at the heart of AT&T Network Sourcing is 'governance.'

what exactly is it?

Executive Summary

Different people mean different things when they talk about governance. This paper describes how it applies to customers of AT&T Network Sourcing service, their business goals, and how they measure network and operational performance with relation to business objectives.

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Governance is a foundational component of AT&T Network Sourcing capabilities. It specifies a set of policies and processes designed to create and maintain a successful working relationship between AT&T and a Network Sourcing customer.

For its part, AT&T Network Sourcing is a holistic set of lifecycle management services that integrate an enterprise's overall compute and network infrastructure (cloud, mobility, etc.). Sourcing involves consulting, professional services and tight teaming between the customer and AT&T aimed to meet specific business goals through the strategic use of IT and communications networks. The combined team maps out detailed business goals and service requirements, executes on them, and then continually reviews and adjusts them as needed when conditions shift.

In the context of Network Sourcing, governance describes the management and oversight of that integral working relationship. It includes regular evaluation as to how well AT&T is helping meet the customer's IT and business goals.

Comparison with Traditional Governance

This definition is similar in spirit to traditional uses of "governance," which when generally applied to business refers to a set of rules and policies under which companies operate. Traditional governance policies are in place for many reasons: to mitigate conflicts of interest between stakeholders; to ensure compliance with industry-specific government regulations (often pertaining to privacy and security); to track and audit business processes; and to assign and enforce accountability, for example. In short, the more general application of governance is to ensure that business policies are followed.

When applied specifically to Network Sourcing, governance has similar goals, particularly as they pertain to accountability. However, the goals are more focused on the working relationship than on any outside requirements.

Network Sourcing governance rules specify, for example, how the AT&T responsibilities will be integrated into the customer's existing business processes and structure. They also lay out how the unified team will work collectively to bring ideas to the table, measure results and modify processes as required.

Regular Benchmarking

Network Sourcing governance also defines a process and frequency for examining how well AT&T is delivering and executing against agreed-upon service levels that have been spelled out in the Network Sourcing contract. That includes measuring the value that AT&T brings to the table in terms of improvements in network availability, performance, response time and other metrics, as well as the degree to which AT&T is contributing to overall business success.

If measurements don't meet expectations, that's a flag that swift changes (whether large or small) are in order. They might be required because business goals have changed, new technologies have

emerged, industry influences have shifted or for other reasons. The frequent monitoring of goals, execution alignment and dynamic follow-through are all part of the Network Sourcing governance protocol. They are intended to ensure that any needed modifications to the contract, services, processes and relationship occur as soon as possible once they are discovered to keep the business closely on course.

Relationship Management

Network Sourcing governance applies from operations up through management and executive levels. It's managed by a lifecycle management team led by a service director who works with the customer and coordinates with the AT&T operational and sales account team to lay out governance policies. Let's look at a few details as to how the relationship works.

governance structure

Service Delivery Management and Tools

Executive Level
- Innovation strategy
- Performance metrics
- Escalation of critical issues

Service Mgmt Level
- Performance trends
- Financial trends
- Status of critical issues

Operations Mgmt Level
- Service delivery
- Service support

Best practices
- Continuous auditing
- Continuous improvement
- Performance capacity services
- Quality management

Focus On Business Improvement
- Cost efficiences
- Increased productivity
- Standardization
- Best of breed services

Customer and AT&T Alignment

At the Operational Level

In a Network Sourcing arrangement, AT&T personnel work closely with the customer's IT staff. As such, AT&T expects to participate in regular operational meetings that the business conducts, including routine daily outage calls and attending weekly IT meetings to discuss issues such as the following:

- How quickly any service outages have been restored.

- New projects on the drawing board.

- Requirements for moves, adds and changes.

At the Management Level

The AT&T Network Sourcing group also involves itself in enterprise planning and discussions that are at more strategic levels than reviews of daily operations metrics. AT&T participates in discussions about the satisfaction levels of customers – both internal and external – and their perceptions, for example. Status of critical issues are discussed, as well as financial trends and business cases for specific projects.

At the Executive Level
At the executive level, governance often involves engaging the CIO to make collective decisions, offer guidance, provide a more holistic and lifecycle plan. Topics can include:

- How well is the overall Network Sourcing relationship is working?

- Where is the customer's business headed?

- What is IT being asked to do?

- How should AT&T work with the company to evolve service deployment?

- Innovation strategies; for example, AT&T might have undertaken similar projects that might apply to the situation at hand. Innovation continues to be of primary importance to include as part of ongoing governance.

In these ways, Network Sourcing governance works to manage the many aspects of a joint AT&T-customer relationship in ways that enable the delivery of an infrastructure and service set that are flexible and dynamic and remain aligned with business goals in measurable ways.

For more information contact an AT&T Representative or click here.

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