## An Actionable Guide

# Telecom Cost Reduction

ONE SOURCE

# Take Back Control of Your Communications

For years, telecom carriers, brokers and other service providers have thrived by driving companies like you to pay more for services than you really need to spend, burying fees in your invoices and increasing rates with little explanation. Agents are incentivized to get you to spend more, because, quite frankly, they're receiving a cut of your spend.

This leaves you at a disadvantage when it comes to managing your enterprise communications. It's an outdated system that is designed to get you to overpay for services and inventory that you don't really need. And depending on how many vendors you're working with and how many locations you have, you may be managing dozens of bills, which can get really complex.

On top of all these traditional problems, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced many businesses into entirely new working environments and strategies for survival. Managing an abrupt shift to a remote workforce and optimizing it with the uncertainty of the duration of quarantine has its challenges. Now more than ever, you need to be smart about where you're investing your budget, and make sure you're being as cost-conscious as possible.

The right solution: a partner who is proactively managing your enterprise communications from end-to-end. This gives you back much-needed control over your technology and connectivity, so you can **optimize services for your budget and your business needs.**

# Common Challenges in Connectivity Management

When it comes to managing your technology services, assets and networks, there are several challenges that are very common across businesses large and small.

## Managing invoices and disputing charges

If you're not actively monitoring your invoices, there might be discrepancies or inaccuracies that you aren't aware of. The major issue here? **You're still paying for them.**

Your carrier or service provider might also hike rates unexpectedly, charge fees for who knows what or fail to apply earned discounts to your bill. These problems all take valuable time away from your company to correct – time that shouldn't be needed in the first place.

## Managing wireline and wireless inventory

Negotiating cost-competitive rates has a huge impact on overall spend, but this can be difficult to do if you're not sure what a fair rate is. On top of this, you also need to keep track of all the assets that comprise your telecom environment to ensure that you're both paying fair rates for them and consuming the services you're paying for.

It can be overwhelming keeping up with your inventory and service assets, and it's often at a huge cost detriment when this happens. "Zombie" assets, such as dormant smartphone lines and forgotten network connections no longer in active use, are a perfect example. Companies often don't realize they're still being charged monthly for these assets, which can eat up a ton of budget if they go undetected.

## Optimizing in times of growth, cutbacks and transitions

Every business endures transition. Whether opening new office locations, assuming locations through acquisition, shifting to a remote workforce as related to COVID19 or facing a reduction in workforce or office locations, you need to optimize these transitions and keep costs in check. **Times of transition present a unique opportunity to reevaluate your services and spend.**

But keeping track of IT inventory and right-sizing connectivity is a big miss for many companies. Often, businesses don't have the staffing resources and infrastructure to continuously reevaluate their needs and optimize plans.

It's often a hassle to manage these transitions with telecom carriers and ISPs as well, especially when you're dealing with different providers and carriers at each business location. With individual locations carrying their own plans, corporations often lose control of expenses and then eventually try to negotiate from headquarters for all locations to save money. But what may be the best carrier for one location may not be best for another as far as connectivity, support and bandwidth.

These are all strong reasons to work with a partner that has national reach and can leverage their relationships and spend to translate savings to you. A managed services partner also has the resources to track inventory usage and ensure it aligns with your company's needs. If you can reduce spend with better inventory visibility and right-size your portfolio to your needs, you can invest that money in other business needs like upgrading your infrastructure and cybersecurity services.

## Diminishing technology relevancy

New technology is maturing fast, and costs are coming down just as quickly. As an example, SD-WAN is increasingly displacing MPLS at 15%-20% of the total cost of ownership. The takeaway? What might have been the most cost-effective solution for your company 36 months ago is probably worth reevaluating today.

There is a great benefit to working with a partner that can help you avoid investing in technology that will later depreciate. In fact, the expenditure for an end-to-end, continuously managed connectivity environment is on average about 30% less costly than refreshing your technology once every five years.
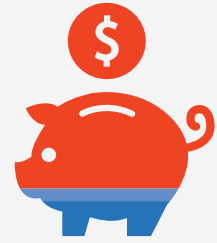
**SD-WAN** is increasingly displacing **MPLS** at

# 15%-20%

of the total cost of ownership.

### 30%
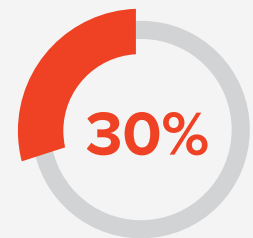
reduction in costs by continuously managing your connectivity from end-to-end

## VS.

refreshing your technology once

## every **5 years**.

## Lack of pricing transparency

If you're not very familiar with telecom or ISP rates and what's fair for your geographic area or industry, there's a good chance you're overpaying for services. Most carriers and providers are not inclined to give you visibility into their pricing structure and it is doubtful that you're able to see your usage portfolio in a single view. This lack of visibility means you have no way of knowing if you are paying too much or if your bandwidth and other connectivity needs are right-sized to your business.

If you don't **have a clear picture of the services you're using most often and the ones you hardly ever use,** it can be really difficult to ensure you're only paying for what you need — and that the prices were fair in the first place.

## Lack of staffing resources

Let's face it: your IT department is short-staffed, and wireless, wireline and Internet expenses are probably not at the top of your list for urgent priorities. You don't want valuable IT staff members calling up carriers and sitting on hold just to get an answer.

To really save significant money and improve connectivity requires highly-specialized staffing and time you just don't have. To manage this fully in-house, you would need dedicated staff to handle contract management, order implementation, auditing accounts payable, dispute recovery and manage a helpdesk for the rest of the company for things like:

Monitoring network
operations and detecting
service disruptions

Coordinating with carriers
to restore service on
an escalated basis

Supporting frontline managers
with location/device-level
connectivity services
(i.e., provisioning new desk or mobile
phones for new employees or branches)

## What's the Solution?

To solve these common business challenges, you need a more holistic approach to enterprise communications and connectivity. The answer is relatively simple: CLM.

**Communications Lifecycle Management (CLM) gives you that big-picture view into your business technology and connectivity portfolio, and then optimizes your expenses and inventory based on your business needs.** This optimization is done by first analyzing your business structure and current usage, and then executing on actionable steps to match your spend with the services and assets you need.

CLM combines all of the management activities needed when it comes to your organization's wireline, wireless and information technology services. It's not about managing each piece of the pie separately, but about looking at the full picture of your enterprise communications and making sure everything is in sync, to help your company operate smoothly and enable cost savings.



Invoice → Contract → Tech → Carrier →

**TEM** | **CLM**
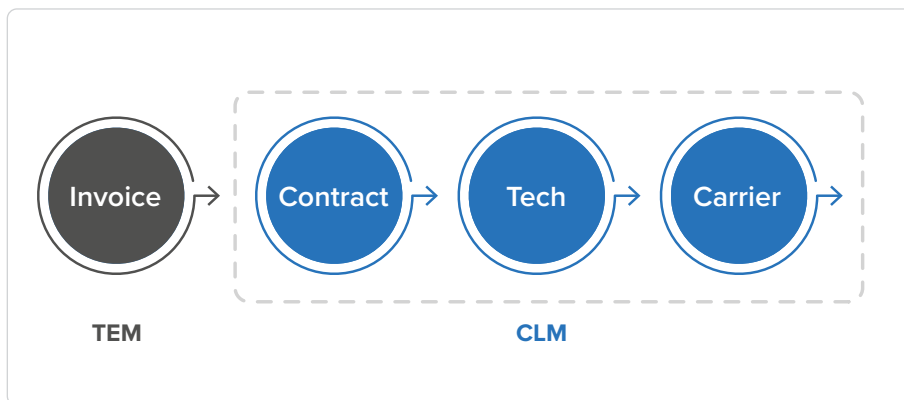
### What about TEM?

Telecom Expense Management (TEM) is a similar approach, but was born in an era where telecom simply meant telephone lines. In those days, expense management meant staying on top of invoice auditing and, at the end of the day, business impact from infrastructure change was trivial. After all, they were dealing solely with phone lines.

Today, enterprise communications includes much more than telecom. It comprises wireless, AI, cloud, the Internet of Things, VR, unified communications and whatever technology comes next. As a result, vendors and partners offering expense management services have had to undergo major adjustments. Vendors that have successfully made this transition know that IT connectivity and expense management is not just TEM anymore.

**Rather, it is Communications Lifecycle Management (CLM).**

## International Gas Distributor Greatly Reduces Cost Through CLM

One international gas distributor with over 1,400 locations saw **ROI increase**

**10X**

by switching to the **CLM model** from the traditional TEM approach.

They also gained back

**13FTEs**

through a **CLM partnership**, freeing up valuable administrative time for more critical business activities.

In all, this company saved

**$3.19M**

in contract management costs, compared to only

**$383K**

in savings with TEM.

**How did they do it? By partnering with One Source for end-to-end CLM.**

One Source managed sourcing, procurement and contract negotiation through their individual carriers and handled service implementation and troubleshooting. After initial implementation, we kept monitoring and working to optimize their portfolio over time.

ONE SOURCE

## How It Works

CLM

Expense Management
Bill Payment

Usage Optimization
Cost Recovery

Service & Support
Help Desk

Portfolio Optimization
Sourcig & Procurement

## Solving Connectivity Pain Points with CLM

### Expense management and bill payment

With a CLM approach from a trusted partner, you'll get one consolidated invoice, instead of managing multiple invoices for different carriers at every geographic location. This greatly helps to **streamline the payment process and also makes it possible for your partner to continuously monitor invoices** and audit for errors and rate changes.

Your CLM vendor should also take over the time-consuming task of disputing errors and extra charges, leaving you to focus on the heart of your business.

### Usage optimization

CLM goes far beyond just invoice and expense management. It's about managing your overall communications technology networks, including wireline services, wireless services and information technology.

But every organization is different, with very different business objectives and connectivity needs. **And as we're seeing during this pandemic, those needs can change rapidly.** CLM gives you insight into how your company can best optimize its technology portfolio based on usage, whether it's for a largely mobile workforce or for rolling out network upgrades.

CLM helps you account for current challenges and risks, as well as any changes your business might face in the future.

## 1%-2%

of annual telecom spending is from late fees, on average.

## 18%

of total monthly fixed invoice dollars contain errors.

ONE SOURCE

## Portfolio optimization

A CLM partner will negotiate rates on your behalf, with full leverage and knowledge of cost-competitive pricing. **You'll get a rate that's negotiated fairly, with your business interests in mind, not a service provider's**.

CLM begins not just with expense management but with sourcing and procurement of your services and assets. This approach gives you control over your carrier relationships, so you'll get the best rates possible and ensure that what you're paying for is what your organization actually needs.

## Operational execution

CLM gives you deep insight into your inventory portfolio and usage, which you desperately need to make the best use of your enterprise communications spend. But this model goes from just identifying cost savings to actually implementing them – and that's a huge difference.

The benefits here are two-fold. For one, you can ensure that **actionable solutions are being created based on the highest level of intelligence about your enterprise communications assets and usage**. The insight you're getting into your own portfolio is accurate and highly robust, allowing you to make the best decisions on both investments and cutbacks.

A CLM partner will also implement these changes for you and manage your portfolio over time, so **your own IT team isn't bogged** down in dealing with carriers and service providers in their day-to-day responsibilities.

## How One Source Delivers

You may have been burned in the past by a TEM vendor claiming to have your best interests in mind. But at One Source, **your best interests are at the heart of what we do**. We thrive on making sure your enterprise communications technology works for both your budget and your business operations.

We are a 100% customer-focused, managed services CLM partner, and we're here to guide you through the complex waters of the business technology world. We'll help you optimize your connectivity networks and devices, negotiating what works for you and managing everything from procurement to service deployment.

## About One Source

One Source is a managed services company focused on optimizing the three mission-critical pillars of complex enterprise technology: communications lifecycle management (CLM), IT infrastructure and right-sized cybersecurity. By taking a holistic approach, One Source is able to solve today's most complex business challenges, including infrastructure upgrades, mobile workforce management, data protection, streamlining M&A complexity, and expansion into new locations, all while reducing cost. They are the only vendor offering this unique blend of services for 360-degree support of mid-market, multi-location enterprises and franchises. Headquartered in Greenville, NC, with offices in Raleigh, NC, Portland, OR, and Mobile, AL, One Source works with with companies across the country in quick service restaurants, retail, automotive, property management, healthcare & senior living, financial services, manufacturing & distribution, and more.

Find them online at onesource.net, or connect on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn.

It's time to take back control of your enterprise communications.

Contact us to learn more about our fully-managed CLM approach.

ONE SOURCE