

## Connecting the dots of wholesale to expand broadband access

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In developing nations, such as Africa, broadband has not yet been deployed for everyone. And it doesn't seem to be happening quick enough and within a cost range that is affordable for local businesses and consumers.



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One of the impacts of continuing globalization is the increasing demand to be connected anywhere and everywhere, anytime and for everything. High speed internet access is needed to connect people, businesses, communities, governments and societies. The internet is the way we find work, do our jobs, learn, grow, access healthcare and stay connected in our evolving world. It's also the way we entertain ourselves and even be social. In developing areas, it's also a key part of improving needed industries such as tourism, agriculture and manufacturing. In industrialized regions, access to

broadband is often taken for granted. There it seems like it has been a long time since the days of dial-up internet access. In developing nations, such as Africa, broadband has not yet been deployed for everyone. And it doesn't seem to be happening quick enough and within a cost range that is affordable for local businesses and consumers.

This evolving connected world presents opportunities and challenges for consumers, enterprises and organizations as they adjust to survive and thrive now and in the future. One of the industries under immense pressure to

transform is telecommunications. Telco operators have the very important role of providing the thread that connects the devices, services and beyond. With the increased demand for internet access they must quickly expand the areas and number of customers they provide services to, along with increasing the amount of services they provide to each subscribers. One of the areas Telcos are focused on transforming is with their wholesale business, as it is the way they help to expand communication services for new regions. By enabling new digital ecosystems for their wholesale business, within their organizations and with all the

partners that are involved in expanding broadband access, they can increase efficiency and performance to be able to meet growing demand quickly and in a cost-effective way.

For the wholesale telco business, the need to enable new digital ecosystems is due to the global nature of expanding their operations and a need for greater connection of services among all the complex relationships they have with simultaneously supplying customers, suppliers, competitors and partners. Wholesale divisions must understand multiple types of users and their needs to be able to negotiate and interface with them. Developing a successful wholesale service approach for internal and external services requires an end-to-end strategy that encompasses retail channels, B2B users, commercial applications, end-user pricing, service costs, network profitability and long-term network planning.

For wholesalers to increase their level of success to tackle these new demands and challenges, they must simplify their complex processes and relationships by unifying and automating business operations. Standing in their way to quickly and easily transform is the multiple legacy systems and processes they have in place. These systems were not designed to work together to efficiently enable the connected digital services of today nor to meet the digital service needs of consumers, enterprises and partners.

As Telcos look at evolving their legacy systems, they'll want to ensure they can contain costs and more quickly adjust by leveraging the legacy systems in place. They'll not want to start over with completely new systems and processes. Projects that call for a total replacement often run way over budget and take way longer than the projected timelines. There isn't time and resources for this with the fast pace of the evolution – they need to keep up.

By adding more capabilities through modular solutions, Telcos can converge systems and processes to meet modern communication and digital service needs. Solution modularity, pre-integration and flexibility, enables the systems to be deployed with a phased-implementation approach for the entire wholesale business while allowing for cost control and seamless solution's expansion and evolution.

To make this happen effectively, telco operators and their wholesale departments need to work with flexible and responsive technology partners so they can innovate together to implement new solutions for this transformation. They must continue to

support unlimited types of wholesale models, covering both telecom and non-telecom services, and integrate with current systems and technologies.

By collaborating effectively, telco operators can deploy innovative wholesale solutions to go beyond the traditional approach to the settlement process and unify all of the departments involved – including business, finance and IT teams - on one platform. This improves enterprise-wide cooperation and awareness. With full process automation, they also improve time to market and add more agility and flexibility for their business operations to speed their deployment and service areas covered. By adding new tools, Telcos can get the real-time information they need for quick and accurate decisions-making to expand their wholesale business.

By establishing an open digital ecosystem with converging and automating wholesale billing, settlement, payment and collection confirmation processes onto a unified software platform, Telcos bring together legacy systems and deployed system modules for end to end integration of billing period management, dispute management, settlement, roaming management, financial management, reporting and to cover recurring charges. Providing full coverage of the settlement process until invoice closure, allows for automation of previous manual processes such as invoice verification, dispute resolution, settlement generation, collection and payment handling, allows the operator to be able to secure revenue, improve operational and financial visibility and ensures readiness for the needed expansion of services.

A large telecommunications company in the Middle East established this type of digital ecosystem. In a short timeframe – eight months, they implemented a new solution that is covering all wholesale stakeholders within one platform improving enterprise wide collaboration and awareness. They connected the dots and converged all wholesale services and unified the entire wholesale partner network within a single platform. They created 'digital bridges' between all the internal businesses and by creating one unified platform broke the silos to provide true automation and business insight. This huge complex project involved several of departments besides just wholesale.

Successful completion of the project optimized the telco staff's operational efficiency, reduced human interactivity, dependency and delays, streamlined concurrently handled settlements, shortened

settlement cycle completion and time to collection. Full convergence for all wholesale services managed with the unified software solution, provided data accuracy and consistency and end to end wholesale business insights and analytics for in-depth understanding of each partner.

By unifying their ecosystem of customers, end users, suppliers, alliance partners, developers, data sources, internal organization and back office systems, this future-proof digital ecosystem helped the telco overcome technical and commercial challenges to grow within the wholesale marketplace. It allowed them to go beyond traditional wholesale business by increasing value contribution, efficiency and performance visibility to support diversified revenue share and support growth to meet developing market needs.



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