



Service Provider Strengthens Network, Streamlines Process

XO Communications identifies and records network assets 80 percent faster with Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service.

Case Study

Customer Name: **XO Communications**
Industry: **Telecommunications**
Location: **Herndon, Virginia USA**
Company Size: **4000 employees**

Business Challenge:

- Comply with service-level agreements and avoid costly network availability reductions
- Track and proactively manage vast network of equipment that is constantly in flux
- Establish more efficient and consistent management process for maintenance and upgrades

Network Solution:

- Cisco Smart Net Total Care provides coverage for more than 200,000 Cisco networking devices in XO network
- Inventory Collection, Reporting, and Analysis streamlines network maintenance and upgrade process
- Added visibility into network equipment facilitates strategic planning

Business Results:

- Reduced time to review and validate network equipment from three months to two weeks
- Potential savings of 4 to 5 percent on quarterly true-up adjustments
- Freed up time and resources, allowing business units to focus on new projects



Business Challenge

As one of the leading communications service providers in the United States, XO Communications delivers a wide range of networking solutions to businesses, government, carriers, and wholesale companies. In many cases, these customers rely on XO Communications as their sole service provider, so maintaining a reliable, up-to-date network is absolutely critical to the success of the company. As XO Communications senior manager Jon Widel puts it: "Without our network, we simply don't exist as a company."

Like any type of equipment, however, networking devices inevitably break or fail when least expected. When this happens, the XO engineers must rapidly assess the problem and deliver a timely repair. "Any time our network fails, we can't offer our service," says Widel. "And any time we can't offer it, we lose money due to the service-level agreements we have with our customers."

Like most service providers, XO Communications needs to track everything on its network. This demanding task is further complicated by the frequent need to move equipment, whether from staging to production or from one site to another. In a network as large as the one owned by XO Communications, this represents a major hurdle. Not only does the sheer size of the company's multiterabit network make this inventory task challenging, the numerous departments involved in product procurement and maintenance further compromise the process. "We have millions of pieces of equipment in our network, and we were depending on people's memory or handwritten notes to figure out where certain products were located," says Widel. "Compiling this information manually was just a very poor way of doing things. We needed Cisco to provide us help."

"We will be migrating Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service into our full scope of offerings, taking it out to existing as well as new customers to establish ourselves as a trusted advisor. Using this tool, we will help customers manage their contracts much more proactively and effectively reduce costs."

Gary Reilly

Account Executive, CompuCom



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Network Solution

The XO Communications network contains more than 200,000 Cisco® products. And for the past 10 years, Cisco Certified Gold Partner CompuCom Systems has been instrumental in managing XO Communications' inventory and maintenance contracts with Cisco. CompuCom is a leading IT outsourcing company that specializes in infrastructure management, application development, and the procurement and management of hardware and software. CompuCom introduced XO Communications to the Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service.

"We've been lacking an electronic inventory capability for years," says Gary Reilly, account executive at CompuCom. "So when Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service became available, we began actively rolling it out to our customers, because we knew it could help them manage their support contracts much more proactively and effectively."

With the Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service, XO Communications now has an accurate file detailing all of its products, network locations, and firewall information. To monitor network changes and streamline maintenance, all CompuCom has to do is run a routine report from a laptop. "From serial numbers, to model types, to locations, this report gives us everything we need to ensure coverage on products and manage contract renewals with Cisco," says Reilly. For XO Communications, this means the ability to quickly replace defective equipment and meet its customer service-level agreements.

In addition to helping identify and resolve network issues, the Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service also enables XO Communications to take a more proactive approach toward network maintenance and upgrades. "The Smart Net Total Care Service delivers more than visibility into network assets," says Reilly. "It also offers back-end reporting that provides a number of additional functions to the customer, such as end of service, end of life, or technical bulletins. It proactively arms the XO network engineers with data, which allows them to better plan and optimize their network." And because this information is provided on a monthly basis, XO Communications has advance notice of when a product line replacement may be due.

Business Results

By leveraging the Cisco automated inventory and reporting tool, XO Communications has gained significant operational efficiencies. It used to take the company three months to review and validate all of the equipment in its network. But with the Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service, it now takes just two weeks. "Now we have the ability to very quickly put together information, ensure our equipment is covered, and stock the Cisco depot accordingly," says Widel.

The added visibility into the XO network also helps the company cut back on spending related to specialized services and equipment coverage. "The Smart Net Total Care Service showed us that we had been paying for coverage of products that were no longer even installed on our network," says Widel. "We also realized that we were paying for a higher level of coverage on certain products than was necessary."

The company now has the potential to save four to five percent on quarterly true-up adjustments. "With less time and resources being spent on contract renewals, XO Communications is first saving money from an administrative standpoint," says Reilly. "But secondly, the company is saving money by minimizing its network downtime. Working directly with Cisco to locate and fix equipment problems greatly reduces the risk of not being able to meet service-level agreements."

With the extra man-hours saved, business units are now able to redirect their resources toward new, value-added projects. Having Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service also allows XO Communications to extend its savings by focusing on other equipment that can be decommissioned in the network. "The Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service offers us an overall value that we did not have before," says Widel. "I believe that in the future it will allow us to do even more than what we do today, which ultimately means providing new features and better service to our customers."

For CompuCom, this means the ability to build more lasting relationships with its customers. "We will be migrating the Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service into our full scope of SMARTnet offerings, taking it out to existing as well as new customers to establish ourselves as a trusted advisor, says Reilly. "Using this tool, we will help customers manage their contracts much more proactively and effectively reduce costs."

For More Information

To find out more about the Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service, go to: <http://www.cisco.com/go/total>.