



Achieving Customer Experience and SLA Excellence for Enterprise Customers with Service Management

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Thomas Stappas
OTE

THE CHALLENGE

► OTE (Hellenic Telecommunications Organization), the incumbent telecommunications provider in Greece and one of the leading service providers in Southeast Europe, recognised that its enterprise customers would be a key driver of future growth in revenue and profits as they increasingly adopted next generation services provided over advanced technologies such as xDSL, Metro Ethernet, and SDH. However, a critical hurdle to success had to be addressed: enterprise customers would demand the highest level of quality for such services and would only pay a premium if it could be proven that an excellent experience was indeed provided.

OTE therefore sought to implement new practices to achieve even more reliable, high quality service and to ensure a consistently outstanding customer experience. To this end, they invited a number of Service Quality Management (SQM) systems vendors, including Telcordia, to take part in extensive trials.

THE TELCORDIA RESPONSE

► For the trial, Telcordia provided OTE with Telcordia[®] Service Director, a Commercial-Off-The-Shelf (COTS) software product that holistically enables SQM, Service Level Agreement (SLA) management, and Customer Experience Management (CEM). Service Director takes the approach described in the TMF Handbook GB923, but uses Telcordia-patented technology to achieve it. Service Director, in essence, is designed to allow various departments to:

- Consolidate information from myriad sources, such as Operations Support Systems (OSSs), probes, usage records, etc.
- Visualize that information — converting the “technology view” data into “service and customer view” information that can be tailored to a variety of roles and needs (including operations, customer service, marketing, etc.)
- Act on service performance issues proactively and rapidly.

With Service Director, service and customer information is derived by using service models which define the relationships between services and the network and/or IT components on which they depend. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for services (such as throughput, dropped packets, etc.) and more aggregated and telling Key Quality Indicators (KQIs) are then defined and can be monitored in near real time on dashboards.

Each dashboard is fully customizable. Thresholds can be set on key indicators, and the relevant icons will change color (such as, to orange or red) if the key indicator value crosses them. The different colors indicate the severity of the alerts, prioritizing them according to the impact on SLAs or other objectives. By double clicking on each panel, the detailed information and attributes of the service can be viewed from the source systems, without leaving Service Director.

The extensive Service Director service quality report functionality offers a wide range of real-time reporting abilities, including historical, comparisons, trending, and the ability to export and add notes to reports. Reports can be exported in a variety of formats (HTML, PDF, CSV, XML, RTF), and schedules can be used to generate reports and automatically distribute them to colleagues or customers. This rich reporting capability is vital to managing and demonstrating performance versus SLA obligations.

THE RESULTS

▶ Following extensive assessment, including a six-week “live” trial, OTE chose Telcordia Service Director as their preferred product. Service Director is now deployed, and OTE is using it to manage services for an ever-growing number of its major customers.

According to Thomas Stappas, Head of OSS & WSS Projects Development Department for OTE S.A., OTE selected and deployed Service Director because it enabled them to meet their key goals:

- Prioritizing problems according to customer and SLA impact
- Managing, not merely monitoring, performance versus SLA commitments
- Meeting corporate customers’ demand for “excellent” service
- Earning brand loyalty and reducing churn.

OTE was able to take advantage of the Service Director GUI-based modeling for complex services, as well as its adaptable library of existing service models. This enabled OTE to reduce the effort required to capture the end-to-end dependencies of current and future services, thus reducing the time from service inception through to service monitoring.

By using Service Director, OTE can monitor availability of services such as Ethernet, IP VPN, and SDH leased lines at individual customers, and they can also determine the performance of these services based on key indicators such as packet loss, round-trip time delay, jitter, error seconds, unavailable seconds, and error rates. But the power of the solution is not just in observing these key indicators.

For example, OTE can determine service availability for each customer site based on packet loss and from network element alarms. By integrating with network inventory systems, Service Director provides root cause as well as impact analysis at one glance. In addition, Service Director helps manage OTE's workloads by integrating with the trouble ticketing system, to correlate duplicate tickets, or to automatically open tickets. According Stappas, "The identification of problems that affect customers and services enables OTE to prioritize repairs such that SLA rebates are reduced."

With Service Director, OTE is able to achieve the reliable, high quality service they need to ensure a consistently outstanding customer experience for enterprise customers. "Ultimately," summarized Stappas, "customers now are often unaware that a network or services issue has occurred, since it has been so rapidly identified and resolved, and even prevented from recurring. That's the best kind of customer experience."



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