Service Provider Tools: Enabling or Inhibiting Business Model Innovation?

Within a relatively brief time, the lines between different types of providers—including communications service providers (CSPs), managed service providers (MSPs), cloud and hosted service providers (xSPs)—have started to blur. Markets keep getting more crowded and dynamic. The result is that for any service provider business, establishing and sustaining fundamental market differentiation is getting tougher by the day.

The Entrepreneurial Mindset

These days, an entrepreneurial mindset represents an increasingly vital part of the service provider executive's job description—and that's true whether he or she is working with a large incumbent or an early stage business. Moving forward, business success will require that executives have a keen understanding of the service provider landscape and the untapped market opportunities that can be exploited. They'll need to identify the innovative business models that can make an impact—whether for the customer, in the market or on the bottom line.

However, entrepreneurial innovation has to move past vision and become a reality. As any successful entrepreneur will tell you, great ideas are a dime a dozen. There's a big gap between the innovative idea and the successful execution of that idea.

In the service provider market, business model innovation that fuels monthly recurring revenues (MRR) doesn't happen without operational innovation. Quite simply, the promise of an innovative business model will only be fully realized through a strong operational foundation.

Service Provider Tools: Helping or Hurting Your Cause?

The tools service providers have in place play a critical role in whether success is achieved, and, if so, the degree to which it is realized. Will the margins be sustainable? Will the offering scale? Will it deliver compelling customer value? Will it be markedly better than competitive offerings? The tools in place can play a make-or-break role in all these respects.

Today, the reality is that many of the products implemented in service provider organizations are stifling rather than fueling business model innovation—but it doesn't have to be that way. There are tools that successful service providers point to as being key enablers of innovation. Moving forward, this capability to enable innovation needs to be a key part of the due diligence associated with any new tool decision.

CA Unified Infrastructure Management: An Ally for Innovators

Many service providers have selected CA Unified Infrastructure Management (CA UIM) because it's an asset, one that that fuels innovative operations, services and business models. If I'd ever doubted that CA UIM could support a wealth of unique business models, those doubts would have quickly been dispelled as I started working on a new paper, "**CA Unified Infrastructure Management: Profiles in Partner Success**."

In this paper, we profile five successful service provider partners. As we conducted interviews of partner executives, we soon found each business has established a strong track record of success— but each had done it in a completely different way.

Up Close: Five Successful Service Provider Business Models

Following is an overview of the unique business models and approaches of each of the partners featured in the paper:

- **Alliant**. This service provider has established a unique model and value proposition. The company doesn't just deliver global infrastructures, such as wide area networks, local area networks and even complete data centers—it owns them. By doing so, the firm takes all risk out of the equation for customers. The only way Alliant can make this model work is through extensive standardization. The company has built a reference architecture for all the configuration items in the core IT network. Through this standardized approach, they're anticipating they'll be 20 times more efficient in managing networks than internal IT departments.

- **Alphaserve**. This service provider offers several key attributes that distinguish it in the marketplace. First, Alphaserve takes a highly verticalized approach. The company focuses on serving customers in several key industries, including financial services, healthcare, legal and media. Based on this focus, the company delivers strategic IT services that are tightly aligned with business objectives. The company's offerings include end-to-end monitoring of complete business services and the entire underpinning infrastructure that supports these services.

- **Capgemini Brazil**. Part of Capgemini, a firm with more than 180,000 employees in 40 countries, the team in Brazil takes a truly global approach to deliver value-added services. For example, the organization has a major client based in Belgium. Capgemini hosts the client's data center infrastructure in Europe, they have a dedicated team in India that delivers level 1-3 support of the infrastructure using CA UIM, and the team in Brazil is responsible for maintaining the CA UIM solution, which is hosted in their data center in Brazil.

- **GDT Advanced Solutions**. This partner offers a broad range of flexible, incident-based managed services, including reactive and best-in-class proactive services. GDT Advanced Solutions gives customers a comprehensive view of their network, helping them avoid unplanned expenses, stabilize their networks, control their risk profile and optimize operations and management.

- **OneNeck**. OneNeck is an expert provider of hybrid IT and cloud solutions. One of the unique things about OneNeck is that it can provide hardware and hosted solutions along with application and outsourcing services, so customers don't have to rely on multiple providers. OneNeck can deliver cloud solutions in multiple form factors. No matter how a customer chooses to implement their infrastructure—whether on-premises, all in the cloud or any hybrid mix of the two—OneNeck can provide a single point of accountability for performance and availability.

The executives at each of these businesses cite CA UIM as a key enabler of these innovative approaches. For example, the solution's extensibility and coverage were key factors in supporting Alliant's highly standardized and optimized reference architectures. CA UIM offered Alphaserve the synthetic transaction monitoring capabilities that delivered strategic business value—while providing the tuning capabilities that promoted efficiency and high margins. CA UIM gave Capgemini Brazil a single solution that supported clients' extremely heterogeneous and globally distributed deployments. At GDT Advanced Solutions, CA UIM provided the real-time, comprehensive views that helped enable the fastest possible response to alerts. Finally, CA UIM enabled OneNeck to go from managing five tools to standardizing on one—so the team could more efficiently support the company's hybrid IT services, including all its data centers, cloud and shared services, and hundreds of customer environments.

Conclusion

If there are innovative business initiatives you want to pursue, maybe it's time to start leveraging CA UIM. CA UIM offers the strong capabilities and adaptability that helped fuel the innovative business models outlined above—and it can support your vision as well. To find out more about these partners, why they chose CA UIM and why they're glad they did, be sure to check out the full **CA Unified Infrastructure Management: Profiles in Partner Success** paper. In addition, you can also review our other Profiles in Partner Success papers, which feature service providers from **Europe** and **Asia**.

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