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Controlling Costs with Managed Mobility Services

Learn about how Managed Mobility Services can produce cost savings and help improve the productivity of your mobile workforce. There are many ways to overspend on telecom costs, and most organizations lack the resources, tools, and telecom expertise to find and eliminate them all.

Contents

Overview

If you're looking for better ways to manage your mobility program, find ways to reduce costs, or improve the productivity of your mobile workforce, finding the right Managed Mobility Services (MMS) program is an excellent place to start. Given the complexity of deploying mobile-enabled applications and content, and a plethora of service providers, plans, and devices, it is easy to understand that there are many ways to overpay for mobile services, devices, and related expenses across an organization's mobile ecosystem.

The services and attendant software applications designed to support managed mobility services can help to identify ways to optimize services, eliminate waste, recover money paid on erroneous charges, and ensure contracts are optimized. And then there are the hidden savings—the productivity of properly equipped workers, elimination of time-wasting distractions, efficiencies gained with centralized control, and more.

The Cost & Complexity of Mobility

There is no doubt that mobility and its capabilities will continue to grow. Mobile devices are proliferating in the workplace and the numbers are impressive: Gartner predicts that worldwide shipments of all devices for 2015 will increase 3.9% to reach 2.5 billion units, with the growth overwhelmingly attributable to mobile devices—mobile phones lead the growth at 3.7%, reaching 2 billion units in 2016. (Gartner, January 2015)

The certain increase in the number of mobile devices being used within your organization, along with the complexity of mobile billing and services and the continued evolution within mobile technologies and capabilities, means your mobile costs are likely to continue to grow, and with it, the likelihood of overspending increases.

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There are many ways organizations overspend on mobile telecom costs. For example, the Telecommunications Expense Management Industry Association (TEMIA) estimates businesses could take 2-15% off monthly phone bills by identifying all-too-common carrier billing errors; other savings to be had in cost avoidance range from 5-25% (TEMIA, The ROI of Telecom Expense Management). As mobility grows, so grow the costs.

So, what is your total monthly telecom spend?

If you can't answer this immediately or quickly access documents needed to do so, you can probably benefit from Telecom Expense Management (TEM), a critical component complete Managed Mobility Services (MMS).

Managing the Lifecycle

Managed Mobility Services can produce many ways to save money and reduce costs, from hard-dollar reimbursements for payments on erroneous charges, to soft savings related to labor efficiencies.

By managing the lifecycle from end-to-end, on an ongoing basis, organizations can realize savings, reduce waste, and ensure users have what they need to work productively while mobile. Some of the areas of MMS that contribute to cost savings include:

- **Identifying Billing Errors On Current And Past Invoices**
  Carrier bills have mistakes. Without ongoing scrutiny and reconciliation, these billing errors can add up. The problem is that organizations often don't have internal resources who can devote the time or have the expertise to catch billing errors.

- **Discovering Unused Devices That Are Still Active**
  Unused devices include zero-use devices, un-reported lost or stolen devices, and devices left in drawers when employees leave the company. An accurate and justified inventory is the first step to ensuring a cost-effective mobility program. You must know how many mobile devices your organization possesses, how many of those devices are actually being used and who uses them.

- **Ensuring Users Are on the Right Service Plans**
  The wrong plan for a user's needs can rack up serious charges. These can be one-time charges, such as an employee with a local plan who goes on an international trip, racking up thousands in roaming charges. Or they can be ongoing, in the case, for example, of an employee who works in the office full-time but has a plan that includes unlimited data.

- **Eliminating Late Payment Fees**
  When there is a stack of invoices from multiple carriers, in different formats and spanning different accounts or departments, it can take countless hours of staff time to manually review them. Organizations that lack the necessary resources to devote to this time-consuming and ongoing chore can sometimes be faced with exorbitant late fees because of delayed invoice processing.

There are many opportunities that a comprehensive Managed Mobility program can uncover. The next section gives an overview of how WidePoint addresses cost savings and expense management.

Asset Discovery & Audit

Example of potential savings:

Number of mobile assets charged each month : **2,032**

Number of devices allowed per employee   :   **1**

Number of employees with devices   : **1,896**

Look at these numbers; they don't make sense. An organization had operated for years with a de-centralized telecom program using only an invoice as to track assets. The WidePoint historical audit discovered that 136 unused devices were charged each month with a total monthly cost of more than $5,000.00. Unused devices included zero-use devices, un-reported lost or stolen devices and devices left in drawers after employees had retired. The device audit alone quickly identified $60,000.00 in annual savings.

The first step to ensuring a cost-effective mobility program is an accurate and justified inventory. You must know how many mobile devices your organization possesses, how many of those devices are actually being used and who uses them.

WidePoint's asset discovery will help you:

- Identify billing errors on current and past invoices
- Achieve significant savings through inventory management
- Improve processes to ensure billing accuracy
- Reduce capital costs

Invoice Management

Manually identifying errors in a stack of invoices from multiple carriers, vendors, formats, and accounts requires countless hours of staff time. Those who lack resources sometimes pay exorbitant late fees because of delayed invoice processing in addition to charges resulting from unidentified billing errors.

WidePoint's solutions can resolve these and other issues, utilizing best-in-class processes and automated technology to acquire, electronically load, normalize, audit, consolidate, approve, and reconcile your telecom invoices. WidePoint's Invoice Management service:

- Significantly increases visibility into your mobile spend (WidePoint's automated expense management system enables visibility across the entire enterprise or down to user line-item detail)
- Dramatically reduces invoice processing time and creates alerts for missing invoices, eliminating major causes of late payment fees
- Utilizes automated processes to validate invoice charges against client account and equipment inventories
- Ensures compliance with negotiated carrier contract rates
- Enables automated allocation and charge-back through GL coding and AP transmittals
- Enables expense reporting across and by carriers and at every level of GL reporting from enterprise level down to the individual user.

Dispute, Recovery & Reconciliation

While other TEM providers might help you identify billing errors, WidePoint also manages the entire recovery process to ensure your savings are realized.

WidePoint's four-step reconciliation process analyzes your invoices line by line and includes:

- Identification of errors
- Research and validation
- Disputation of the charges
- Managing the issue and negotiating with the carrier through resolution

Rate Plan & Contract Optimization

WidePoint's expert analysts utilize advanced technology, current market knowledge, and years of telecom experience to identify cost saving opportunities across your entire mobile enterprise. Our optimization process involves detailed analysis and the creation of user usage profiles to assign rate plans and features that are consistent with the usage patterns of your mobile workforce.

Rate Plan Optimization includes:

- Voice and Data plans
- Features such as SMS and voice mail
- International roaming
- International calling
- Push-to-talk
- Mobile-to-Mobile
- Night & Weekend usage
- Historical trends
- Top users/zero-use
- Carrier account consolidation
- Contract negotiation or renegotiation

WidePoint uses its technology and three months of electronic data from each mobile carrier to (a) determine user plans, features, and usage; (b) identify unnecessary or unauthorized services in violation of policy; (c) identify needed optional services; and (d) develop an optimum selection of plans for rate plan pooling to reduce the total minutes of use purchased while leaving a sufficient buffer that the possibility of bursting at high rates is minimized. Savings are tracked and reported on monthly, and optimizations should be reviewed and adjusted monthly as well.

There are two main elements to Rate Plan Optimization. First is optimization of optional services to conform to your mobile policy and to accommodate end-user consumption patterns. Second is (Rate Plan) cost optimization for minutes of usage consumed and special calling plans.

Rate plan optimization (RPO) creates a pool of minutes aggregated from all user rate plans and accessed by all users. WidePoint begins with the most recent three months of electronic invoices and creates an optimal pool of rate plans based upon the initial average.

An initial recommendation will be presented to you for review and approval. The recommendation includes a percentage of excess minutes to minimize the chance that you will incur bursting charges. Upon your approval we place orders with the carriers and manage implementation including quality assurance.

We review the first month billing to assure that carrier implementation was correct. We order corrections when necessary and request credits when carrier errors cost you money. We compare the result to our projection, report it to you, and make any changes we believe necessary. We review each month individually and make recommendations to "tune" your pool size. This can produce an additional 1-3% savings. A full optimization is performed quarterly. WidePoint is responsible for implementation management and for quality assurance and results measurement.

WidePoint's average customer realizes cost savings in excess of 20% from mobile optimization.

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For international usage optimization, WidePoint uses a variety of tools and strategies depending upon customer usage. This varies from international travel devices to adding international plans for needed periods to an international travel plan that saves larger users 20-40% of international cost.

To optimize contracts, WidePoint reviews your carrier contract(s), extracts the terms, conditions, and pricing, and makes recommendations as to how to maximize the value from those contracts including negotiating revisions to them as appropriate. This is done in conjunction with Rate Plan Optimization and Inventory Optimization.

Conclusion

Managed Mobility Services can provide valuable management of your mobility programs and assets that can help reduce costs and eliminate waste, while ensuring users have what they need to be productive when mobile, as they increasingly are.

An established provider such as WidePoint has processes and effective tools and systems that, combined with our deep knowledge and understanding of the industry, carriers, and related practices, can produce ongoing savings, cost reduction, and efficiencies that can make a real bottom-line impact, not to mention create a competitive edge by enabling workers to leverage the benefits of mobility.

About WidePoint

WidePoint (NYSE Mkt: WYY) is a leading provider of secure, cloud-delivered, enterprise-wide information technology-based solutions that can enable enterprises and agencies to deploy fully compliant IT services in accordance with government-mandated regulations and advanced system requirements. WidePoint has several major government and commercial contracts.

For more information, please visit us at www.widepoint.com.