B2B: Fueling the Growth Engine

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Overview

B2B has long been heralded as the driver of service provider growth, but so far the potential has not been fully realized. As legacy B2B services decline – driven by customers moving to more cost-effective alternatives – CSPs have struggled to grow sales in the way anticipated.

That isn't to say there hasn't been any growth in B2B. CSPs without significant legacy businesses have successfully built offerings around new, more modern services. Others have invested heavily to diversify portfolios and sales channels, aiming to climb higher in the B2B value chain. In some vertical and geographic markets, rapid digital transformation is fueling demand.

But the critical question remains: **What must CSPs do to capture B2B growth more effectively, drive profitable expansion, and position themselves to exploit future opportunities?**

So what's the problem?

There is no single cause for the struggles CSPs face. Competition is intensifying, not just from traditional telco players but also from hyperscalers, systems integrators, network equipment vendors, and others. And even as businesses recognize the benefits of digitalizing their operations, tight IT and telecom budgets place a sharp focus on ROI, slowing uptake of less-established propositions.

Significantly, many challenges originate within CSPs themselves. One quarter said they cannot capture or process leads across multiple channels; one fifth of RFPs are not responded to in time; and a staggering 50% of bids delivered contain some form of error[1] – impacting win rates, margins, and customer confidence.

Addressing these internal inefficiencies can deliver both immediate and sustained benefits:

- **Sell Better:** Enhance responsiveness and accuracy by mastering the enterprise customer journey
- **Sell More:** Take control of B2B product complexity to capture "beyond connectivity" growth

[1] Leaving Money on the Table: The Truth About Telco B2B, Omdia

Simplifying the Complex, Automating the Simple

The B2B segment isn't one, homogenous thing. Companies working in different vertical markets will have vastly different technology requirements; some will be more technologically advanced than others, which will be reflected in their in-house capabilities; and the appetite for digitalization will vary from those who want to lead to those who prefer a more measured approach.

For many service providers, the most obvious split is by customer size, segmenting SoHo/small, medium and large/government into separate groups. While it is bold to make too many generalizations, complexity and contract value generally grow e as enterprise size increases, while the number of potential customers gets smaller.

This does not only reflect technology and service needs: larger businesses also have different procurement requirements, moving into the realm of RFPs, negotiations, framework agreements and hierarchies, which have a big impact on the customer journey when compared with the consumer-like SoHo/small process.

- **SoHo/small** customers resemble advanced consumers. Needs are generally simpler, but expectations are high.
- **Midmarket companies** require greater sophistication. The challenge is increasing deal throughput and enhancing customer experience while minimizing manual processes. Here, the opportunity is to **automate the simple**, improving both efficiency and profitability.
- **Large and government** customers present the highest complexity. From bespoke solutions and contracts to delivery and care, each step involves coordination across multiple teams. While there are certainly significant opportunities for automation, the key challenge for CSPs is how to **simplify the complex**, ensuring accuracy and agility for high-value deals.

Sales: A Different Kind of Journey

B2B sales processes are markedly different from those common in the B2C realm. It doesn't come down to one thing: almost everything is more complex, from lead qualification through to product selection, configuration and contracting.

While consumers are often offered bundles of products and services across fixed, mobile and media services, the number of options is often relatively controlled, based on defined eligibility rules. For B2B customers, these bundles can become much richer, including more products, with high volumes, across multiple sites, including partner products, and tailored to meet a specific business objective.

What's more, while in a B2C process the person selecting the products is usually the person paying, in a B2B environment purchasing decisions span business, technical, finance, and legal stakeholders, each with distinct priorities and approval requirements. Buyers also need to be able to align their purchases with organizational structures, for example aligning with existing master agreements when buying for a subsidiary, or ensuring costs are allocated accurately to business units.

This applies not only to new customers but, as enterprises embrace technology and move towards more dynamic purchase and consumption models, extends to existing ones seeking to upgrade or modify services. CSPs must maintain full visibility of each customer's portfolio to maximize cross-sell and upsell potential while delivering consistent commerce experiences.

Delivery: First Impressions Count

Timely and accurate service delivery is non-negotiable. Business customers depend on purchased services to support critical operations, so the delivery process must be seamless — from serviceability checks during sales, through order capture, to error-free fulfillment.

This is the CSP's first opportunity to really fulfill its role as a trusted partner, and missteps here damage customer trust and can erode long-term value.

Delivery doesn't end at the point of activation. As enterprises embrace digitalization to improve their agility, increase their efficiency, and support new business models, ICT solutions are being woven into the core of the business. This means that continuity of services – often supported by service level agreements – is critically important, with the cost of failure, either financial or in terms of reputation, high.

And a key attribute for B2B customers is transparency throughout the journey: from knowing when a service will be activated, to having access to usage dashboards and proactive communications around service disruptions and upgrades. Get this right, and you create a satisfied customer and make the all-important renewals, cross-sell and upsell processes smooth.

Monetization: Flexibility is King

While traditionally B2B has revolved around long-term, predictable contracts, today's business buyers have become accustomed to the streamlined, digitally-driven commerce processes offered in the B2C world. This means CSPs must offer flexible, accurate, and transparent monetization models that mirror the capabilities of digital-native platforms.

While long-term contracts will still play a critical role – for example in fixed connectivity for facilities – CSPs must also support flexible purchase and consumption models. For example, additional edge compute resources may be needed for a specific project or connectivity needed for a temporary site or location, which means the customer needs to be able to buy and use this with ease, as in the background the CSP manages resources, activation, charging and deactivation.

In the B2B world, there is additional complexity in billing. For the largest customers, it is likely there are bespoke terms in place which follow negotiation and review, making each deal unlike every other. Corporate structures also play an important role, with costs assigned to specific business units or subsidiaries or with costs split across divisions, all of which need to be correctly assigned for the customer's bill.

It comes as no surprise, then, that accuracy is an underpinning attribute of B2B success for telcos, but it is not always easy to achieve. What is required is consistency and integration across the complete lifecycle, so the payment terms defined during the sales process and consumption are reflected in the bill, with proactive bill analysis to ensure the invoice that reaches the customer is correct.

And another important factor for businesses is transparency: the ability to see what has been spent, where, and why. Having a clear view of spending and usage enables enterprise customers to make sure they are buying services in the most appropriate way, in order to optimize their ICT costs.

Care: Building a Long-term Customer Relationship

For B2B customers, communications and ICT services are a core part of their operational fabric. This means that CSPs need to act proactively to support businesses in their operations, not only by ensuring services are delivered as expected and in line with service level agreements (SLAs), but in supporting them through the customer lifecycle as their needs and requirements change.

At the network level, AI-driven assurance capabilities are critical to ensuring services are delivered reliably, with self-healing capabilities to detect and resolve potential issues before the customer is impacted. Cross-domain, closed-loop automation is also needed to act across different network types and services, to ensure that problems can be solved across complex network infrastructure environments.

While proactive is the keyword in terms of operations, this is also the case when it comes to care engagements. From scheduling maintenance to dealing with problems and requests, the key to success is providing accurate and timely information so the customer has complete visibility into what is happening and when – what is affected, how long it will take to fix, and what is being done to prevent recurrence. Consistent communications build confidence.

These factors take a very "CSP-centric" view of care. But equally important is empowering customers with the ability to engage and act via self-serve tools. Whether related to billing queries, activating mobile lines or making service change requests, there is a broad set of B2B requirements that can be either fully or partially completed via an agent-driven self-serve portal, placing the customer in the driving seat and improving efficiency for CSPs – a true "win-win" situation.

Done well, effective care strengthens trust, increases stickiness, and turns renewal from a negotiation into a natural next step.

Amdocs B2B Portfolio

Amdocs offers a suite of agent-driven software that spans the entire customer lifecycle, from marketing and sales through delivery to monetization and care. It supports connectivity and beyond connectivity products, enabling communications service providers to engage effectively with customers and grow their revenue with rich B2B solutions.

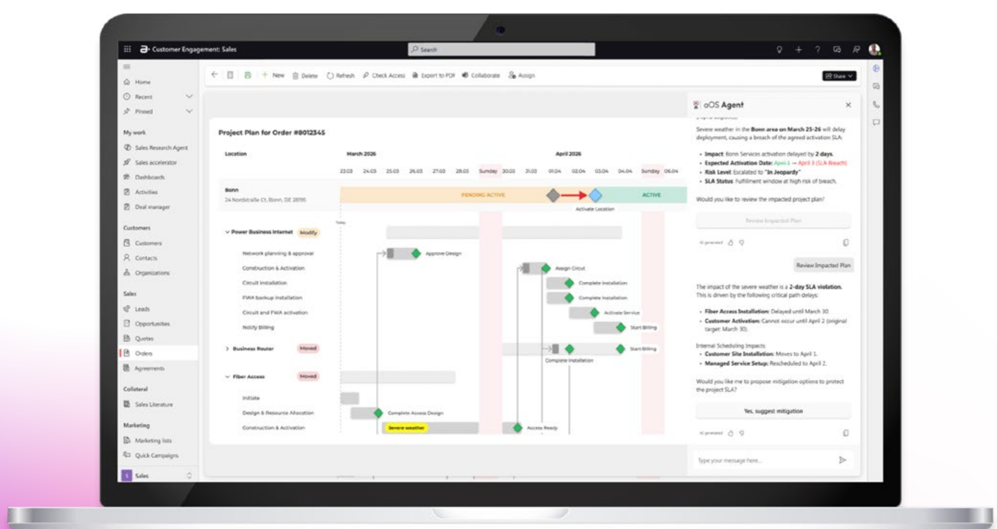
The Customer Engagement Platform is a telecom-specific customer relationship management solution developed by Amdocs in partnership with Microsoft. Purpose-built to address the intricate challenges of telecoms, this platform combines the strengths of Microsoft and Amdocs into a unified, open, telco and cloud-native solution which enables CSPs to master the complexities of the B2B segment, across customer engagement, configure-price-quote (CPQ) and order management functions.

Amdocs Intelligent Networking Suite is an innovative and advanced service and network automation platform, with a set of modular, flexible and open service and network lifecycle management products. It enables CSPs to automate service fulfilment across domains, manage the end-to-end lifecycle for B2B products, and continuously align service delivery with customer needs through intent-driven automation.

Amdocs Freestyle Billing combines real-time billing capabilities with bill presentment capabilities to provide B2B customers with flexibility, agility, personalization, transparency and clarity. In addition to supporting a wide range of billing models from subscriptions to tiered pricing and milestone billing, it enables business customers to align bills with enterprise hierarchies and can scale to any enterprise size with its high volume capabilities.

Amdocs B2B Portfolio is powered by aOS Cognitive Core, a generative AI technology foundation with pre-built telco-specific agent libraries and actionable insights. Open by design and based on industry standards, it enables CSPs to accelerate any generative AI strategy while ensuring telco-grade security, compliance, and observability.

Cognitive Core agents are based on composable architecture, continuous performance optimization, evaluation, and analysis benchmarks. The Cognitive Core supports multiple LLMs, allowing CSPs to safely use their model of choice.



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