



THE TELECOM MANAGEMENT ECOSYSTEM: A Progress Report on Vendor Value, Enterprise Efficiency Gains and Business Impact



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OVERVIEW

Telecom services are essential business tools. The fixed and mobile telecom estate enables business communications, collaboration and transactions. Service demand is at an all-time high; and as demand continues to grow, focus on establishing total control over the technical, operational and financial elements of telecom leads organizations to refine telecom management strategy and to partner with vendors that possess established track records for delivering value and predictable performance.

Identifying and evaluating vendors is not a simple task, as the market is filled with new and established vendors that are rapidly evolving capabilities, introducing new offers and innovating new technology to consume. Collectively, telecom vendors are providers of products and services used in a fixed and mobile telecom environment, as well as providers supporting enterprise telecom management practices. They include fixed and mobile services vendors, carriers and operators, software vendors, equipment and device vendors, and systems integrators and value-added resellers.

Enterprises consistently report to AOTMP performance traits they expect from vendors as well as challenges they experience in achieving desired results with vendors in all telecom management categories.

Common themes for top performing vendors, as reported by their customers, include:

- Responsive, knowledgeable and professional account management and support staff
- Service availability and reliability
- Full-featured software and reliable hardware

Common themes enterprises express with underperforming vendors include:

- Unresponsive support and delivery staff after the sale
- Inability to meet committed milestones and deliverables
- Inadequate, unreliable service level agreements (SLAs)
- Poor reporting and lack of visibility
- No correlation to driving business value or Return on Investment

Independent of the types of products and services procured from vendors, customers have high expectations and place high value on account management and customer experience after the sale. Customer sentiments of vendor abandonment is high with underperforming vendors and typically manifests when vendors become non-responsive or transition account management to support staff with low knowledge levels of their own products and services and/or the telecom management industry.

Not all vendors possess the same capabilities, nor do all vendors consistently deliver. Additionally, customers have different capabilities and performance expectations. For these reasons, customer alignment with vendors that possess a solid track record of meeting or exceeding expectations is critical to the success of any relationship.

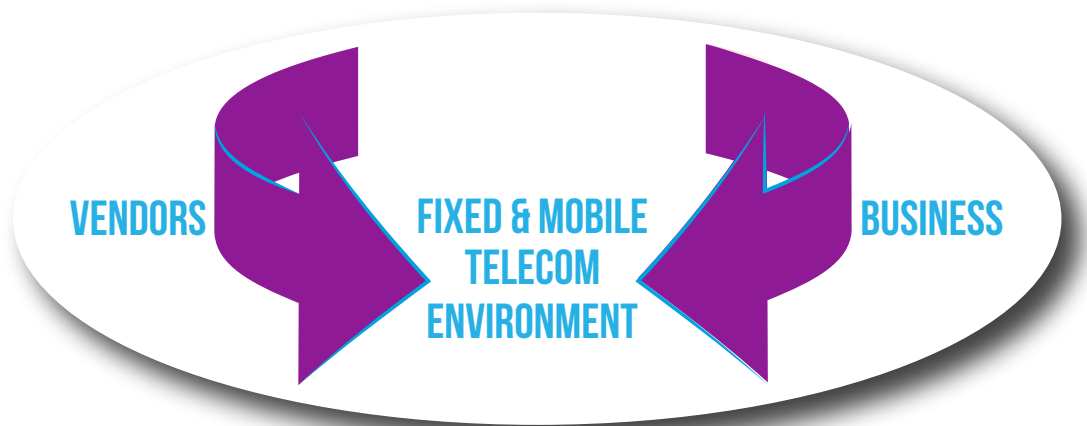
The scope of vendor capabilities available in the market, and the scope of business demands, is vast. To simplify market complexity, AOTMP has established a standard suite of performance and business value parameters from which vendors can be identified and evaluated based on capabilities and performance.

This white paper focuses on vendors in the Telecom Management Industry and offers a progress report on vendor value, enterprise efficiency gains and business impact they deliver.

Telecom Management Industry: A group of like-minded professionals and companies dedicated to efficiently and effectively managing technical, operational and financial elements of an organization's fixed and mobile telecom environment.

TELECOM MANAGEMENT ECOSYSTEM

The Telecom Management Ecosystem defines the relationship of vendors to enterprise fixed and mobile telecom environments as well as the influence of fixed and mobile telecom environments, including vendor-delivered products and services, on business results. The Ecosystem consists of three components that work in harmony to deliver efficient and effective business performance.



VENDORS

Providers of products and services used in a fixed and mobile telecom environment and providers supporting enterprise telecom management practices

FIXED & MOBILE TELECOM ENVIRONMENT



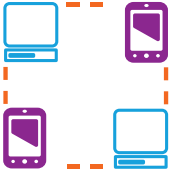


The products and services that comprise the fixed and mobile telecom environment, the human capital resources that manage the environment, and the structure and methodology defined by the Efficiency First® Framework that guides technical, operational and financial efficiency and optimal business results

BUSINESS

A public or private organization that consumes products and services delivered by the fixed and mobile telecom environment

VENDORS

Vendors are providers of products and services used in a fixed and mobile telecom environment and providers supporting enterprise telecom management.

	Services Vendor – A provider of consulting, outsourced or managed services
	Carrier / Operator – A provider of fixed/wireline or mobile/wireless telecom network services
	Software Vendor – A provider of applications used in the fixed and mobile telecom environment
	Equipment / Device Vendor – A provider of physical infrastructure and endpoints
	Systems Integrator / VAR – A provider that delivers products and services as part of a comprehensive fixed and mobile networking solution

VENDOR EVALUATION

The types of products and services offered by vendors guide performance evaluation; however, four universal criteria exist for evaluating performance capabilities of all vendors in the telecom management ecosystem:

1. Service Levels
2. Customer Experience Practices
3. Business Analytics
4. Business Value

Service Levels

Each vendor has service level objectives that address performance targets for key interactions of product, service and support during engagement. Technical performance is a common objective that is defined by service level agreements relating to the quality and consistency of technical delivery. Engagement objectives may include deployment and implementation timeframes, as well as issue resolution and overall engagement execution parameters around solution design, engineering, testing, and customer acceptance. Additionally, response objectives to in-life interactions, such as product and service quotes and availability inquiries should be defined by objectives addressing response time and accuracy.

Customer Experience Practices

All vendors service customers; however, the methods and practices used to manage the lifecycle of customer relationships can vary significantly. Some vendors deliver high personal touch care, while others provide self-service care or a combination of both. The types of products and services delivered also play a role in defining the customer experience. Professional and managed services require high-touch by nature, while off-the-shelf equipment products may require much less personal touch. In every case, alignment of customer experience practices with customer expectations is an essential component of a successful relationship.

Business Analytics

Telecom environments contain a lot of data points. Services, service configurations, usage data and charges alone can be comprised of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of unique data points for any given environment. Business users communicate using the telecom environment to transact business, and those transactions include as many, if not more, data points than the telecom environment alone. Business analytics evaluates the entirety to the data sets to identify trends, uncover opportunities and monitor performance. To this end, vendors that provide data through reporting and dashboards that either contributes to business analytics execution, or vendors that analyze data and translate it into meaningful business information are valuable to every organization.

Business Value

Business value expectations vary, but receiving a positive return on investment is a constant. Organizations can measure return on investment against technical, operational and financial criteria. The telecom environment enables communications, and acquiring products and services that establish communications enablement goals offer a technical return on investment. Products and services that improve operational efficiency and deliver new or enhanced capabilities offer an operational return on investment. Products and services delivered for a more cost effective rate, or that improve the service-to-cost ratio, provide a financial return on investment. Business value can also be gained through business analytics information that improves decision-making and empowers business results to be achieved.

EFFICIENCY FIRST® VENDOR SOLUTION CERTIFICATION

AOTMP Efficiency First® Certified vendors desire to validate solution capabilities against the principles of the Efficiency First® Framework and to identify opportunities to align capabilities with a standard set of best practices and performance measures that drive customer results.

Organizations seek the same goals as vendors when selecting a telecom management vendor from the ecosystem. Knowing that vendors align to Efficiency First® Framework best practice principles and performance objectives serves as the basis of a positive and successful vendor relationship.

Solution certification evaluates vendor capabilities and scores capability performance using performance measures collected from customers. Only vendors performing in the top 10% of the performance range, those receiving 900 points or greater out of a possible 1,000 points, are eligible for certification.

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Efficiency First® Vendor Solution Certification credentials provide prospects and customers valuable insight regarding the performance of a vendor's products and services that have been evaluated against six Vendor Focus Areas. The Vendor Focus Areas guide the diagnostic and scoring processes during solution certification to determine certification eligibility and to ensure vendor evaluation can be conducted on a consistent basis.

VENDOR FOCUS AREAS

These target categories define the nature of the business relationship between vendors and enterprises; performance in each focus area influences performance within a fixed and mobile telecom environment, and across the business served by the environment. Vendor focus areas yield essential criteria for evaluating vendors and vendor performance.

SERVICES	SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS	REPORTING AND DASHBOARDS
Network/carrier services, consulting, managed services, professional services, BPO/outsourcing and out-tasking	SLOs and SLAs defining performance levels and measurement intervals for products and services including quote, delivery, support and incident events	Performance and business analytics data and information provided to clients
PRODUCTS	CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE	BUSINESS VALUE
Hardware, systems and software	Practices and methodologies for managing the lifecycle of customer relationships	The measured effect of products, services and vendor performance on business results

CONCLUSION

Vendors impact the technical, operational and financial performance of the telecom environment; and it is imperative that vendors are selected based on their track record of performance, not just capabilities. The Efficiency First® Framework is a methodology guiding telecom management excellence for organizations. Efficiency First® Vendor Solution Certification illustrates that a vendor's products and services are aligned to the principles of the Efficiency First® Framework. Enterprises that seek and select vendor solutions that are aligned to the principles of the Framework are more likely to establish a sound telecom environment that has been transformed into an asset that generates a visible and sustainable business impact.

TELECOM MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES AND INDUSTRY STANDARDS

AOTMP is an information services company that assists organizations in taking their fixed and mobile environment to a greater level of performance and helps telecom vendors achieve excellence in creating value for their clients. Using information and analytics to drive efficiencies, performance and productivity, business solutions are based on the patented Efficiency First® Framework which drives adoption and utilization of industry standards and best practices to create a high-performing telecom management ecosystem.

The Efficiency First® Program is based on the Efficiency First® Framework, a disciplined, best practice-driven approach to managing fixed and mobile telecom environments. Adoption of the Efficiency First® Framework by an organization, and alignment to the Framework by their telecom vendors, allows organizations to take their telecom environment to a new level of performance far beyond standard auditing and telecom expense management programs to create sustainable, predictable short-term impact and long-term results. The Program continues to create value as it evolves the telecom environment from an operating expense into a strategic asset that is used to drive business results.

Business and performance results are measured and monitored far beyond cost savings with Efficiency First® ratings, performance indexes and certifications for the organization, its employees and telecom vendors who support the organization. Organizations are measured in order to understand how they are performing today and what they need to improve to meet telecom management industry standards in all key areas outlined in the Efficiency First® Framework. Certifications indicate quality, efficiency, performance and value to stakeholders, customers and the individuals who support the environment internally or through a telecom vendor.

AOTMP's clients represent \$24+ billion in annual telecom spend and include 100+ of the Fortune 500, small and medium businesses, public sector organizations and industry suppliers.

Interested in Learning How AOTMP Can Benefit Your Organization?

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View vendor profiles that include detailed information at efficiencyfirstdirectory.com

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