

2.0 Market Pressures

Increasing revenue and profit are obvious pressure points for every CSP. In the current operational environment, when addressing the enterprise segment, these objectives are as dependent on up-sell and cross sell to existing customers as the acquisition of new customers. To address the enterprise segment CSPs are adding Unified Communication enabled products and features including:

- Soft products – instant messaging, contacts, calendar with sync.
- Presence and availability features.
- Telecom products – voice, conference and collaboration, fax to email.
- Convergent distribution over FMC (fixed-mobile convergence).

The aim is to become a preferred supplier of communication services to the enterprise customer. This may seem *trivial* from a one directional point of view – such as selling. However, from the enterprise customers' point of view, they invest in technology that in many respects equals any IT investment, and their expectations are high.

2.1 Customer Management

In many respects Customer Management is in its third-generation from a solution support point of view; while the general Business Support Systems with Billing, are at a later generation.

1st Generation

As an industry term, “Customer Care” started in the latter part of the 1980’s when the telecommunications industry, particularly in Europe, went from being regulated to being de-regulated, as the market was liberalised through the EU telecom directives on Open Network Provision and the award of new mobile licenses.

With the waiting list for fixed wire services and, at the time, unrecognised demand for mobile telephony, Customer Care was all about handling customer requests for service – in volumes. Customer Care and Billing systems were put in place with large call centre environments. The measure for successful customer care was based on systems and functionality, measured solely by the CSP based on their experience of volume handling. It was an internal *on premises* based measure.

2nd Generation

Later, as waiting lists were reduced in fixed wire and mobile reached saturation, the industry embarked on CRM (Customer Relationship Management). This is about being more proactive toward customers and is an *outside premises* measure. However, the measure of successful CRM is still internally measured.

Implementing CRM in a CSP’s existing IT environment has proven to be complex, resource demanding, time-consuming and very costly (a discussion topic beyond the scope of this paper).