



USE CASE

TruOps Common Language

Effective Equipment Product Change Management

altafiber \$1.1B Revenue 3,100 Employees \$182M CAPEX

Challenges

Fewer resources for operations processes
Managing Product Change Notices (PCNs) to identify equipment requiring replacement

Solution

PCN Business Optimization Analysis
Recommendations to develop a PCN process aligned with industry best practices

Results

Identified 50 equipment items worth \$3.7M where supplier is potentially responsible for replacement

Challenge: Effective Equipment Product Change Management

altafiber, like many service providers, has continuously improved operations efficiency resulting in reduced operations expenses. With this benefit, however, has come the challenge of how to give the necessary attention to operational processes while utilizing fewer resources.

Using Product Change Notices (PCNs), network equipment suppliers notify their customers of product changes so that customers can decide whether to make updates. Service providers need a process to manage the PCNs received from their equipment suppliers. This process ensures that the network does not contain equipment with known defects, which in turn can have detrimental effects on service.

Since the supplier typically is responsible for bearing the cost of replacing defective equipment, service providers need to respond to PCNs in a timely manner. Otherwise, the service provider may end up incurring the cost of equipment replacement. This can result in millions of dollars of unnecessary expenditures to the service provider as well as the increased risk of customer-impacting service outages.

For example, the PCN management process may not be getting the attention needed to operate today's diverse networks. In some cases, this has resulted in additional capital expenditures. TNS offers services to help a service provider optimize its product change management process and ensure that its network equipment has been updated with critical product changes.

"TNS PCN Business Optimization Analysis was comprehensive and thorough and the results were eye opening. The process knowledge, experience and expertise combined with its equipment database provided altafiber with benefits that cannot be replicated by anyone else in the industry."

*John Washington
Language Standards Manager, altafiber*

Solution: Effective Equipment Product Change Management

altafiber took advantage of the TNS PCN Business Optimization Analysis service offering. The analysis included examining altafiber's PCN process, documentation and tools as well as comparing altafiber's equipment inventory to TruOps® Common Language® Equipment Repository to help identify equipment that has an outstanding product change for which the supplier is financially responsible. TNS consultants interviewed altafiber staff from the network operations, operations planning, field operations, spares warehouse management, procurement and IT organizations and reviewed altafiber PCN documentation to understand altafiber's product change process. TNS analyzed the information and presented its findings along with a companion set of recommendations to help altafiber with the development of a PCN process conforming to industry best practices.

A second feature of the PCN Business Optimization Analysis was TNS' analysis of altafiber's network equipment against the Common Language Equipment Repository.

Results: Significant Number of Equipment Changes Identified

The results were significant as TNS identified more than 50 equipment items with product changes where the supplier was potentially responsible for replacement. The replacement cost of the equipment items was estimated at \$3.7M.

Managing the product change of network equipment is a critical service provider process that helps ensure network reliability and minimize operating expense. Suppliers communicate product changes to their service provider customers via PCNs and are responsible for the cost of material and labor to replace defective equipment in a timely manner. Otherwise, the service provider may experience service disruptions from the defective equipment and incur the costs of replacing the equipment if discovered past a certain date.

TNS works extensively with the service provider community to formalize and enhance the PCN process ensuring it conforms to industry best practices. TNS, with its TruOps Common Language Equipment Repository, is uniquely positioned to review a service provider's equipment inventory and identify equipment items with outstanding PCNs that have not been implemented.

Service providers have a significant network investment and a critical interest in maintaining network reliability. TNS helps mitigate risk and leverage cost-impacting product changes.

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