

Leading MSO, North America: Network Inventory Management

Fast-growing business services unit relies on Tellabs for inventory management process documentation and database updating

Executive Summary

Customer

Large MSO, North America

Business Challenge

Bring network inventory management database into compliance with corporate standards while improving overall record quality and detail.

Tellabs Solution

Deliver comprehensive, accurate database detailing all business customers, locations and equipment present at each location.

Business Results

- Verification and updating of more than 49,000 lines of data and 14,700 records, resulting in identification of 98.5% of equipment with 11-character CLLI codes
- Reduction in shelf equipment IDs with 8-character codes to less than 1%
- Certification of network inventory management system as compliant with demanding corporate standard
- Substantial time savings to complete the project
- Improved decision-making capabilities based on better data saved time and capital expense

Business Challenge

With an appealing portfolio of business communications services and a rising share of the business marketplace, a large MSO in North America is one of the country's premier service providers. But like many cable companies that have made strong inroads into business services, one of their regional divisions recently encountered a familiar growing pain: Its network equipment databases had not kept up with its business growth.

As a result, the system was starting to incur delays in provisioning new customers, having difficulty diagnosing network problems and not meeting metrics required by their corporate headquarters.

For many cable companies, it's an increasingly familiar circumstance. The accuracy of network inventory databases becomes questionable, particularly those that have expanded through adjacent-system acquisitions and have inherited multiple documentation platforms



that don't easily integrate. Industry consolidation and centralization also have imposed challenges on inventory management. "Often, the people who installed and know these networks have moved on. So there's a need to audit the network, making sure that information is accurately reflected in the database" says Jay Tallmon, Tellabs Professional Services Manager.

Growth has also been a factor. As companies enjoy success in pursuing new markets, network inventory management often takes a back seat to more pressing agenda items. Many cable companies don't have time or staff to devote to the sometimes painstaking work of database updating.

"Our MSO customers are often so focused on revenue-generating activities, such as provisioning new customers and upgrading the network to keep up with demand, that they simply don't have the time or resources for inventory management," says Denise Turner, Executive Account Manager for Tellabs.

Cable operators are providing increasingly sophisticated networking and connectivity services to business customers. In turn, these customers are demanding comprehensive Service Level Agreements that specify detailed performance requirements. As a result, having current, accurate records of equipment and service-path inventory is more important than ever. "Two years ago inventory database accuracy wasn't that much of a focus," Turner says. "Now, it's a major goal. And with the demand for carrier-class services growing, it's going to be even more important."

New database

To bring its network inventory management system into compliance with their demanding corporate specifications, the MSO turned to

Tellabs. A Tellabs team was assigned to populate a new database that would record every location where the MSO maintained equipment for its business services network and identify in detail the equipment—down to 11-character Common Language Location Identifiers, or CLLI codes.

Based on Tellabs' recommendation, the MSO also adopted a new inventory management system to house the updated records. The new platform offers greater real-time information, flexible report generation and off-site redundancy systems than the legacy database previously used. "They realized immediate value by partnering with Tellabs to migrate a legacy database to a new platform quickly and accurately," says Turner.

As part of the project, Tellabs specialists reviewed more than 49,000 lines of data for paths and networks, identifying close to 15,000 customer, service path and equipment records that required verification and/or updating. Devices ranging from power sources to QAM modulators to routers were audited and catalogued with correct part numbers, card IDs and port assignments. Additionally 11-character CLLI codes were assigned to more than 98% of shelf IDs.

Key project deliverable included:

- **Site Recording and Verification:** Tellabs audited all installed equipment at network sites, verifying each location, updating existing sites for accuracy and adding missing or non-recorded sites into the inventory management system. Tellabs also updated and verified addresses, CLLI codes and uni-directional antennas used in this operator's wireless/mobile network.
- **Equipment Verification and Updating:** Tellabs recorded correct part numbers, cards and ports for all installed equipment and added missing records and verifying or updating current records through a process that involved from 5 to 13 steps, depending on the status and detail associated with existing records.
- **Customer Record Updating:** Tellabs reviewed, updated and verified the accuracy of existing customer records while adding new records to the database.
- **Service Path Verification:** Tellabs ensured that all recorded service paths had assigned customers and at least one piece of equipment recorded. In addition to updating existing path records, Tellabs loaded any missing path or network objects.



Results

Tellabs delivered a fully updated database including:

- Records associated with 100% of on-shelf intelligent equipment
- Brought the level of 11-character CLLI records to nearly 99% of all devices
- Reduced shelf IDs with only 8 CLLI characters to less than 1%

The time savings were substantial. The MSO had estimated that it would have taken 3-4 times longer to complete the project with in-house resources or with supplemental contract labor. Tellabs was able to complete the project quicker with minimal resources needed from their team. This enabled the MSO's personnel to focus on revenue generating projects.

In addition, the MSO can now make critical business decisions based on the inventory database information. Decisions based on accurate data will save the MSO time and unnecessary capital expenditures.

Equally important, the system moved up on a corporate scorecard for inventory management, becoming certified as compliant with the MSO's internal standards.

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