



Outsourcing Communications Technology Lifecycle Management

9 Essentials to Managing Cost
and Performance



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Telecom used to be a lot simpler. Just a decade ago, enterprise communication needs could be fulfilled with a telephone line and a PBX system hosted on-premise.

Things aren't so simple these days. Demands for access, connectivity, innovative platforms, as well as a growing dispersed workforce, means employees have high expectations for the way they want and need to communicate.

Telecom has crept its way into all core business entities—becoming an increasing priority for executive decision makers.

It is becoming more and more unreasonable to expect internal IT teams to effectively manage this multi-dimensional ecosystem alone. Today, savvy businesses know that outsourcing Communications Technology Lifecycle Management to industry experts is both a strategic and cost-effective move.



9 Essentials to Elements of Communications Technology Lifecycle Management

Here are the nine things you should be doing to save money, stay current, and ensure employee efficiency.

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Service Reviews: Audits, Inventory, and Benchmarking



Regular service reviews are imperative to ensure you only pay for the services, lines, and hardware you have in use. The scope of these reviews depends on your individual business requirements; however, at a minimum should include an inventory overview of your fixed and mobile services, equipment charges, taxes, and surcharges to create an initial baseline.

Benchmarking supports these audits and provides a detailed pricing analysis of market pricing for services rendered for businesses comparable to your company.



DIY Challenges:

1. Time-consuming process to fully categorize and review all services
2. Lack of open access to vendor pricing
3. Limited experience creating multi-vendor models



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Strategy Development



The basis of any successful IT and communication network implementation is its strategic plan. Developing an overall strategy is critical for controlling the costs of managing, auditing, and designing a communications network and its related processes. The strategy should at minimum include an approach for wireline, mobile, collaboration, messaging, and cloud policies.

Taking a wide lens to your communications technology and network strategy requires an effective methodology where business goals, efficiency, and growth are mandated over the replacing of one particular technology. Keeping technology aligned with the strategic goals of your organization will place you in a position where technology drives growth.



The Benefits:

- Maps your enterprise-wide IT and communications technology needs
- Enables the adoption of best-of-breed solutions
- Ensures costs are forecasted, budgeted and controlled
- Provides an approach for maintaining and monitoring software



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Centralized Procurement



Many businesses struggle to procure the IT and telecom services best suited to its needs. Complicated requirements gathering and fragmented internal procurement processes further strain this challenge. And with the increasing number of solutions and providers out there all stating they can provide the best solutions, navigating the procurement process can be frustrating and time-consuming.

The solution? Centralized procurement. By establishing a single corporate approach to procurement, businesses can eliminate the wasted costs associated with a mismanaged and fragmented procurement process.



The Benefits:

- Enterprise-wide uniformity of service and equipment requests
- Central management of moves, additions, changes, and disconnects
- Elimination of redundancy in manpower and expenses



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Automated RFP Process



The traditional RFP evaluation process has long been a cog in the wheel for large organizations. Typically proposals include long-winded responses to requirements, making it time-consuming for bidders to complete, and difficult for buyers to make apples-to-apples comparisons.

As a result, both buyers and bidders end up spending a great deal of time and money on the proposal itself without ultimately finding the best vendor.

The good news? The future of RFP evaluations is moving towards an automated proposal and bid system. A SaaS-based RFP platform reduces the time and effort to create, complete and evaluate proposals.

Getting a clearly defined RFP in front of the most qualified vendors means you're in a good position to get the best solution that meets your needs. It's always a good thing when you have a healthy number of bids coming in.

Evaluation Criteria:

- **Auto-scoring for easy analysis of results:** respondent scores should be ranked instantly without the need to print-off hard copies.
- **Ease of vendor access:** make it easy for vendors to submit bids, thus increasing competition amongst bidders.
- **Single pane view for all stakeholders:** a shared view to automate much of the proposal writing, and live tracking during the bidding process.



Recommended: DirectRFP

The world's first RFP technology platform built to solicit exact and measurable responses.

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Contract Negotiations



Contract negotiations in the telecom world can be intimidating—vendors are known to use aggressive sales tactics to talk enterprise negotiators into less than ideal contract terms.

Luckily, businesses don't have to face the contract negotiation challenge alone. Many enterprises outsource their contract needs to experienced telecom experts who can negotiate on their behalf.

Further, these experts are typically hired to manage the entire communications technology lifecycle to eliminate silos between legal and other operational functions.

Evaluation Criteria:

- **Depth of experience:** how many contracts have they successfully negotiated? Best-in-class providers should have over 2,000 under their belt.
- **Handling business change:** do they have the know-how to re-negotiate new contract terms should your business experience a downturn? Top providers will ensure your original contracts are built to accommodate change.
- **Enterprise-wide coordination:** how well do they communicate with multiple-stakeholder groups? Your best provider will have a proven track-record in working with stakeholder groups across an enterprise.



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Implementation, Planning, and Management



Implementing a new technology solution is often a daunting task that many IT teams understandably dread. The pressure is on to ensure the solution is rolled out on-time and without disruption to the business.

Which is why having an implementation plan and a experience resources to manage the project are critical components of Communications Technology Lifecycle Management.



The Benefits:

- Avoid excessive service disruptions
- Eliminate duplicate services (from a single vendor or across multiple vendors)
- Keep costs for implementation services in check



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On-Going Service Management



The day-to-day management of IT and telecom services can be a tedious and time-consuming affair—particularly for large organizations juggling multiple vendors across multiple locations.

For many organizations, the solution to service management has been to have the IT manager of each independent office manage its own services. This, however, presents several drawbacks.



DIY Challenges:

- Blind spots in vendor charges
- User issues across the network
- Lack of single-source for quality control
- Consistent Support across the enterprise



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On-Going Expense Management



Managing telecom and IT expenses is a complicated affair for organizations large and small. In fact, telecom ranks in the top five operating expenses for many organizations today.

The silver lining is that big budgets mean big opportunity for savings. There are effective Telecom Expense Management (TEM) tools available to help manage your expenses and reduce telecom expenses by as much as 20%.

As helpful as these tools are, most inexperienced administrators still require the keen eye of a Telecom Expense Expert to validate every invoice and dispute every billing error. Who wants to go through hundreds of bills from carriers on a monthly basis anyway?



The Challenges:

- Erroneous billing (not to contract, overbilling, double-billing etc.)
- Complicated invoicing
- Extensive inventory



Recommended: A Cloud-based TEM solution with Managed Services.

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Software Asset Management



Most organizations today grapple with the constant onboarding and offboarding of employees and their devices— from smartphones to consultant laptops, the number of devices just keeps on growing. Software Asset Management (SAM) helps organizations keep stock of all devices within its environment.



The Benefits:

- Up-to-date tracking of all software licensing coming in and out of an organization's environment
- Greater control over costs
- Better management over software licensing and increased security



What's Next?

If this all sounds a bit too much for your team, you're not alone. Many organizations are choosing to outsource because of the expertise available through Telecom and Technology Consultants. Establishing a comprehensive communications technology lifecycle management strategy with an industry expert will save you thousands of dollars year over year, and ensure your communications technology services meet your business goals.

LEARN MORE →

With over 20 years of experience developing and maintaining Communications Technology Lifecycle Management services at the enterprise level, LinkSource is motivated to help you achieve your IT and telecom goals.

Contact our experienced Technology Consultants to learn more about Communications Technology Lifecycle Management Services by LinkSource Technologies.

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