

A Leading Midwest Communications Service Provider Realizes Enormous Efficiencies Through Partner Management

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

The client, a leading Midwest communications service provider, needed to continuously build out and extend its product portfolio. It chose to do so through partnerships, the quickest and most cost-efficient means available. The first such partnership secured a third party ISP provider that created a customizable portal and user experience for the service provider's (SP) broadband subscriber base.

As partnerships were secured and contracts signed, the SP wanted to be able to incorporate these business partnerships into the operational side of the business with the same rigor, metrics, and visibility as internally developed services / offerings / capabilities. Integrating these partnerships and attaining the visibility that yields the necessary actionable intelligence was critical to maintaining efficiencies, performance, consistency, and general partnership health.

The client needed a strategic solution, one that would work across multiple internal organizations and provide value to many stakeholders. First, the solution had to meet an impressive set of business goals: provide a best-in-class offering, meet aggressive time-to-market requirements and provide a seamless operational impact and enhanced customer experience – all to maintain a clear competitive advantage.

Second, the service provider needed a complete, scalable solution that operationalized partner relationships against contracts, enabled a proactive approach in managing relationships and offered a common view for all stakeholders to measure, validate and manage financial and operational performance around each relationship.

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THE VERTEK SOLUTION

The client chose Vertek's Partner Management managed service solution. Initially, the program was implemented for a few key partnerships, but it quickly resulted in a major change in the way the client handled the entire life cycle of its partnership relationships causing a comprehensive business transformation.

Vertek Partner Management combines talented analysts with powerful software tools to consistently deliver a depth of intelligence across all partnerships. Partner Management shortens time to market for a new service, and measures key performance metrics and financial results for Sarbanes Oxley (SOX) compliance. It provides a defined and scalable operational model for existing and future relationships, monitors control points and fallout to minimize exposure, and offers an independent and common view for all stakeholders. Providing this as a managed service eliminates the need for the service provider to invest in software and hardware CAPEX costs and OSS/ BSS integration.

NET RESULT

The client achieved results that had strong impacts on its end customers and partners including:

- Significant reduction in unbillables and uncollectibles
- Significant reduction in customer invoice complaints from the assessment of subscriber charges generated by partners but billed to the end customer on the client invoice
- True-up of active subscriber base between partnerships that defines true active units per period in a repeatable, standard, and SOX approved validation process
- Timely identification of billing errors related to customer invoicing that have reduced the length of billing discrepancies
- Better relationships with their partners

In just the first year, the client accomplished the following key metrics:

- Hundreds of millions of revenue and cost reconciled for 12 unique partnership arrangements

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- Millions of subscribers assessed monthly across all partnerships on the VPA solution
- Over 6,000 business rules established for validation and reconciliation
- Over 700 data sets reviewed monthly covering billing, ordering, invoicing, transactions and subscriber activity
- Return of \$3 million in value to the business through revenue uplift, cost reduction and avoidance, and value-added elements
- A 98% reduction in disputes as a percent of revenue with one partner
- 60 percent reduction in customer billing inquiries in the first month with another partnership

Through Partner Management, the client has met and exceeded its key objectives of gaining control, improving visibility and establishing a successful methodology. The client has since established the program to be used as the foundation for reporting of all key partnership metrics. The operational model and associated tools provide a common dashboard for all stakeholders and support recurring and ad hoc analysis without dependence on IT. The client has also accomplished risk reduction through a single, credible data source and methodology used for SOX controls.

Vertek's Partner Management service offering combined with the client's internal policy discipline and active management delivered the desired results with a level of partnership assurance never before experienced. From the client's point of view, Partner Management is a fully integrated part of its business that serves as a basis for improved internal and cross organizational processes.

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