backhaul with virtually any-to-any direct connectivity, so organizations can scale environments and onboard partners in days instead of months.

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A simple way to think about it: **Lumen provides high-performance, flexible networking connectivity. Alkira helps organizations manage the services and policies globally, with visibility and control.**

How does this build on Lumen cloud connectivity for AI and multicloud traffic?

AI and distributed applications are increasing east-west traffic across clouds, data centers, on-ramps, and AI destinations. Lumen Multi-Cloud Gateway provides the private, programmable IP connectivity foundation for that traffic, while Alkira is the layer that ties them all together: unified network fabric for cloud-to-cloud and cloud-to-branch connectivity, with segmentation, security, and other network services built in.

What value does this provide when an organization already has cloud networking teams?

Simplicity, total control, ease of day two operations, management, and troubleshooting. Alkira automates the plumbing so organizations can focus on apps, not complex cloud networking operations.

How is Alkira different from SD-WAN?

SD-WAN is designed to connect sites. Alkira is designed to create and manage the multicloud networking layer across clouds, sites, and services. These address different aspects of networking.

Why use Alkira instead of managing connectivity directly through each cloud provider console?

Cloud networking can be configured separately within each cloud environment, often requiring manual setup and ongoing management. Alkira provides a centralized console and policy model designed to simplify deployment and management across cloud environments.

How does this help simplify security, segmentation, and compliance?

Security and segmentation can become harder to manage as applications, data, users, partners, and services spread across multiple clouds and locations. Lumen and Alkira help simplify that environment by applying policy, segmentation, service insertion, and visibility through a cloud-native control layer on top of Lumen's private network foundation.

Alkira helps make security services and policies more consistent across clouds, sites, partners, and distributed environments, while Lumen provides the option to carry traffic over private, high-performance connectivity rather than relying only on best-effort internet paths.

Why use a private network in an Alkira-based environment instead of the lowest-cost connectivity?

Lowest-cost connectivity does not guarantee the performance, predictability, or operational consistency that mission-critical workloads require. A private network can help reduce exposure to public internet bottlenecks, support more predictable performance, and provide a stronger foundation for high-bandwidth, latency-sensitive, and multicloud workloads. With Lumen and Alkira together, customers can combine cloud-like agility and centralized control with private connectivity designed for scale, performance, and operational simplicity

Getting Started and Next Steps

Can I purchase the Alkira platform through Lumen now?

Engagements typically begin with a discussion of the relevant use case, such as multicloud connectivity, colocation simplification, extranet connectivity, or support for distributed cloud and AI environments.

From there, the Lumen account team can help evaluate the best path forward, including available options for demos, proof-of-concept discussions, and solution planning based on the customer's environment and priorities. This gives organizations a practical way to explore Alkira's cloud-native control capabilities alongside Lumen's programmable network services and private connectivity foundation.

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When will Lumen and Alkira offer a more unified management experience?

Lumen Connect and Alkira will come together over time into a more unified management experience. Today, both platforms continue to operate and be supported as they are, with Lumen services managed through Lumen Connect and Alkira capabilities managed through the Alkira platform.

The roadmap is to make Lumen's programmable network services, Multi-Cloud Gateway, Alkira control capabilities, cloud connectivity, security services, policy, automation, monitoring, and billing easier to manage through a more integrated operating model.

The goal is simple: a more unified way to connect, secure, and operate distributed cloud, network, and AI-ready environments.

What happens if a planned project or upgrade is already in progress?

There is no need to pause current projects or choose between existing Lumen investments and future Alkira capabilities. Existing Lumen NaaS investments carry forward as the combined platform evolves. Starting with a focused use case or on-demand pilot can provide a practical path to expand over time.

Can Lumen share Alkira's product roadmap or technical documentation?

Yes. The Lumen account team can connect organizations with the appropriate combined materials and Alkira technical resources. Roadmap direction can be discussed as part of those conversations, and publicly available Alkira materials remain accessible.

Who should be contacted about specific account or service questions

For questions about specific services, contracts, or projects, the Lumen account team remains the primary point of contact. They will bring in the right specialists to discuss NaaS, Multi-Cloud Gateway, or Alkira to address your questions and needs.

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A Lumen Connect® Solution

Why Lumen + Alkira?

Only Lumen owns the physical fiber underlay and the cloud-native control plane. Other companies do one layer and but lack the other, leaving customers with more complexity and costs. Lumen + Alkira delivers both together –one provider owns the consumption experience and the underlying performance.

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