A Leading Cable Company Builds an Order Engineering Center To Support New Product Delivery

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

One of the largest national cable firms, headquartered in the Midwest, is a leading provider of managed networking solutions to a wide array of businesses and organizations in 75 markets spanning 30 states and Washington D.C. As one of the country's premier competitive service providers, the multiple system operator (MSO) integrates data, dedicated Internet access, and local and long distance voice services for long distance carriers, wireless communications companies, incumbent local exchange carriers, and enterprise organizations in healthcare, finance, higher education, manufacturing, and hospitality industries, as well as military, state and local government.

As a quickly growing and emerging services provider, the cable company is focused on bringing leading edge business services to the marketplace. As part of this strategy, they were beginning to introduce to the marketplace two new products: IP-based VPN and a digital Voice and Data/IP bundled business offering.

For the typical communications company, new product development and deployment is a recurring activity that many internal organizations need to support. Operationally, this can impact organizations responsible for service delivery and customer management, and ultimately impact their end-customer's experience. In the case of this cable company, they proactively embarked on a strategy to create a platform and process for buffering these kinds of impacts, in order to avoid or mitigate many of the common pitfalls such as bad data quality, rejected work and rework, elongated service intervals and resource productivity issues that can result in poor customer satisfaction.

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These challenges faced during the roll out of a new product drive the need for issue capture and analytical feedback to answer the following questions:

· What are the process gaps?

· What are the root causes for poor data quality?

· How is this affecting the customer experience—and what can be done about it?

The real-time capture and communication of these questions is critical for the service provider in order to respond to and adjust the new product to meet both the demands of the marketplace, and its service delivery business units.

THE VERTEK SOLUTION

Because of the complexity inherent in the rollout of these products, it made sense to create a centralized order management resource to provide quicker time to market (training; ramping up; etc.) where issue management and the associated learnings could be managed in a scalable fashion.

Vertek established an Order Handling Center (OHC) by quickly implementing and ramping up an order management and consulting team that immediately began to execute on all national customer sales for these two complex products. The ramp-up team focused on creating process, strategies and a governance framework for the insertion of the OHC model, and a seamless integration. Once "live," orders flowed directly from national sales locations into the Order Handling Center via Vertek's web-based submission mechanism called the MDS (minimum data set). Quality gates and best practices were utilized to enable technical data gathering and order package creation to improve provisioning KPIs. All order placement into design and engineering was conducted by the Order Handling Center, where Vertek's order engineers project managed customer projects through the provisioning process to ensure timely and successful activations.

NET RESULT

By leveraging the Order Handling Center model, the cable company was effectively able to have a zero negative impact on its existing order management resources for the introduction of both new products, IP-based VPN and a digital Voice and Data/IP product, resulting in staffing and training cost avoidance and reduced operational expenses.

But even more importantly, the Order Handling Center created the governance environment wherein the important challenges and opportunities associated with new product rollouts were managed, worked through, and communicated in an expeditious way that enabled problem solving and improved KPIs.

The unique framework of the Order Handling Center allows for the consistent capture and communication of measures related to key strategies—such as service delivery intervals, quality, and customer experience—month over month as part of the service.

This business intelligence is critical and extremely valuable to the champions and stakeholders of these new services. The OHC has significantly improved the rollout of these products both from an operational and customer satisfaction standpoint.

Vertek's unique experience and positioning in the marketplace as a solutions provider who combines business process outsourcing in tandem with consultative services enables service providers to leverage the Order Handling Center service and balance operational throughput needs along with product/services improvement. It was this differentiator that convinced the cable company to bring Vertek on as a partner in this project.

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