

Four Stages of Enterprise Telecommunications Management

Introduction

A Purple Paper on Enterprise Telecommunications Management

Abstract

There are four distinct stages of enterprise telecommunications management adoption. Like Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, each stage addresses a defined set of telecom management needs and desires.

The needs of each stage build upon those of the previous stages. When the needs and wants associated with any particular stage are fulfilled, other more sophisticated and often more strategic needs and desires emerge. The four stages are:

- *Accuracy*
- *Allocation*
- *Analysis and Planning*
- *Acceleration and Enhancement*

Each successive stage reflects the increased sophistication of the organization's relationship with the telecommunications environment, and the increase in the strategic significance of telecommunications to an organization. Hence, network-centric organizations, whose business operations could not exist without the telecommunications infrastructure, are most likely to attain all stages of ETM.

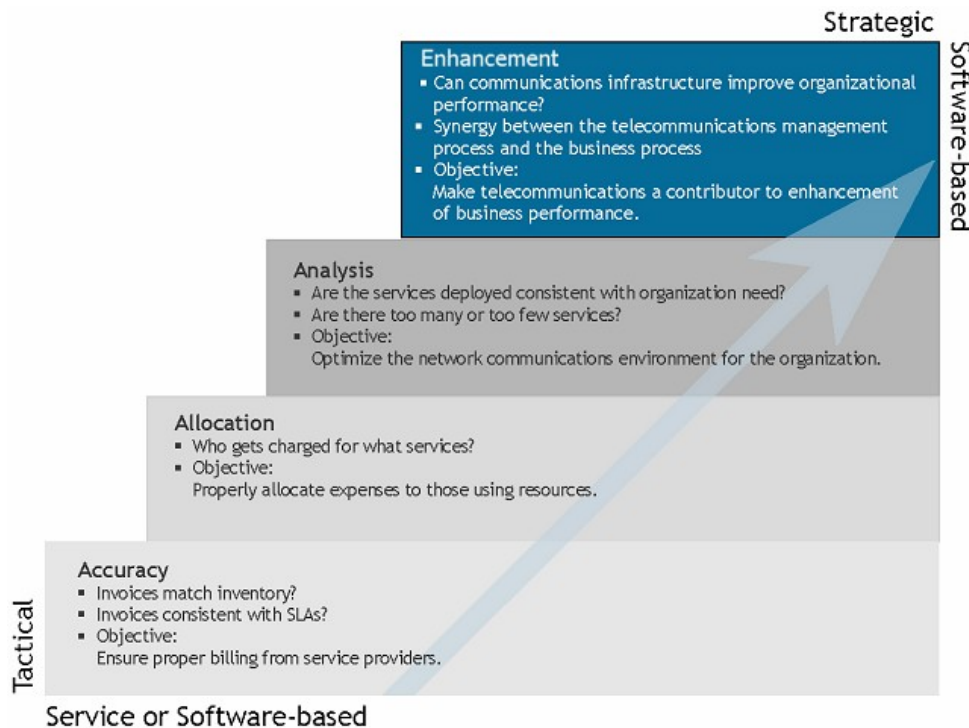
Stage of Enterprise Telecommunications Management

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Stages of Enterprise Telecommunications Management



We offer the following brief descriptions of the four stages of ETM depicted in the preceding graphic:

Accuracy Stage

- Know and manage the services, equipment, applications, and users that actually reside within the ETM environment
- Know what services, equipment, applications, and users should reside within the environment
- Assess whether the bills and invoices associated with the telecommunications environment are correct.
- Provide accurate inventory and inventory-management processes that can support other ETM applications.

If an enterprise does not have an accurate accounting of its telecommunications environment, any subsequent application of management technology to that environment is likely to be ineffective. The inaccuracies will overwhelm the practicality of moving to a further evolved stage of ETM.

Example: Fortune 1000 company in office equipment business uses a software-based telecom inventory management system that includes a workflow process that ensures proper business and technical routing for new service and equipment requests. Orders are placed automatically with the carrier, and all databases are updated. Having an accurate inventory allows better financial analysis of invoices and charges.

Allocation Stage

- Leverage the accuracy stage of ETM
- Ensure resource availability for services, equipment, applications, and users
- Allocate the costs associated with those resources
- Charge and bill the appropriate service, application, or user for resources used.

Example: The previously mentioned F1000 office equipment company uses software tools to evaluate information from call detail reports, service bills, resource usage reports, and the accurate inventory. This allows it to determine what resources specific users and applications utilized and how much to charge for those services. Since there is specific knowledge about specific use, specific cost allocations can be made.

Analysis and Planning Stage

- Leverage accuracy and allocation stages
- Fine tune the network configuration and design
- Optimize environment for performance and cost
- Develop a project management infrastructure for telecommunications network enhancements and changes
- Start to answer questions:
 - “How well are we doing what we are doing?”*
 - “Should we be doing something different?”*
 - “Can we be doing things better?”*

This is the first strategic-oriented stage of ETM. Having an accurate and properly allocated environment provides the information that an organization, especially an NCO, can use to plan future requirements and analyze the performance of the current environment.

Example: A major international food-service company uses inventory-centric, software-based ETM technology to manage the installation and activation of the telecommunications infrastructure into new locations. Because the number of new locations opened is extremely high and they occur quickly, delays in opening stores can have substantial financial impact. The inventory-centric software provides the company a new-store service template and a carrier-neutral ordering process – very important when stores are opening around the globe.

Acceleration and Enhancement Stage

- Leverage previous three stages
- Facilitate network environment that accelerates business
- View telecommunications as the basis of business enabling processes
- Convert the network from an expense item into a strategic and competitive advantage
- Treat cost of telecommunications as strategic investment/cost vs. simple operating expense

This is the most strategic stage of ETM. It fulfills needs and wants for network-centric organizations where IT and telecommunications functions are viewed as strategic components of the business, rather than support functions. The operational transformations that are embodied within being network-centric are at the core of this stage of ETM.

Summary

Using the glossary of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, stages one and two – accuracy and allocation – are “instinctoid.” We class these stages as tactical, rather than instinctoid – i.e., stages of ETM that address the basic levels of ETM. This includes getting the right things in place, knowing what those things are, paying for the right amount for those things, and making sure that costs are allocated to the proper users and applications. The first two stages of ETM apply to ALL enterprises, whether or not they are network-centric.

When an organization is network centric, the higher-order stages (three and four), become more important. The presumption is that the accuracy and allocation stages are implemented, and now the organization can focus on strategic-level ETM to better analyze and plan its environment, and to use the telecommunications environment as a competitive advantage, accelerating its overall business.

Rivermine Software, developers and marketers of software-based telecommunications management solutions for network-centric organizations, commissioned this paper. The company offers a spectrum of inventory-powered ETM solutions. Specific solutions include financial management, service order processing, and personal device management.