

Success Story



GCI: Trailblazing Market Leader

GCI is the market leader in Alaska, providing multiple telecommunication services to its customers, from local and long distance to Internet and multi-channel TV services. It has blazed a trail for other operators to follow by consolidating its back-office systems to support convergence, a trail that leads to not only supporting customers with the best possible service but one that positions GCI for future growth.

Achieving True Convergence

Telecommunication service providers today offer more services than ever before, making convergence an increasingly hot topic in the marketplace. To deliver all of these offerings in a seamless fashion, operators must make it easy for customers to access the services they want -- when they want them.

To achieve the goal of true convergence with one view of the customer, industry analysts say that operators must tackle the daunting task of consolidating multiple billing, customer care and order management systems. Analysts agree that it is only by consolidating these multiple back-office systems that operators can diminish their internal silos and differentiate themselves with a bundled convergent offering and high-quality customer experience. In doing so, they can also operate more cost-effectively and efficiently.

Streamlining Systems for Maximum Efficiency

A key to GCI's success is effectively bundling and cross-selling its services to improve customer retention, drive revenues and reduce customer acquisition costs.

Its bundling strategy has produced impressive results: Today, the lion's share of GCI's customers use two or more services from the company, contributing significantly to overall GCI revenues. As a result of bundling, GCI enjoys lower churn rates that decrease even further among customers using more GCI services.

But like many other convergent service providers, as GCI's business had grown, so too had the number of disparate systems supporting it. In order to continue to execute its bundling strategy and grow, GCI needed to focus on streamlining internal systems to drive efficiencies, reduce costs and position the company for future growth. GCI also sought to help its own call center staff better support GCI customers with a unified view of its customers' accounts and services, which also would enable up-sell opportunities.

To accomplish these goals, GCI launched an aggressive initiative called OneView, which consolidated more than 40 systems, including multiple legacy billing, orders, customer care, and other OSS-related systems into a single framework of enterprise-grade solutions.

GCI's motive for OneView was to make its backoffice infrastructure the key enabler of the company's growth strategy, providing the flexibility the business would need as it evolved.

The Challenge:

To consolidate more than 40 back-office systems into a single framework of enterprise-grade solutions to reduce costs and position the company for future growth.

The Solution:

CGI selected numerous solutions within Comverse's Kenan® FX framework to support its business, including Kenan® BP and Kenan® Data Mediation.

The Result:

Significantly increased the identification of cross-selling opportunities by utilizing a unified view of the customer, and decreased the time to market of new products, promotions and services by over 75% -- from four months to 2-3 weeks.

"Effective bundling and cross-selling is key to GCI's strategy in growing our revenues, retaining customers and increasing market share. We needed to align our back-office infrastructure to support those business goals, and selected the Comverse Kenan® FX product suite as the cornerstone of our strategy. Kenan FX enabled us to reduce costs and increase efficiencies by consolidating multiple billing, order and customer care systems into one. Our systems are now better positioned to support GCI's future growth, and we have infinite new ways to support customers across multiple services."

— Jim Dunlap, Chief Information Officer, GCI

Utilizing the Comverse Kenan® FX Framework

GCI selected solutions within the Kenan® FX framework to provide a single, integrated system to support orders, customer care and billing across its local and long distance, wireless and Internet services. In addition to selecting proven solutions, GCI also employed the expertise of Comverse's Professional Services team to ensure a smooth implementation of a complex consolidation project:

- Comverse's Professional Services team worked closely with GCI and other partners to migrate data from four billing and numerous other systems onto the Kenan FX suite, including the Kenan® BP billing engine and its Customer Center front end, Orders Modules and Kenan® Data Mediation.
 - Comverse's Orders Modules enable pre-integrated order entry, order fulfillment, and inventory management capabilities that work seamlessly with Kenan BP. With the Orders Modules, GCI can better manage customer requests from the point of request acquisition through service activation to billing.
 - Comverse's services organization also provided leadership in integration testing and troubleshooting throughout the project, training key partners and GCI employees.
- The Customer Center aspect of Kenan BP provides a unified front end that supports the bulk of GCI's services, enabling staff to see a customer's history and all services with a single platform. It is pre-integrated with the orders and billing solutions within Kenan FX, enabling seamless hand-off of orders and changes in service. In addition, Customer Center interfaces with numerous other downstream applications within GCI to maintain a holistic view of the customer. GCI also deployed Comverse's GUI Designer to easily configure Customer Center to meet individual look-and-feel and screen workflow requirements, giving the operator control over how the application is used within existing business processes.
 - GCI also implemented Kenan® Application Integrator, enabling it to easily integrate other third-party OSS systems to enable flow-through provisioning for all services supported by Kenan FX.

About GCI

GCI (Nasdaq: GNCMA) is an Alaskabased company providing voice, video and data communication services to residential, commercial and government customers.

Founded in 1979, GCI introduced longdistance competition to Alaska and has since grown to be one of the nation's premier integrated telecommunication providers.

GCI's services are connected through company-owned fiber optic, satellite and metropolitan area network facilities to the lower 48 states. This broadband platform is the only one of its kind in Alaska and allows the company to provide customized services to the Alaskan market.

About Comverse

Comverse is the world's leading provider of software and systems enabling value-added services for voice, messaging, mobile Internet and mobile advertising; converged billing and active customer management; and IP communications. Comverse's extensive customer base spans more than 130 countries and covers over 500 communication service providers serving more than two billion subscribers. The company's innovative product portfolio enables communication service providers to unleash the value of the network for their customers by making their networks smarter.

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Results Speak for Themselves

GCI is already reaping rewards from deploying the Kenan FX framework, such as:

- A single system integrating customer care, orders and billing to support GCI's local and long distance, Internet and wireless subscribers – replacing four disparate billing systems. This has significantly reduced total cost of ownership and total cost of implementation associated with GCI's OSS and BSS infrastructure.
- A single order, billing and customer care framework across GCI's services, providing real-time flowthrough provisioning of orders and consistent rating of all services, ensuring timely and accurate processing and billing of all orders across all offerings.
- More than 40 systems were integrated to replace or feed into or out of the Kenan FX framework, simplifying GCI's back-office infrastructure and reducing costs related to managing and maintaining multiple systems and third-party software.
- Significantly reduced training time required for call center staff, as a result of using the unified front end of Kenan BP's Customer Center.
- Call center staff can leverage a single view of the customer to provide high-quality, personalized service and identify up-sell opportunities that enable increased customer retention and drive new revenue. On average, 20% of calls into GCI's customer service center result in cross-sales and more than 50% of Internet customers upgrade to cable modems.
- GCI decreased the time to market for introducing new products, promotions and services by more than 75%. Previously, entering changes manually into each business unit's system took up to four months. With a single converged system, it now takes just 2-3 weeks. Kenan FX also allows calls to be rated beyond Alaska area codes.
- As a result of the improved bundling capability, GCI can now capitalize on an increasing number of customers using multiple services. GCI estimates that its bundled customers are 75% less likely to churn.
- Kenan FX enables GCI to expand into new markets and compete more aggressively by reducing the rollout of new products and bundled services in the market from weeks to days.