

CURE FOR THE COMMON CARRIER



February 2012

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Customer Case Studies

Do you think Orion can help, but you are not really sure of the expected outcomes? On our website, we have included some case studies by vertical market that identify the original challenges and the delivered outcomes.

www.orionnow.com

SIP Seminar

Orion will be hosting a seminar to discuss the SIP Trunking.

February 22, 2012

Only 6 seats left

Double Tree Hotel

Brookfield, WI

7:30 to 9:30 AM

2nd Date Added

April 11th, 2012

THE COST OF DOING NOTHING STICKING WITH THE STATUS QUO CAN COST YOU

As with any project, one of the options is to stick to the proven technology that has served one's organization well. There is little risk and contract renewals sometimes offer some cost savings. However, similar to any area of technology, telecom often offers significant value in looking at new solutions. Orion has dedicated this edition of our newsletter to change.

Cost Savings ~ No matter what the economic environment, project cost is always a consideration. And, getting more for less often makes decisions much easier. Carriers continue to leap-frog each other offering service bundles that better align with the customer environment reducing costs significantly. In recent presentations that Orion has concluded, we have seen cost reductions of up to 60%.

Downtime ~ A communications network has little value if it is unavailable for any reason. Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plans are increasingly inching up on customer priority lists. Many of the new solutions offer enhanced functionality in regards to these DR plans.

Environment Change ~ The only thing that we have found to be consistent in today's business environment is change. Since the last time that telecom solutions were evaluated, this change likely has impacted the ideal solution compared to what was implemented three years ago. Small changes to promotional offerings can significantly impact this ideal solution. In one project recently completed, small changes to service reduced monthly costs

by 45% while offering other significant values.

Industry Change ~ Carriers have merged; geographic territories have expanded; and technologies continue to mature. These industry changes cannot only significantly reduce costs, but can also simplify billing, consolidate carriers and provide enhanced support solutions previously unavailable.

Best Practices ~ Over the last few years, many organizations have changed the way that they look at communications services. Do you purchase equipment or look to managed solutions? Do you support services internally or look to hosted solutions? Many organizations are focusing on the elements of their business that they can control and are leaving the rest to the experts.

Sticking with the status quo can be the safest option, but please know that it does not come without risk including obsolescence, reduced flexibility and not aligning correctly with your overall business objectives. With Orion, you get a trusted team that can help you evaluate all of your options analyzing the pros and cons of each solution. Let us help you gain the greatest value for your telecom budget.



10850 W. Park Place, Suite 220

Milwaukee, WI 53224

414-359-2500 ~ www.orionnow.com

Your Cure for the Common Carrier

Telcom Tidbits

FROM ORION COMMUNICATIONS

Bundled Services

Bundles can provide areas for growth without adding expense, but many customers never reach the point where they truly take advantage of them when looking into changes. There are so many carriers each with their own set of services, promotions and bundles. And, of course, each of them states they are the best. Let Orion do the work for you and explore new solutions. We will itemize your current costs and find out what you would like to accomplish. Then, we will match the solutions and best available pricing, combining the information into one, simple to understand analysis.

Utilization Reports

One of the most common questions we hear is whether a customer's network is correctly aligned with their business requirements. Are callers getting busy signals? Is there enough Internet bandwidth to support daily needs? Is the data network correctly sized to support the needs of the remote locations? Many carriers can provide you utilization reports for voice, data and/or Internet that can give you the data to show current utilization as well as trends. This data can be vital to ensure your telecom network is correctly aligned.

Demarcation Points

Carriers do not always install telecom services where they need to be terminated, especially in multi-tenant buildings. Know your demarc location so that you can get services extended where you need them before you need them.

No Project Is Too Big ...

... or Too Small

Over the years, Orion has worked with some of the largest organizations in WI. And, we have worked with customers with only a few lines. If telecom is important to you, it is important to us.

Did You Know ...

Of the telephone bills that Orion reviews each month, over 40% of them have some type of correction that could be made to reduce costs. Knowing that every dollar counts, do you have the internal expertise to ensure you are being billed correctly for the services you have in place?

TELECOM CHANGE 101

WHAT SHOULD YOU LOOK FOR WHEN CONSIDERING CHANGE?

By no means are we trying to trivialize the vital nature of telecom services or the complicated steps when considering change. However, there are some basic steps that can be taken to ease the process to ensure that you are making the right decision for your organization.

Current Baseline ~ In order to avoid potential future surprises, we recommend that a current cost baseline be generated including all line charges, usage costs, discounts and taxes. This will ease the process when comparing solutions ensuring all the elements are included.

Timelines ~ Every project has a timeline that should include implementation time frames, current contract dates, additional third party support, etc.

Understanding these timelines from the start will help you stay on time and on budget.

Written Documentation ~ We recommend that you get everything in writing. Contracts, quotes, time frames, etc. People change and verbal conversations can get misinterpreted. Written correspondence can be accessed should conflicts arise.

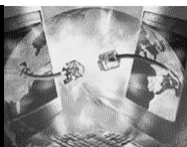
Say "NO" ~ We have often found that the first offer made by a carrier is not their best offer. By introducing competition, rates can sometimes be discounted even further. If you don't ask, they can't say "No".

Obviously, looking at telecom change can be a tedious and time consuming process. But, it does not have to be if you follow a systematic approach. If you think there has to be a better way, maybe Orion can help.

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

Challenge



Solution

A Milwaukee based financial institution with branches throughout Wisconsin was having significant challenges with their telecom provider.

- The customer was having challenges renewing contracts and monthly costs had increased significantly as a result.
- Changes to local voice lines and the bundled offering that was recommended were not delivering the results that they expected actually increasing monthly costs.
- Since the local lines at the remote branches had not been reviewed in some time, it was expected that many of the local lines were no longer required. Eliminating these lines expected to reduce costs.
- For the simplest requests, the customer was not receiving the support that they predicted. Thus, next steps to resolution were dragging from month to month..

The customer knew that their monthly costs could be reduced, but just needed help to accomplish the tasks.

After carefully reviewing the situation of the customer, Orion designed and implemented a plan to assist the customer meet their objectives.

- Orion was able to get all of the expired circuits renewed, obtaining credits for the time frame where the customer paid for the higher, non contractual rates.
- Orion was able to implement a service bundle that flat rated the monthly line costs included free local calls and the addition of other features reducing monthly costs by over 40%.
- By inventorying the lines at the remote sites, many of the lines were identified to be disconnected since they were not being utilized.
- The final results were monthly cost reductions of over 40% compared to previously billing and provided an inventory of services that on-going change could be managed more effectively.

Overall, Orion was able to save the customer a significant amount of money each month and provide the on-going support services to manage on-going change.

ARE YOU MOVING?

RELOCATION PROJECT TIPS AND TRICKS

For many, the idea of moving can be an exciting time. It is an opportunity to start fresh and clear out many of your old habits. However, when moving, there are a number of considerations that should be addressed to maintain the project on time and on budget.

- **Maintaining Telephone Numbers** ~ Customers are often surprised by the fact that they cannot keep vital telephone numbers between locations. It is important to check the portability and plan accordingly. Note that carriers have different boundaries so just because one carriers says no, it does not mean your numbers cannot move with you.
- **Carrier Service Areas** ~ Depending on the physical location, there are occasions in which specific carrier

services are unavailable. Checking out what carriers are available in advance can eliminate a number of potential surprise.

- **Technology** ~ Similar to carrier limitations, technology is not always available or can be very costly to implement.
- **Time Frames** ~ It is important to know your time frames for service delivery. Because time frames can span from a week to several months, understanding these timelines can make sure your project stays on schedule.

At any given time, Orion has 8-10 relocation projects in process. Our team understands the steps that are required to ensure your project stays on time and on budget.

Your Cure for the Common Carrier