

Connecting Service Providers to New Markets and Revenue

Acuative Drives Growth for Tier One Provider during Global Financial Crisis



The Business Challenge

At the peak of the Global Financial Crisis, a Texas-based tier one service provider needed answers to some tough questions. Enterprise customers were demanding better, faster and more affordable services, while budget cuts and diminished access to capital from struggling traditional lenders stymied opportunities for geographic market expansion.

In a strategic planning session assembled to convert these challenges into opportunities, the client identified a set of three critical issues that called for quick resolution:

1. How to support a new flagship multi-national customer with enhanced services without increased CAPEX
2. How to accelerate revenue growth and market capture for a new hosted voice solution
3. How to service a large geographically diverse client base with on-site support during network upgrades

The company's existing portfolio of services did not offer viable solutions, despite their range, scale and scope. They required new approaches to their wide area networking and network management/operating models to quickly respond to existing and emerging market demands and opportunities. Furthermore, this needed to happen at a time when building additional internal and external infrastructure and resources through traditional means was simply not an option. As a result, the company turned to Acuative for answers.

The Acuative Solution

Acuative deployed teams of subject-matter experts to work out solutions for each of the identified challenges. As a strategic technical provider of outsourced services for the provider since 1986, we were able to leverage our extensive working knowledge of the carrier's operations to accelerate solution development and simplify implementation. We built our approach around three principles:

1. Solutions had to have no increase in cost and high long-term returns
2. Solutions had to drive revenues and open markets at a time when customers were unwilling to spend cash
3. Solutions had to provide a significant and immediate competitive advantage to the carrier in order to capture sizeable market share from competitors grappling with the same constraints during the financial crisis

The Acuative teams built custom solutions for each of the identified issues, and moved swiftly into implementation upon the client's acceptance and approval. The impact from our efforts was immediate, turning a time of crisis into a period of robust growth, service and territory expansion, and new customer acquisition. Each of the solutions identified met our criteria of zero net cost difference, dynamic revenue growth and superior service offerings, leading to market capture from the competition.

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CASE STUDY

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Supporting the New Flagship Multi-National Customer

The provider landed this premier multi-national customer in 2009, with an estimated overall contract value of \$10 million annually. However, as the time to service cut-over approached, the provider realized that their current service mix and capacity were going to fall significantly short of customer expectations, meaning that the “big win” could become an expensive public relations and operational nightmare. Short of throwing money at the problem and turning a profitable deal into a multi-year loss, the carrier could find no viable solution allowing them to save face and meet customer requirements.

The Acuative engineering team took a look at the customer Service Level Agreement (SLA) and the facilities map (which spanned 400 locations in 50 countries), and set to work. They designed a Cisco-based product solution coupled with a turnkey outsourced engineering, staging, provisioning, logistics, network monitoring and managed services offering designed to handle not only this client, but also any other global client acquired by the provider.

Additionally, the Acuative team designed a custom web-based program and end-user interface to meet real-time reporting requirements, automating the reporting process and providing the client with deep insights into facility utilization patterns, spend and comprehensive network performance metrics for every location across the globe.

The provider immediately approved the solution, and Acuative put it into action as the delivery agent. The Acuative Global Technology Center in Cleveland, Ohio, deployed and centrally managed on-going operations. Our domestic Field Services team and certified international partners completed the implementation at all 400 locations on-time and under budget, producing a satisfied client, increased profitability, and a new packaged service offering for engaging, on-boarding and managing large enterprise customers with globally dispersed operations.

To this day, Acuative continues to provide full-service outsourcing of the network operations and services for this client and others secured by the provider, including 2-hour, 4-hour and next day service response, 24x7x365 network monitoring and help desk, sparing and “hot swap” equipment management, product returns/testing/repair (RMA), and the management of all product and service warranties for the entire 50-country footprint.

Revenue and Market Capture Acceleration for a New Hosted Voice Solution

Acquiring new customers at the height of the Global Financial Crisis was a challenge for everyone in 2009. As companies across the country slashed operating costs in response to the economic downturn, the tier one provider responded by launching a new hosted voice solution that they believed would dramatically reduce customer operating costs, while generating superior margins for the provider itself. It seemed like a “win-win,” but the launch generated few takers. At a loss to explain the lack of customer adoption, the provider turned to Acuative for answers.

Acuative’s Offer Development and Consulting Services arm launched a detailed evaluation of the overall product, implementation methodology and value

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CASE STUDY

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proposition. Careful analysis using Acuative's quality system tools and methodologies found a more cost-effective and less invasive method for implementation; one that could be standardized and marketed as a seamless end-to-end solution.

Acuative worked with the engineering and sales teams to re-engineer and reconfigure the platform, feature set and customer-premise equipment staging, and simplified the programming and database activity requirements on the soft switches.

The marketing team packaged the redesigned platform and it was re-launched, this time successfully. Sales in the first six months of the new offering exceeded expectations, and eventually more than doubled in 2010. As of the first quarter of 2011, sales continue to skyrocket, with exponential growth anticipated in the product line over the next several years.

On-Site Support to a Large Geographically Diverse Client Base during Network Upgrade

Communication technologies are evolving at an increasingly rapid rate, and the process of large scale network upgrades in the face of obsolescence is daunting. In 2001, Acuative was instrumental in the provider's roll-out of the then "cutting edge" frame relay service over a wide geographic territory impacting tens of thousands of customer sites. We developed a turnkey solution that allowed the provider to effectively outsource all components of the massive frame-relay roll-out, including

logistics, staging, deployment, spares management/replenishment, and on-site maintenance under 2- and 4-hour service level agreements. Acuative successfully transitioned and managed support for over 15,000 sites scattered across the U.S., leveraging our domestic field service technicians based out of strategic locations across the country.

As of 2010, the frame relay service had entered the final stage of its lifecycle. Once again, a massive service upgrade was impacting tens of thousands of customers, and Acuative re-emerged with an outsourced solution that generated fast, effective installations which seamlessly transitioned customers to the new plant, equipment and network configurations. Our clients couldn't have been happier, as the tremendous cost savings generated through leveraging the Acuative field service technician pool went straight to the provider's bottom line.

Our end-to-end management of the entire installation, upgrade and on-going maintenance process put the customer's experience first, walking them through the changes, reconfiguring equipment and systems as required, all while maintaining customer maximum system uptime and voice/data throughput.

About Acuative Service Provider Services

Acuative Service Provider Services offer extensive expertise in multiple carrier network environments, whether in customer sites or in the central office. Prompt, reliable network service from an Acuative Field Service engineer ensures that the network is fully operational and performing at peak efficiency. From edge to edge, and from design through implementation, carriers can count on Acuative.

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CASE STUDY

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Services from Acuative enable:

- Fast, effective CPE deployment to speed time to market and shorten the time to profitability
- Complete scalable network support so operators can maintain focus on their core business
- Tight control and accountability for CPE services delivered to customers
- Firm, accurate budgeting with fixed pricing structure
- Global support, deployment and network management services without the large up-front and on-going costs involved with building, managing and maintaining a global support infrastructure internally

Acuative Service Provider Services Include Managed Network Services, Offer Development and Consulting

Acuative understands service providers' challenges in delivering services to end-users. Identifying and planning to overcome the inevitable obstacles up front in the offer development process is critical and is a core capability of Acuative.

In addition to the physical infrastructure and field engineering resources to perform nationwide deployments, Acuative can help simplify the launch of new services as a consultative partner by providing comprehensive planning and support from concept stage through post-rollout.

Services include:

- Acuative Managed Network Services
- ValuNet™ On-site Maintenance Plans
- netDeploy™ Installation Services
- International Services
- netDeploy™/EF&I – Central Office Services

Acuative offers carriers and their customers support for a wide range of equipment, the full support of the 24/7/365 Global Technology Center (GTC), and comprehensive project management.



30 Two Bridges Road
Fairfield, NJ 07004
1-888-835-7687
info@acuative.com

