



# Best Practices for Telecom Expense Management (TEM) & Wireless Mobility Management (WMM) Reporting

## Publication

*Best Practices  
From AOTMP*



September 2010



# Publication

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*“Enterprises have historically expressed reporting as a difficult area to effectively execute.”*

## Executive Summary

The process of generating reports and distributing information is critical to every Telecom Expense Management (TEM) and Wireless Mobility Management (WMM) program. Reporting is a mechanism to demonstrate the value TEM and WMM programs provide to the organization and to offer needed insight into the telecom environment for many different stakeholders. Based upon previous research collected by AOTMP, the highest perceived advantages of reporting include (1) improved decision making and (2) increased visibility/credibility for the program. Access to key data creates a much better environment from which to make educated decisions or recommendations for the organization based on real-time information.

However, enterprises have historically expressed reporting as a difficult area to effectively execute. According to AOTMP’s 2009 State of the Industry Report, reporting and analysis was the lowest rated area across 11 different TEM / WMM activities in terms of overall satisfaction. Among the most common points of frustration mentioned by enterprises were:

- Lack of business system integration
- Accuracy of information
- Completeness of information
- Availability of information

It’s interesting to note that these challenges are actually interrelated. Oftentimes, data from multiple sources, including financial, HR, TEM and WMM systems, is combined into a spreadsheet and manipulated externally from any single system in order to generate desired telecom environment views. Manual manipulation of data often raises questions surrounding the accuracy and completeness of the information due to the inability of business systems to generate needed report views. Because of the lack of system unification and manual manipulation, the enterprise typically finds that all of the information being targeted



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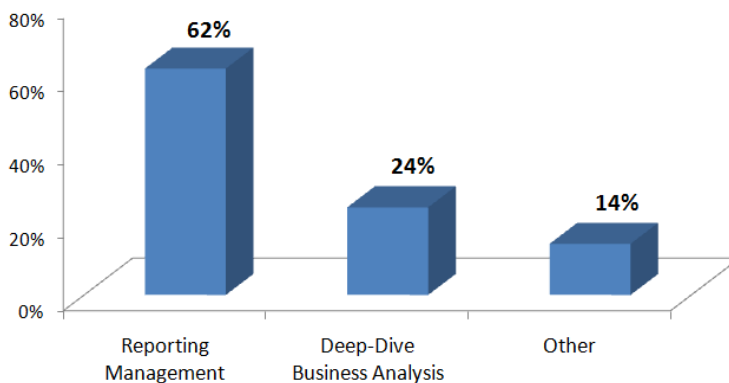
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is not available. All of this leads to continuous, unproductive cycles in the reporting process.

Enterprises also have a tendency to over-manage the reporting process. On average, 62% of the total reporting effort is dedicated toward managing the activity, with only 24% of time being spent on deep-dive business analysis. These findings indicate that enterprises are spending too much time determining how to execute on the reporting strategy and not enough time drilling into the details. Applying additional focus on business analysis allows the enterprise to perform root cause analysis on specific reasons for higher expenses and to develop specific actions to remedy the situation. Examining and defining reporting needs prior to deployment will also help alleviate management time on the back-end; resulting in more time for productive business analysis.

*“Enterprises are spending too much time determining how to execute on reporting strategy and not enough time drilling into the details.”*

**Figure 1: Total Time Spent – TEM Reporting Activities**



Source: AOTMP, May 2010

This best practice publication serves as a guide for the enterprise to overcome these challenges while creating and maintaining an effective reporting process for TEM / WMM programs.



## Best Practices for Reporting

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There are several key factors to consider when reporting on TEM / WMM-related data. Is the information being provided valuable and actionable? Are you providing too much information or not enough detail? Are recipients of the data acting on the information? Each of these areas can contribute to the overall effectiveness of the reporting process. **Figure 2** summarizes the key activities when assessing the reporting process for the enterprise.

**Figure 2: Reporting & Analysis Checklist**

Evaluate the Reporting Landscape	
Identify and Align Stakeholder Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Management</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Telecom Operations</li> <li>• End Users</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Confirm Stakeholder Information Needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform Needs Assessment</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Evaluate Method for Bringing Information Together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine Use of Internal System or TEM/WMM Supplier Software</li> <li>• Validate Method Ensures Internal/External Data will be Available in One System (with little to no manipulation)</li> <li>• Assess Availability of Information</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Generate Reports	
Automate the Reporting Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate business systems</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Generate Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardize Where Possible</li> <li>• Anticipate Ad-Hoc Customized/Requirements</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ensure Information is Clear and Easily Interpreted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow-up with users to ensure information is clear and understandable</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



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*“Reporting strategy should be clearly defined prior to implementation to ensure success.”*

<p>Ensure Information is Actionable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow-up with users to ensure action can be taken on the information</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Monitor and Measure Reporting Effectiveness</b>	
<p>Review Reporting Process Efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify time-consuming processes and understand root causes</li> <li>Identify and automate all manual processes</li> <li>Evaluate business system integration effectiveness</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Solicit Stakeholder Report Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold quarterly de-brief meetings to ensure information provided meets needs</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Implement Report Content and Process Enhancements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure both content and procedural feedback are considered simultaneously</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Monitor and Measure Implemented Enhancements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure enhancements provide intended benefit</li> <li>Re-evaluate process and reports quarterly</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Evaluate the Reporting Landscape

Determining enterprise requirements is the initial step in the reporting process. Ideally, this process will start during the planning stages of the program, beginning with identifying and aligning your stakeholder groups and their information needs. In order to determine stakeholder needs, a needs assessment should be performed to ultimately define the requirements of each group. This may include group discussions or one-on-one interviews. The ultimate goal is to determine the data requirements for each department, individual and the company in aggregate. **Figure 3** offers a template which can be used during the needs assessment to identify information needs.



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*“For a TEM/WMM reporting process to truly drive value and generate impactful and actionable information, data will need to be consolidated from many different internal and external systems.”*

**Figure 3: Reporting Needs Assessment Template**

Stakeholder Name	Department/ Area	Functional Level	Information Needs	Frequency
Bill Smith	IT	Senior Management	• Total Savings • Total Spend	Quarterly
John Jackson	Finance	Finance	• Spend by BU • MACD Financial Details	Monthly
Sara Stephens	TEM Team	Operations	• Spend by BU • Spend by Vendor	Monthly
Tim Steel	Procurement	Operations	• MACD Financial Details • Spend by Vendor	Monthly
Mary Williams	Finance	Finance	• Spend by BU • MACD Financial Details	Monthly
Julie Brown	District Manager	End-User	• Employee Wireless Detail • MACD Financial Details	Monthly
John Smith	WMM Team	Operations	• Spend by BU • Corporate Liable Device Count	Monthly

Once stakeholders and reporting needs have been identified, the next step is to evaluate the method in which you will bring information together. For a TEM/WMM reporting process to truly drive value and generate impactful and actionable information, data will need to be consolidated from many different internal and external systems. The method selected should ensure that financial, HR, telecom and other related information can be viewed and dissected in an easy-to-use fashion with little to no data export and manual manipulation required. If TEM/WMM supplier software is being utilized, the following questions should be asked of the supplier to ensure true data consolidation and complete reporting can be attained:

- How does your technology integrate with internal systems?
- Does the process involve seamless, real-time integration and linkage? Are downloads of flat files or excel files which need to be uploaded and manipulated involved?
- Which specific systems or databases does the technology integrate with?
- What database fields are available for integration with other business systems?
- Can the system report upon any and all database fields?



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It is unlikely that every data point identified will be attainable or available. Therefore, a prioritization scheme should be developed, ranking data points based on need. The enterprise will then be able to determine the specific details that will be required when performing such activities as building the initial inventory of services or assessing the level of detail that will be required on invoices.

### **Generate Reports**

Standardizing on a set of reports that will be provided to the organization is recommended wherever possible. This will reduce the amount of effort required to generate the information while increasing data accuracy. However, not all reporting requirements will be satisfied by these reports; additional requests for information are certain to present themselves. AOTMP research indicates only 62% are currently customizing report content based upon the needs of recipients. Customization ensures the information being provided has relevance and useful application for the intended audience. **Figure 4** offers standard reports by audience group that should be generated, at a minimum, to enable visibility into the telecom environment.

*"AOTMP research indicates only 62% are currently customizing report content based upon the needs of recipients."*





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*“AOTMP research indicates only 49% are confident that users know what to do with the information being provided in their reports.”*

Figure 4: Common Reports by Stakeholder Group

Report Type	End Users (District Managers)	Finance (VP of Finance, Business Unit Coordinators)	Operations (TEM Team, Procurement)	Senior Management (CIO, CFO)
Total Savings YTD		X	X	X
Total Spend 3-month rolling average/YTD				X
Spend by Service Type by Location 3-month rolling average/YTD	X			
Spend by Business Unit 3-month rolling average/YTD		X	X	
Spend by Vendor			X	
MACD Activity Financial Impact	X	X	X	
Wireless Spend by User	X			
Wireless Devices (#'s and \$) 3-month rolling average			X	
Exception Report Targeting Variances	X	X	X	
Variance Report by Account (+/- or % of \$) 3 month high/low use		X	X	
Call Detail	X			
Cost by Business Unit, Call Center, Employee		X		
Service Address Exceptions (for closed service locations)			X	
Contract Performance (% of contractual terms met)			X	X
Vendor Report Card (pricing, service levels, SLA performance)			X	
Trends (spend, savings, devices and other significant trends)		X	X	

Simply generating information is not enough to ensure an optimal reporting process. The information must also be clear and easily interpreted. AOTMP research indicates only 49% are confident that users know what to do with the information being provided in their reports. Knowing your audience and the relevant, actionable information for each group will increase the effectiveness of the reports, while reducing time spent on generating unwanted information.





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To help alleviate this specific issue, FAQ's and information sessions should be available to help users understand the reports being shared and how the information can be used to drive efficiency within the telecom environment. Other valuable tactics, such as sharing best practices and soliciting suggestions for more meaningful reports, should also be part of these discussions. If the information being provided is easily interpreted and can be acted upon, the reporting process becomes a powerful tool for the users of the information as well as the enterprise as a whole.

### **Automation is Key**

Many organizations find it challenging and time-consuming to provide effective information to internal stakeholders. Based on previous AOTMP research, the main challenges enterprises face when reporting TEM-related metrics include (1) ensuring accurate information is provided (2) getting users to take action on the information and (3) being able to efficiently generate data. Most of these struggles stem from a lack of automation in the reporting process. Data may come from a variety of systems and organizations could spend hours, or even days, consolidating information and generating information through spreadsheets. The process can quickly become cumbersome and filled with the potential for error. TEM and WMM Suppliers offer software to satisfy enterprise automation requirements and provide many benefits including:

- Decreased production time of reports
- Decreasing the amount of enterprise reporting resources (BPO/Managed Service model)
- Increasing accuracy of information
- Conversion of multiple currencies to a single, unified currency view
- Integration with internal systems (Accounts Payable, Human Resources, etc.)

*"Most reporting struggles stem from a lack of automation in the process."*



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Suppliers have varying capabilities so it is important to define program goals and objectives and match them to supplier capabilities.

## **Monitor and Measure Reporting Effectiveness**

Any reports that are generated, as well as underlying reporting processes, should be continuously scrutinized in order to generate maximum effectiveness. Soliciting stakeholder feedback on an on-going basis will ensure the information remains relevant and actionable for the intended audience. Enterprises should continue to generate the reports that are providing the most value and discontinue the production of those that are not being used. The reporting process should also be reviewed in order to identify labor-intensive activities. At a minimum, reporting processes and all associated reports should be evaluated on a quarterly basis.



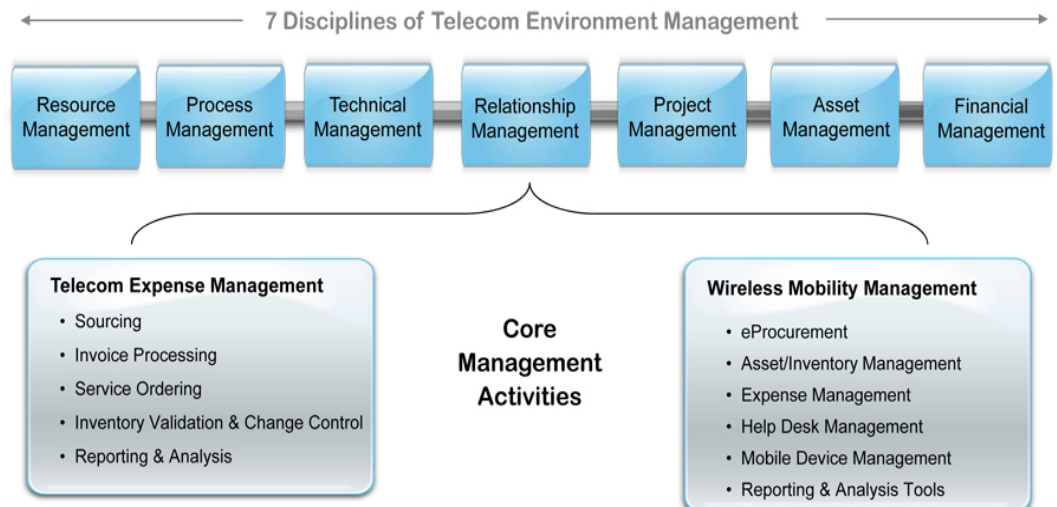
## Telecom Environment Management

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Generating maximum value from your program requires a complete and balanced approach across all telecom environment management disciplines. Sole focus on individual TEW and WMM program activities, without a calculation of the effect of performance contributions to the program as a whole, leads to program mis-queueus and sub-optimal performance. A holistic approach considering every aspect of your fixed and wireless telecom environment promotes efficiencies and creates a unified approach for achieving overall program performance objectives.

AOTMP's Telecom Environment Management model is based on a framework for managing a telecom environment across seven disciplines. Each discipline impacts the other areas, as well as the organization's overall ability to create an efficient and productive telecom environment. Our approach to telecom environment management considers the contributions and responsibilities across every discipline in order to achieve the best possible return on telecom and IT services. AOTMP has also defined 11 core management activities within Telecom Expense Management (TEM) and Wireless Mobility Management (WMM) which influence the seven disciplines of telecom environment management.





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### About the Authors

#### **Timothy C. Colwell, AOTMP Vice President of Knowledge Operations**

Tim Colwell leads the teams responsible for standards & best practices, research, benchmarking and training & certification. Tim has 17+ years of industry experience in helping Fortune 500 and Forbes Private 50 enterprise and industry supplier organizations achieve excellence in the financial, operational and technical performance management of a telecom environment.

A thought leader in telecom environment management, Tim's expertise spans performance benchmarking, process engineering, budget management, contract negotiations, asset & inventory management, and relationship management. Tim is a patent author and leads product development for TEMOS, a performance management system designed to optimize enterprise telecom environments. Prior to joining AOTMP, Tim spent three years as Director of Support Services for a telecommunications consulting firm where he refined and implemented telecommunications best practice methodologies across 500+ client consulting engagements. Tim holds a BA in Telecommunications from Indiana University.



#### **Scott Lawrence, AOTMP Director of Research**

Scott has over 15 years of experience developing and collecting market research on behalf of global Fortune 500 enterprises within the telecommunications and IT industries. In his previous role as a senior research manager, Scott led teams to accomplish research objectives by designing studies that yielded actionable information while helping clients understand the impact of the results. Scott has a B.S. in Marketing from Ball State University.



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Scott is responsible for designing and managing AOTMP's research activities which includes research publications, market landscapes and benchmarks within the areas of telecom expense management and wireless mobility management. Scott also works as an advisor and subject matter expert for AOTMP's research services.

### **About AOTMP Research**

AOTMP research is supported through data collected from a variety of sources. Data points are collected through enterprise and supplier benchmarking projects, training and certification events, research surveys, frequent hot topic polls, virtual conference audience polling, live conference audience polling, and AOTMP Access benchmarking events. AOTMP's data point contributors include over 60,000 IT, telecom and business professionals, supporting domestic and international enterprises and industry suppliers. Data points contributing to research are carefully analyzed using advanced statistical methods. Research findings are confirmed through test/retest validity methodology and, therefore, paint an accurate picture of the industry. The clarity and detail of AOTMP research is unmatched in the practice of telecom environment management, and AOTMP expertise translates analysis into actionable findings representative of the industry and all related industry segments.

Additional information on AOTMP publications, programs and research can be found at [www.aotmp.com](http://www.aotmp.com).



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## About AOTMP

AOTMP is the leading provider of information solutions to drive efficiency and productivity across fixed and wireless telecom environments in the enterprise. Our industry research, advisory services, events, educational programs and performance management systems focus on People, Process and Tools to deliver measurable improvement in efficiency and productivity.

**People** - Human capital execution of tactical and strategic initiatives

**Process** - Best practices and methodologies

**Tools** - Technology, templates, guides and references



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