

Case Study



Telecom provider enhances user experience with Cloud-based L2C integration solution

Abstract

The client is a leading APAC-based telecom provider with voice, data, and online services across the world. Powering more than 200 of the world's top 500 companies, it operates some of the largest and most diverse communication networks in the Asia Pacific.

Owing to acquisitions, its Lead-to-Cash (L2C) process was highly fragmented across several BSS (Business Support Systems) applications such as CRM, Quote, Provisioning, Billing and Finance. Additionally, as a strategic push to move its IT infrastructure toward the Cloud, the telecom major was modernizing in-house applications into Software-as-a-Service-based equivalents. This led to a complex integration challenge.

Infosys leveraged its knowledge and expertise in Business Process Management and CRM, employing industry best practices to streamline the Lead-to-Cash process by orchestrating the Cloud and in-house BSS applications. Infosys' solution helped the client present a superior experience to business and end users.

Business Context

A market-leading global telecom service provider – offering data, hosting, voice and video services – was stymied by its complex IT environment in its efforts to enhance end-user satisfaction and enhance business value. The result of acquisitions made over the years, the set-up comprised of redundant legacy systems and blunted responsiveness and flexibility. The client was experiencing widespread inefficiencies with manual interventions being the norm rather than exception. Aging servers and out-of-support applications represented a significant risk to the business.

Needing to simplify the infrastructure into an agile business process-based platform, the telecom major wanted to consolidate its BSS (Business Support Systems) platform and gain the capability to introduce and personalize products. The organization was looking to grow its Managed Services and International Connectivity business and improve profitability by concentrating on good quality operational practices from frameworks like ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) and eTOM (enhanced Telecom Operations Map).

Situation

Weighed down by process discrepancies across legacy systems inherited through acquisitions, the organization's daily business operations were based on non-standard practices. Some of the key issues the telecom service provider was facing were:

Complex IT Landscape – Disproportionately complex IT estate with a large number of servers and applications relative to the size of the business

Lack of Legacy Support – Many of legacy systems were unsupported end-of-life systems or were nearing end-of-life, indicating a high risk of obsolescence

Poor Alignment of Business Process and Data Integrity – Business process alignment was poor, and minimal workflows and automation resulted in cumbersome and manual-intensive activities. Poor data management and integrity caused inconsistencies in data entry, duplication of data and limited validation

Heritage Systems and Complexity – Existing systems were heavily customised, addressing requirements at a certain point of time or inherited from acquired companies. Hence, making changes or introducing new products or product variants was akin to an end-to-end IT project. This affected the company's time-to-market and business agility

To overcome these, the organization:

- Needed a flexible and scalable solution based on industry-standard frameworks such as eTOM and ITIL
- Wanted to replace custom applications with off-the-shelf business solutions, thus reducing time to market
- Lower capital and operational expenditure through Cloud-based applications

Solution Overview

The client approached Infosys to architect, design and implement a business transformation program to streamline the Lead-to-Cash (L2C) process. Being the most disintegrated process, revamping it could provide the client with the greatest business benefits.

Infosys, an existing strategic IT partner to the parent company, leveraged its sound domain knowledge and BPMS (Business Process Management System) experience to propose a Cloud-based L2C solution. It aimed to orchestrate the client's Cloud and in-house BSS applications (such as Customer Relationship Management, Quote, Provisioning, Billing, Finance) to achieve an efficient L2C process.

With the TIBCO platform (mainly BW, EMS) playing a vital role in orchestrating this diverse Cloud and in-house application portfolio, it was decided early on by the project team to leverage the client's existing TIBCO-based ESB platform. Infosys' TIBCO Center of Excellence (CoE) designed and delivered the TIBCO-based orchestration layer.

The final solution was realised using Cloud-based business applications like Salesforce.com, ServiceNow, and Webservice CPQ for functional areas like CRM, Fulfilment, Provisioning, and Quote. While ServiceNow was used for CMDB (Configuration Management Database) and ticket management, in-house billing and financial systems were leveraged for billing and GL. The Infosys solution played a vital role in integrating these applications and eliminated the need for manual data entry, thereby improving data integrity.

The solution improved customer experience by providing up-to-date information about new opportunities, sold services, existing issues/problems, and billing information. It streamlined the provisioning process by automating the workflow-based provisioning processes. An agile underlying BPMS platform helped the client design and deliver workflows for provisioning and also for incident, problem and change management processes based on ITIL standards.

Key Solution Highlights

The key functional areas of the deployed solution were:

- **Customer Relationship Management** – Provides a single source of customer information and opportunities and custom views on existing services, cases etc.
- **Product Configure and Quote** – Offers a master product catalog with pricing. It also supports guided selling and the auto generation of quotes and approvals
- **Incident, Problem and Change Management** – Follows an ITIL-based approach using the ServiceNow platform. Information is passed back to the CRM platform to give a 360-degree view of the customer to the account team. The solution is used for SLA/OLA (Service Level Agreement/ Operational Level Agreement) management and escalations
- **Order Management and Provisioning** – Delivers workflow-based order management and provisioning process using the Service Now platform. Process-driven provisioning helps achieve much-needed visibility of order provisioning status and aims to reduce cycle time by using internal OLAs
- **Enterprise Service Bus (ESB)** – Orchestrates both in-house and new Cloud applications to realise the end-to-end business process. Opting for TIBCO ESB helps ensure that the information flow is reliable, secure and near real time

The orchestration layer was the most critical component in helping realise the end-to-end business process. The biggest risk was in ensuring that standalone applications sent the right information out or received the right information as per the L2C business process. TIBCO played a key role in seamlessly gluing these systems.

To ensure that the business applications were securely hosted outside the corporate firewall, Infosys engaged with the Cloud providers early on to select the products and later worked closely with their professional services during the architecture design.

Business Benefits

Infosys' solution helped the client to improve business efficiency and improved the overall customer experience. The principal benefits include:

Business Efficiency

- Reduction in capital expenditure by reducing more than fifteen servers and six legacy applications and databases by using Cloud-based pay-per-use systems
- Achieved a 360-degree view of the customer by integrating CRM, order management, service management, CMDB and billing
- Automation and improved data accuracy ensures that the organization's employees need to get involved only in exceptional cases
- Enabled agility by allowing the client to react quickly, accurately and effectively to customers and changing business needs
- Reduction in disused third-party services through data cleansing and reporting
- Real-time visibility into key process like CRM and ITSM
- Cataloging products and pricing to provide a much quicker quote generation

Customer Experience

- Reduced cycle time for all key business processes like provisioning and also by providing real-time information to customers and the account team
- Allowed cross-selling and up-selling by providing up-to-date service information to the sales team
- Faster and more effective turnaround of requests, driving a first-call first-fix, first-time-right approach

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