How Combined Fixed and Mobile Inventories Help Drive Business Innovation

To drive business innovation, businesses often need to re-architect their existing network infrastructure and account for newer technologies and connections, such as SD-WAN, Internet of Things (IoT), and Unified Communications. To support innovation initiatives, these organizations must be able to identify what they own and how each piece connects to each other and the network overall through complete visibility into their fixed telecommunications environment.

Many organizations also increasingly rely on mobile business processes to drive revenue, streamline processes, and improve customer satisfaction. Consider, for example, applications enabling online and offline payments, visitor management, and training programs, all provided through a tablet or smartphone. Organizations can't afford for the mobile devices used to access these applications to go down, and inventory visibility is a base requirement for availability of those devices.

As businesses mobile-enable more of their business processes, mobile devices become a bigger part of the overall telecommunications infrastructure, and the complexity of the inventory management challenges greatly increase. Accurate inventory information is at the heart of decision-making around device replacement and deployment as well as application support.

Driving Transformation and Innovation Requires a Holistic View of Assets and Spend

Thus, there is a two-part need for a holistic view into assets and spend. First, any strategic initiative will require support and funding from the c-suite. In order to push these projects forward, CFOs and CIOs must be able to answer fundamental questions. Specifically, CIOs want to drive shared accountability across the business. To do so, they need information about how consumption drives IT costs. CFOs must be able to justify any new technology investments required. Accomplishing that requires insights into how costs are distributed within the organization. However, when fixed and mobile inventories are siloed, it becomes too labor intensive for staff to provide the most complete IT financial transparency to CIOs and CFOs.

Second, CFOs and CIOs need a complete picture of spend across the organization, as shown below in an ideal state, to understand how assets are being consumed, forecast future costs, and determine the true costs of each line of business. However, without an accurate inventory of the assets found in each category, there is no way to determine the precise amount of spend in each

category. Inaccurate allocations lead to corporate receiving a skewed, incorrect view of how assets are being consumed across the business and the actual costs associated with each area of the business.

In short, not having a complete picture of your complete telecommunications infrastructure (including both fixed and mobile inventory) will slow down even the most agile businesses.

Establishing a Solid Foundation for Cost Savings and More Efficient Decision-Making

At its core, a combined fixed and mobile inventory provides the foundation for uncovering cost savings, managing usage, and making strategic decisions to support innovation.

Digging deeper, a combined fixed and mobile inventory allows organizations to create an integrated solution and single touchpoint for all of the connections. It also provides vital insights into the total cost of ownership (TCO) per employee and by department as organizations can readily access the inventory as a whole to filter by cost center and review these costs for fixed and mobile in one place. Insights into TCO are critical to validating investments in mobile technology, making the case for service provider changes, and monitoring indirect costs. The same benefits apply to cost allocation and associating an inventory record to a location.

The combined data can provide insights into carrier pricing and support negotiating for more favorable rates and terms. Furthermore, with increased visibility into these key areas, organizations may use the data as a baseline for identifying cost savings opportunities and validating bills as inactive lines, and inaccurate charges are identified. According to AOTMP, 9% of all total fixed and mobile charges contain errors; by establishing one touchpoint for fixed and mobile inventory, organizations can proactively address and mitigate erroneous charges. Additionally, they may choose to strategically allocate costs to distinct cost centers.

Prioritizing Key Initiatives: Future Planning, Forecasting, Budgeting, and Process Improvement

Without an optimized telecom inventory management system in place, organizations are at great risk of overpaying, paying for unused services, and experiencing service outages. For industries that depend on immediacy and accessibility (think: healthcare, SaaS, digital advertising, and more), connectivity is mission-critical to achieving strategic objectives and avoiding customer churn. With customer experience set to overtake price and product as the key brand differentiator, few if any organizations can afford to risk losing customers over unreliable connectivity.

The combined data from fixed and mobile inventory provides the basis for applying detailed reporting to reduce organizational risks and manage operational expenses. Finance departments can enable the enhanced spotting and analyzing trends, forecasting and budgeting, as well as establish a basis for measuring the ROI of future projects.

Most innovation initiatives will involve having to make decisions about your telecommunications infrastructure. Having a single accurate touchpoint for telecom inventory should be a central part of any innovation initiative. Otherwise, you risk making decisions based on incomplete or flat-out wrong information, and planning projects without considering how network needs will be affected.

The benefits related to staffing and workloads are also significant. These include the reduction of provisioning strains, resource drains, and mistakes caused by human error. For companies that are especially decentralized, the value derived from a combined fixed and mobile inventory is even greater, as it unites data that had previously been siloed, making decision-making more efficient while reducing non-core workloads for internal resources.

As you work toward developing an accurate, complete combined fixed and mobile inventory, arm yourself with best practices for inventory management by accessing AOTMP's latest white paper, [Addressing the Telecom and IT Inventory Conundrum](#).

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