M6 Overview

M6 provides robust inventory and order management capabilities to facilitate the delivery of traditional and next generation services.

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Comprehensive, efficient inventory management processes and systems are critical to your business. In fact, they are vital components in ensuring the efficient and automated network environment you need to fulfill your customer's requests as quickly, accurately, and cost-effectively as possible. However, inventory systems in isolation are insufficient for meeting the primary objectives that are driving your business:

INCREASE REVENUE AND DECREASE TIME TO REVENUE. You must have the ability to more effectively deliver new services while leveraging your existing investment in network equipment and technologies. As you bring new services to market, visibility into existing products and network assets can help you make the right decisions for your business.

OPTIMIZE CAPITAL EXPENDITURES. It's critical that you maintain an accurate record of all your network and service resources. A system that allows you to accurately model all your network equipment, in all the network systems you maintain, enables you to verify the placement of all your assets and how best to take advantage of them, enabling you to reduce CAPEX.

ENHANCE OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE. You must continue consolidating multiple systems and automating your provisioning processes for faster service delivery. To do this, you need a system with multi-service capabilities, coupled with effective integration to activation. Flow-through, automated provisioning can help reduce OPEX.

PROVIDE EFFECTIVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION. A single source of access to comprehensive network and service information enables you to make more informed business decisions. It's important that you empower individuals at every level of your organization to leverage maximum benefits from your inventory.

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MetaSolv understands the need to effectively address all these issues, and our robust suite of solutions addresses the full spectrum of service fulfillment processes – from order management to inventory management to activation. In addition, MetaSolv has extensive experience in helping you meet the challenges of today's complex communications environment. With over 180 customers worldwide, using all types of networks, protocols, and technologies, MetaSolv is the acknowledged leader in delivering OSS solutions that address real-world challenges.

Our extensive experience in actual customer deployments has enabled MetaSolv to develop solutions with domain-rich functionality that can be used alone or can be easily integrated with other best-of-breed systems. MetaSolv offers leading edge capabilities in M6, the next generation inventory and order management solution. M6 can help you:

· Leverage the power of inventory across the enterprise, getting key data into the hands of decision makers
· Manage across diverse networks, enabling rapid delivery and intelligent design of all services, from optical to IP
· Deliver faster time-to-revenue for services through features such as an actual multi-domain view of the network
· Provide a positive end user experience, leading ultimately to improved productivity
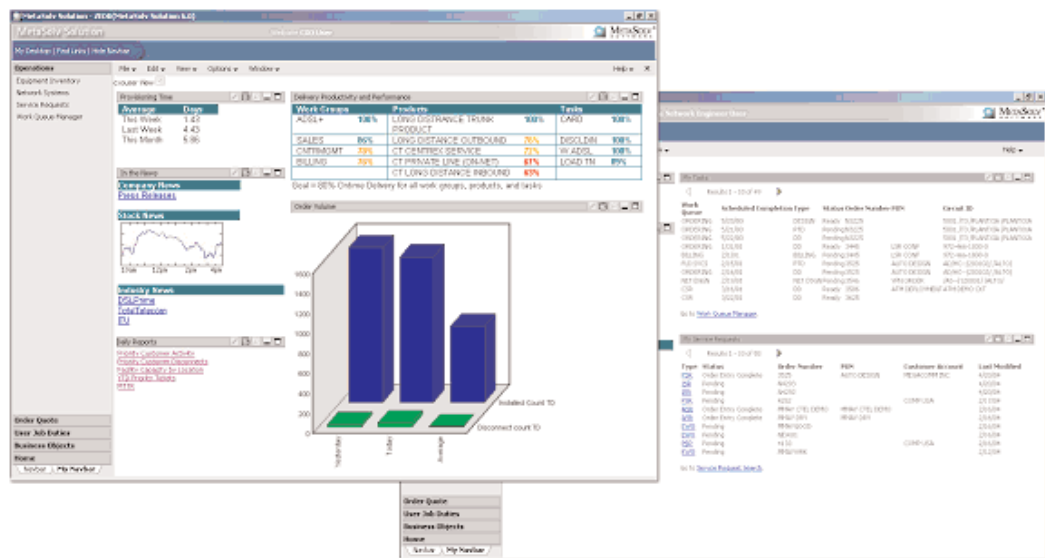
LEVERAGING THE POWER OF INVENTORY ACROSS THE ENTERPRISE

Different people need different information based on their roles. For example, the CEO needs timely, concise information on actual costs of the network. The Marketing Manager must evaluate the success of various service offerings to determine bundling opportunities. And the Network Engineer needs to track all network assets, whether they are logical, physical, or functional.

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M6 allows you to capture all the data needed across your organization, as well as correlate and report that data as meaningful information that empowers your entire organization to recognize its real value. With M6, not only can you access and use information inherent in a standalone inventory system, but you can also integrate your inventory system with network-facing information sources including existing Network Management Systems (NMSs), Element Management Systems (EMSs), fault and performance management systems, and legacy data stores. These powerful capabilities automatically identify discrepancies between the network "as is" and the network "as intended" in your inventory, helping ensure that your business decisions are made on the most current information available.

To help you access and benefit from all available data, MetaSolv offers configurable portlets that allow your users to tailor access to the data that is important and relevant to them. In addition, the configurable navigation allows one-click access to key portions of M6 and external applications. This facilitates informed decision-making relating to capital expenditures, adding or discontinuing services, and planning network operations.
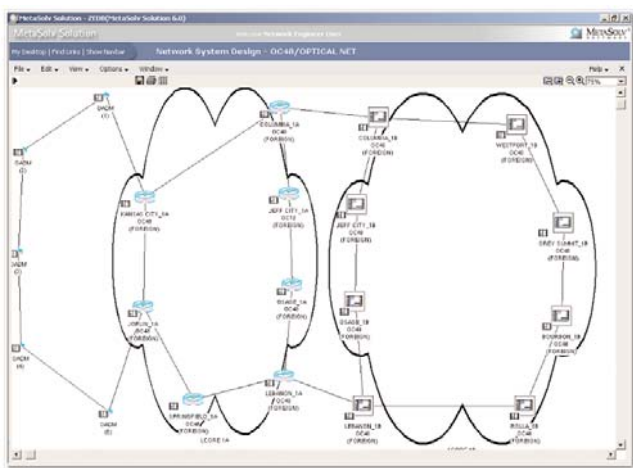

Different levels in your organization require customized views of your inventory data.
For example, a CxO accesses M6 (left) for key, actionable data enabling informed decisions.
A Network Engineer (right) views daily operational tasks for network design and provisioning.

MANAGING ACROSS DIVERSE NETWORKS

Traditionally, networks are managed and visualized on a per-domain or network basis. For example, IP networks are modeled in one application, ATM/FR in another, and so on. In a single system, M6 provides multi-layer graphical visualization across all hierarchies of the network, from Optical to IP. Visualizing relationships between different network technologies helps you see where you can make improvements – and where you are already achieving your goals. This comprehensive and cohesive visualization enables you to maximize your operational efficiencies and reduce costs.

MODELING ALL TECHNOLOGIES IN A SINGLE SYSTEM

MetaSolv's template-based network design functionality is a flexible platform that helps you design and configure any type of network, from simple to complex, in one user-configurable system. Using MetaSolv's productized Technology Modules and robust modeling capabilities, you can model all the technologies and equipment in your complete network in one place, and view the relationships between the various components. For example, your network system could represent an entire global network, a backbone (or core) distribution network, an access (or edge) network, or even a LAN or VLAN network configuration.

The Technology Module for Optical/TDM networks allows you to embed SONET/SDH networks in other networks to facilitate the management of the complete network.

M6 Technology Modules support current and emerging technologies – IP services such as VoIP and IP VPN, cable and broadband services, Ethernet, ATM/FR (including Layer 2 VPNs), mobile services (2.5/3G), MPLS (including MPLS VPN), DSL, SONET/SDH, and optical, including meshed SONET and DWDM.

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And because the Technology Modules are built on the concept that technologies, products, and services are rapidly changing, M6 allows your network designs to grow and change along with your business.

MAINTAINING EQUIPMENT ASSETS

M6 maintains information about the equipment supporting your network as well its relationship to locations, connections, and carrier systems. Because equipment types change as network technologies change, M6 provides flexible and configurable equipment modeling capabilities. Using a specification that reflects your specific implementation, you can install in-service or spare equipment, associate specific equipment with network components, and track equipment according to your needs, such as for capacity planning or troubleshooting. Equipment capabilities can also be easily integrated with other asset tracking capabilities such as barcoding or other auditing mechanisms. The result is timely, accurate data about all the pieces equipment in your network and their locations – for on-net and off-net resources.

MANAGING NUMBER INVENTORIES

M6 offers number inventory management to help you manage your database of numbers—telephone numbers and IP resources—more effectively. M6 provides user-defined telephone number formats and defined functionality for managing number portability. You also have the ability to make and redeem reservations according to defined business processes. IP resource management also provides the flexibility of inventorying and managing the IP address space, allocating public or provide IP address blocks to customers, and assigning IP addresses to the network

UTILIZING INTERNAL INVENTORY BUILDOUT PROCESSES

Your network must be ready to deliver requested services. MetaSolv provides an Engineering Work Order (EWO) designed for high-volume network-related activity. Whether you are expanding in anticipation of customer demand or building out your network in response to specific customer requests, MetaSolv's EWO facilitates the management of internal buildout activities.

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The Engineering Work Order combines two key buildout capabilities – the structure of workflow processes typically associated with customer requests, and the flexibility of performing network maintenance without the restriction of specific customer requests. M6 enables you to manage the workflow associated with building and maintaining connections and installing equipment, helping ensure that your network can handle all customer-related service requests.

DELIVERING FASTER TIME-TO-REVENUE FOR SERVICES

Your success depends not only on your ability to deliver services, but also on delivering the right services to the right people in the shortest possible time.

To deliver effective service, you must understand your customers. M6 communicates with CRM systems to help you integrate your front-office customer information with the back-office technical information about your networks. This facilitates the capture and management of complete, up-to-date customer information. In M6, you can access a complete history of a customer's activity with your company – not only the products and services ordered by that customer through the CRM system, but how your network is configured and provisioned to deliver those services.

The product catalog in M6 helps you manage the products and services that are delivered across your network. Whether you integrate with a third-party CRM or you use M6 as the front-end ordering system, the product catalog provides the flexibility to define both simple products, such as basic dial tone lines, and advanced services, such as IP VPNs.
You can tie products to network design templates in M6 and coordinate your commercial product offerings with the functional and technical capabilities of your network. You can be confident that the products your customers order can be supported by your network. M6 allows you to determine whether the network supports the specific items on that order, has the capacity to carry the services ordered, and contains the appropriate transport technologies for the order. Ultimately, you save time in the ordering process by only ordering those products

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and services available to a specific customer, which can be critical for many advanced services. In a traditional environment, your different networks might be contained in different systems, meaning you have to consult many diverse, piecemeal views of your network, none of them providing the overall information you need. In addition, the different systems require that you manually create and design service paths – using a time-consuming, inefficient, and iterative process to determine the optimal route.

To address the inefficiencies of making assignments across different technologies in different systems, M6 provides layer-independent, automated path analysis and network design, across all network layers, significantly reducing the time needed to provision advanced Optical-to-IP services. The enhanced rules-based platform and graphical design capabilities can traverse network rings to identify a working path, as well as a protected path, according to user-selected criteria, such as number of hops or distance. M6 enables you to perform intelligent analysis functions including:

LAYER-INDEPENDENT PATH ANALYSIS - enables automated path analysis assignment across your network.

MULTI-LAYER VISUALIZATION AND DESIGN - provides a centralized area to create and view designs and design-related information in textual and graphical views.

PATH DIVERSITY, QUADVERSITY, AND/OR TRIVERSITY - enables you to validate your diversity requirements to support Quality of Service (QoS) standards and Service Level Agreement (SLA) parameters.

AUTOMATIC RESOURCE ASSIGNMENT - automates designs to meet your needs, based upon rules including mileage and least-cost routing.

GROOMING AND/OR REHOMING – allows you to groom and use existing resources more efficiently.

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MetaSolv pulls provisioning orders and inventory together with workflow management capabilities to help you manage workloads across workgroups and individuals. The Work Queue Manager provides a configurable interface, showing you the information you want to see. These workflow management capabilities are intelligently integrated into the service fulfillment process, providing, direct access to all information needed to perform a given task. You can study and proactively manage your workflows and service performance, proactively manage jeopardy situations, and plan and allocate resources. The flexible workflow modeling allows you to dynamically build workflow processes, including initiating exits to external systems in the middle of the process.

PROVIDING A POSITIVE END USER EXPERIENCE

Even the most powerful automation system is only beneficial to your organization if it is fully utilized. You need a highly functional system that is also needs easy to use, navigate, and configure, helping your staff be more satisfied and productive.

M6 provides a market-leading user interface built on standard UI design and underlying technologies, designed with the end user in mind. Based on direct feedback from existing users, numerous changes were made across the system.

For example, the configurable navigation bar provides fast access – in many cases only a single click – to any part of the application. Your users can design individual navigation based on the parts of the application they use most, without costly and time-consuming custom development work.

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CONCLUSION

MetaSolv is uniquely positioned to provide a complete solution for your organization, coupling the comprehensive inventory management capabilities of M6 with our industry-leading order management and service activation functionality.

MetaSolv Provides	Business Benefit
Layer-independent path analysis	Rapid provisioning of next-generation services, helping you increase revenue and decrease time-to-revenue
Multi-layer visualization capabilities	Effective leveraging of your network assets, allowing you to optimize your capital expenditures
Multi-service capabilities and activation integration	Enhanced operational excellence and reduced operational expenses
Configurable portlets and navigation	Easy access to pertinent information at all levels of the organization

ABOUT METASOLV

MetaSolv, Inc. (Nasdaq: MSLV) is a global leader in comprehensive service fulfillment software solutions for communications service providers. MetaSolv's multi-service order management, network resource management, and service activation capabilities automate the order-to-activate provisioning process for next-generation IP-based wireline and mobile service providers. More than 180 service providers from around the world - including Brasil Telecom, Bell Canada, BT, Cable & Wireless, Nextel, O2, T-Mobile, Vodafone, and others - use MetaSolv's solutions to achieve increased revenues, reduced costs, and enhanced customer service. MetaSolv is a global company, headquartered in Plano, Texas.

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