How B2B Telcos Win on Agility, Efficiency, and Customer Experience

A growth guide for faster product launches, more efficient operations, and elevated customer experiences

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Executive Summary

Alexander Graham Bell made the first telephone call on March 10, 1876. His words, "Mr. Watson, come here. I want to see you," were a practical request for assistance. The telecom industry was founded on a service request, yet modern carriers are still struggling to efficiently deliver this to their business clients.

For regional and mid-sized service providers, this is even more difficult due to capital constraints. Unlike Tier 1 operators, Tier 2 & 3 carriers cannot outspend competitors on infrastructure buildout, or acquisitions to consolidate their market position. Instead, they must compete on efficiency, agility, and customer experience.[1]

This is easier said than done. Decades of mergers, isolated software silos, and bolted-on customized tools have left operators and their business customers managing a fragile web of disconnected workflows. Carriers are stuck in a “patchwork enterprise” approach. This approach is consuming a majority of their IT budget on basic maintenance, preventing real-time data processing, delaying product launches from weeks to months, creating cybersecurity risks and vulnerabilities, and failing to meet rising customer expectations.

Modernizing enterprise operations requires a platform-centric approach. This means having a single platform with a unified data model that brings together IT operations, network operations, field services, customer experience, workflow automation, and AI orchestration. This will form the foundation for B2B success - enabling you to launch new services to market faster, lower the cost-of-service assurance and provisioning, and provide superior customer experience.

Enterprise buyers expect cloud-like agility from their telecom partners, but few get it in practice.

74% of U.S. corporate IT buyers rate their carrier’s digital experience as average or poor.[2]

Furthermore, more than half of those buyers state they would switch providers for faster, on-demand service activation.[2]

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Executive Summary

This document serves as a telco to techco transformation guide, written by a team with a deep understanding of both technology and telecom operations. Ateko, backed by Bell Canada, is ServiceNow's first globally certified telecom service management partner.

In 2024, Bell and ServiceNow announced a $100+ million strategic agreement with Ateko as the integrator and co-innovation partner. Two years into this transformation, we're going to share what we've accomplished at Bell, what's ahead, and what you can learn from the path we've taken.

> *Our collaboration with ServiceNow and Ateko is a cornerstone in Bell Canada's transformation from a traditional telco to a tech services leader. We are investing strongly in elevating our enterprise client experience. This will make the end-to-end process - from ordering, to provisioning, to service assurance - easier and more effective, and serve the unique needs of each client.*
>
> ***John Watson, Group President, Bell Business Markets & AI***

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Chapter 1: The Patchwork Enterprise

When launching new B2B services, carriers must navigate complex new product introduction (NPI) processes that interact with several siloed teams and systems: from creating product codes in the sales CRM, to coordinating service ordering, provisioning, and day-two support with operations, to establishing billing SKUs with back-office teams. These disjointed operational support systems (OSS) and business support systems (BSS) make introducing new services too complex, slow, and expensive.

The impact on day-to-day operations

Almost every team feels the burden of the patchwork enterprise, including product, operations, engineering, finance, sales, and customer service. Even customers notice the difference when customer service agents are forced to toggle between disjointed systems to verify customer data, validate service availability, and create or update support tickets. Research indicates that B2B order fallout rates reach approximately 30% in fragmented legacy environments, requiring manual rework that delays provisioning and negatively impacts customer experience.[3]

In a survey of North American telecom operators by the TM Forum, product managers must navigate an average of 15 disjointed software systems to define a single new product bundle.[4] The resulting delays frequently force regional carriers to miss narrow market opportunity windows, with analysis by Forrester indicating that 64% of product releases by regional carriers are delayed past their targeted launch dates.[5]

This fragmentation creates a heavy administrative burden on daily operations. Research from the TM Forum indicates that because legacy systems fail to automatically synchronize network provisioning with billing engines, operators suffer from systemic "revenue leakage" on 1.5% to 3% of transactions, forcing back-office teams into a constant cycle of manual data audits and costly corrections to address billing errors.[6]

The impact on customer experience

It's often overlooked that your B2B customer's own IT department faces operational issues when accessing your service assurance and provisioning. Consider this scenario – an IT administrator, let’s call him Alex, discovers a network performance problem. He opens an incident ticket and routes it to his operations team.

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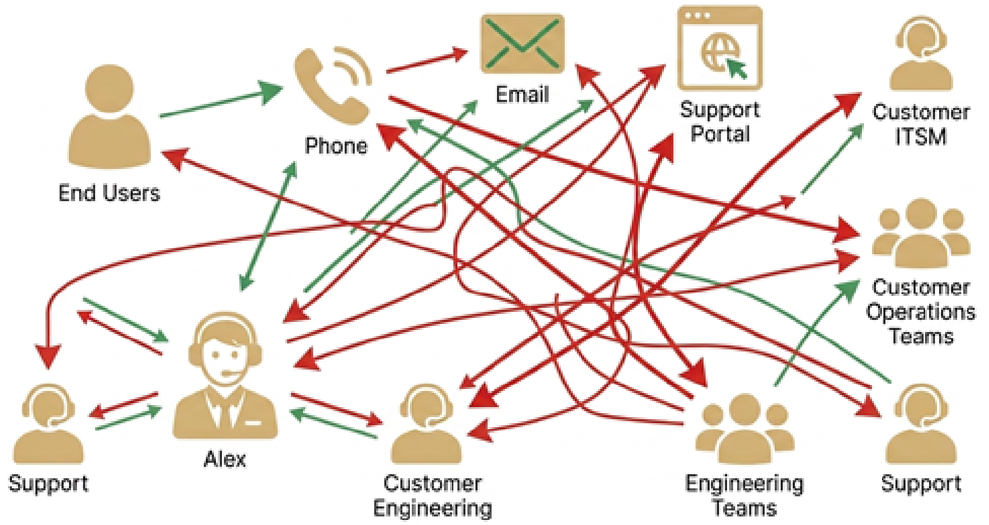
Chapter 1: The Patchwork Enterprise

They cannot resolve the issue and recommends that he open a ticket with their telecom. He logs into the telecom's portal, opens a case, and then has to swivel back to his own system to update the incident status.

Alex receives complaints and escalations from his colleagues via Microsoft Teams. In the meantime, their operations team has identified a new related symptom. Alex copies and pastes the details into the work notes in the telecom portal and has to swivel to do the same in his own system. This goes on-and-on, with Alex and the telecom working towards a solution. It's a complex issue that requires exchanging emails, calls, and hopping on virtual meetings.

In the end, Alex is unhappy with this support experience. He spent several days trying to resolve this incident. His management struggles to understand - why did it take so long to resolve this situation? This broken communication path is a major driver of customer dissatisfaction. Research shows that 62% of B2B channel shifts are classified as high effort, meaning the customer bears the burden of rebuilding the context of their service or support request.[7]

Challenges with today's experience:
Disjointed systems and processes



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Chapter 1: The Patchwork Enterprise

Without a direct system-to-system and workflow-to-workflow integration, service assurance and provisioning can be slow, expensive, and inefficient. Before you say, we offer a solution to that. We all know about the custom integrations that telecoms have offered in the past - you know, the ones that take up to a year to implement, cost over a million dollars, are hard to maintain and don't evolve over time. This is not the solution your business customers are looking for.

When enterprises face lengthy service provisioning and complex support processes, they consider alternatives to their incumbent carriers. Tier 2 & 3 operators cannot rely on manual workflows built on legacy systems to compete. Business customers expect fast, easy-to-use, and modern experiences. In the next chapter, we'll talk about how to establish a foundation for B2B success, including a B2B integration solution native to the ServiceNow platform that Bell has deployed with their enterprise customers.

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Chapter 2: The Foundation for B2B Success

To drive top-line revenue growth and reduce delivery costs, carriers should seek to adopt a unified service orchestration platform. A platform that eliminates the siloed teams and processes to automate the lifecycle of B2B services. Gartner research states that automating order-to-activation cycles is a requirement for carriers to remain viable in the modern business market.

For Bell, they chose ServiceNow as this cornerstone technology to support their corporate, residential, and enterprise services. As their integration partner, we challenged them not to recreate the same decades-old processes and customized capabilities they had been using in the past. Real transformation requires changes to people, processes, and technology.

Where is a good place to start for B2B telcos?

While we'll walk you through a detailed roadmap in subsequent chapters, we wanted to share where Bell Business Markets (the B2B part of Bell) started once they licensed the ServiceNow platform. They were working with legacy, heavily customized systems that supported distinct functional areas. This often led to silos and challenges with cross-functional collaboration.

The first thing they wanted to improve was their service assurance and service provisioning. We were able to help them accomplish this by implementing ServiceNow Telecom Service Management (TSM) and Order Management for Telecom (OMT), as well as integrating third-party tools such as their unified product catalog and order optimizer. This enabled them to eliminate the data siloes that previously existed, while introducing workflow automation that shortened fulfillment times by 15%, shortened response times by 25%, and made their overall service operations more efficient.

> *The foundational integrations provided by Ateko have been instrumental in setting the stage for Bell Business Market's future development. Their strategic approach has empowered us to build a robust framework as we continue our digital transformation journey. Ateko's expertise and dedication have been invaluable in laying the groundwork for our success.*
>
> ***Director of Sales and Service Transformation, Bell Canada***

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Chapter 2: The Foundation for B2B Success

Bell On-Demand Network

Leveraging this foundation, Bell Business Markets was able to in a matter of weeks, develop and launch their new network on demand service for enterprise customers. This new offer enables their customers to order, monitor, and modify their connectivity services through a self-service digital platform, greatly reducing the carrier's cost-to-serve. The customers can make changes that take effect in real time, getting the responsiveness and experience they expect in the modern business environment.

62%

According to a 2026 report from Futurum Research, 62% of enterprises are already adopting or planning to adopt on-demand network services.[8]

B2B integration with ServiceNow Service Bridge

While Bell on-demand network improved service provisioning, they also wanted to automate the service assurance process such as incident tickets and change requests. This led us to implement ServiceNow's Service Bridge for Bell and their enterprise customers.

Service Bridge is a first-party application within the ServiceNow platform that is part of the TSM license, so there are no license costs for your business customers. It is the best way to quickly and securely integrate two ServiceNow instances to exchange data - whether that be a proactive alert for an expected downtime due to network maintenance or providing near real-time status updates on an incident that you're working to resolve.

The process for business customers to adopt this is straightforward – they download the free application "Service Bridge for Consumers", then the parties perform a few simple configuration steps to connect the two instances. The parties conduct a workshop together to ensure they're aligned with how the ticket workflows will be configured (ie., defining trigger conditions, mapping fields, etc).

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Chapter 2: The Foundation for B2B Success

Then they implement this configuration, test, and deploy it in their various environments (ie. development, staging, and production). This product has a good set of documentation and training available to set you and your business customers up for success.

In a matter of weeks, you can implement a single, integrated system and process to manage B2B service assurance. Enterprise clients who have adopted this typically realized cost savings equivalent to nearly one full-time person per year, a reduction in human error and corrections by approx. 10%, and a reduction in processing times by approx. 10% per request.

For the carrier, it means a reduction in their cost to serve. By automating the exchange of service assurance data, the cost of a self-service interaction is just $1.84, compared to a median cost of $13.50 for a live-agent call.[9] But these operational gains are only half the story. This B2B foundation will help carriers deliver a more proactive and superior customer experience, which we will explore in the next chapter.

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Chapter 3: Differentiate in Customer Experience

With the unified platform foundation in place, the next step is to transform it into a competitive advantage. For Bell, this meant creating a proactive, transparent service model they call the "Promise Engine." This initiative recognizes that customer experience is the primary driver of retention and growth, with 88% of B2B executives agreeing that customer engagement has a significant and direct impact on their bottom line.[10] This chapter showcases how the "Promise Engine", built on ServiceNow, helps transform the customer journey from a point of operational friction to a source of enduring customer trust.

The cost of a disconnected B2B experience

Before their transformation, Bell's customer operations reflected challenges common across the telecommunications industry. Their agents worked within a custom-built case management system where customer data was fragmented across multiple tools. With no simple way to view the complete details of a service case (including active work being performed by technicians in the field), business clients were sometimes left feeling uncertain. The manual processes that often required the need to switch between multiple tools were difficult to scale effectively and slowed down service delivery and case resolution times.

The agent experience can be a force multiplier

The disconnected experience doesn't just frustrate customers; it creates a risk of burnout and churn among customer service agents. Too often, agents have to rely on inadequate tools to perform their jobs. They are asked to endlessly navigate a web of disconnected systems, manually copy and paste information from one to another, and put the customer on hold due to a lack of quick and complete visibility. This can lead to lower morale and higher employee turnover, which can become a critical business risk, as industry research shows the cost of replacing a single contact center agent can be as high as $15,000 to $20,000.[11]

A unified platform like ServiceNow directly addresses this by providing agents with a single pane of glass experience. When agents are empowered with the right information at the right time, they are not just more efficient; they are more effective and engaged. This helps them be less reactive to customer issues, and more proactive customer advocates.

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Chapter 3: Differentiate in Customer Experience

Building the "Promise Engine" on ServiceNow

To address the agent and customer experience challenges, Bell developed its "Promise Engine," a new approach to customer experience built on the ServiceNow platform. Using ServiceNow Customer Service Management, they provided agents with a streamlined, modern interface and automated workflows for managing every customer case.

A key component of the “Promise Engine” is ServiceNow Workflow Data Fabric, which was used to securely aggregate data from dozens of enterprise systems (e.g., AWS, Google BigQuery, etc.) into a single, unified customer profile. For the first time, agents could see a complete picture of the customer on one screen: demographics, service history, billing information, interaction logs, and engagement metrics. Centralized data and automation enabled the company to deliver more personalized services and drive faster resolutions.

> *We were running into the limitations of what we could do with our in-house tools. We were fortunate that Ateko has deep expertise on AWS, Google Cloud, and ServiceNow, to be able to integrate our customer data into a unified customer profile. Combined with the automation they introduced around case management, we’ve achieved faster case resolution, improved customer satisfaction, and the ability for us to excite our customers with personalized offers.*
>
> ***Matt Cullingham, VP Customer Experience, Bell Canada***

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Chapter 3: Differentiate in Customer Experience

Integrating AI into customer service workflows

Bell has also deployed AI and automation to make their customer operations more efficient. For example, they deployed a Telco Service Management (TSM) Triage Agent. Rather than forcing human operators to manually sort through unstructured emails and other interactions, the triage agent acts as the automated gateway: parsing incoming messages, validating customer accounts, dealing with any duplications, and auto-populating fields before routing the cases directly to the agent best suited to address the specific issue.

While these types of AI Agents are available out-of-the-box from ServiceNow, anyone who has worked with enterprise IT systems knows that out-of-the-box doesn't mean simply flipping a switch to achieve production readiness. The TSM Triage Agent needed to be integrated with 11 email inboxes and 14 enterprise systems, with a fair amount of configuration and testing to ensure the AI would correctly identify the type of service, customer account, nature of complaint or escalation, etc.

Clear and measurable customer service outcomes

Bell fundamentally improved their B2B customer engagement model with the “Promise Engine”. As a result, they saw a 3% improvement in customer churn due to better communication and faster case resolution. The better visibility and more proactive updates led to 43,000 fewer customer follow-up calls per year. The TSM Triage Agent has automated over 450,000 cases per year, delivering a 98% accuracy rate on predicted fields, and 43% improvement in response times. Overall, these customer service initiatives have set them up to realize tens of millions of dollars in cost savings in the coming years.

450K+	cases automated annually
98%	prediction accuracy on case fields
43%	faster response times for critical issues

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Chapter 3: Differentiate in Customer Experience

These outcomes represent more than just operational efficiency. They represent a significant competitive advantage. In a market where customer experience has become the primary battleground, a proactive, predictive, and efficient customer service model is a differentiator. The investments in a platform-centric approach are not just about better customer experience; it's about building a B2B customer base that helps provide sustainable, long-term growth.

> *Each customer interaction is an opportunity to make life easier for the people we serve. We place AI where friction lives, and our agents and customers prove its value.*
>
> ***Hadeer Hassan, Chief Information and Customer Experience Officer, Bell Canada***

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Conclusion: From Telco to Techco

The telecommunications industry was founded on a simple request for service, yet delivering on that promise can be a challenge. The "patchwork enterprise," with its fragile web of disconnected systems, is no longer sustainable. It drains IT budgets, slows innovation, and fails to meet the expectations of modern B2B customers who demand cloud-like agility.

As demonstrated through the journey by Bell, the path forward requires a decisive shift to a platform-centric model. By consolidating operations onto a unified platform like ServiceNow, carriers can dismantle information silos, automate core operational processes, and build a superior customer experience.

This whitepaper serves as a guide, and the following roadmap provides a practical, hype-free approach for your organization.

Your 24-month transformation roadmap

This is a phased strategy designed for regional and mid-sized B2B carriers to modernize their foundation and begin the journey toward an autonomous future. One note on posture before the roadmap. This represents a deliberately measured path: designed to assist people rather than replace them, prove value in weeks, and scale only once the evidence is in. There is a bolder path too, redesigning whole workflows around AI and betting on transformation, and doing well it can return far more. What follows is the lower-risk route that is well suited for the regulatory environment that telcos operate within - slower to compound but hard to argue with once the numbers land.

Phase	Timeline	Key actions
Audit & align	Months 1-6	1. Document key systems and workflows within the B2B service lifecycle - ordering, provisioning, assurance, field operations, customer service, etc. to identify opportunities for improvement. 2. Identify the highest-impact use case(s) to address first. This could be B2B ordering, service provisioning, and assurance. Working with a partner such as Ateko, scope out the first planning and deployment phase(s).

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Conclusion: From Telco to Techco

Phase	Timeline	Key actions
Audit & align (cont'd)	Months 1-6	3. Build the business case by quantifying the cost of legacy systems and processes (ie. operational costs, customer churn, etc.) and model the potential return on investment from a platform-centric approach with ServiceNow. 4. Secure exec sponsorship by aligning leadership on a clear vision for the transformation and establishing a cross-functional project team that will work with your partner.
Implement & augment	Months 7-18	1. Implement and configure the foundational ServiceNow platform, alongside modules like Telecom Service Management and Order Management for Telecom. 2. Deliver an early win: launch B2B Integration using ServiceNow's Service Bridge capabilities to automate incident ticket exchange with a key enterprise customer. The best candidates are ones that use ServiceNow as their ITSM and raise a sizable number of tickets. 3. Integrate AI into your workflows: we've written quite a bit about this subject, such as this article.

Phase	Timeline	Key actions
Implement & augment (cont'd)	Months 7-18	3. You'll want to make sure a subset of your data is ready, that you sequence AI capabilities to realize compound value, start with use-cases that keep a human-in-the-loop, and get your AI pilot in a production as soon as possible to get real end user feedback and iterate often.
Operate, govern, & optimize	Months 19-24+	1. Create a center of excellence and innovation to manage the platform, govern data and cross-functional team use, and drive best practices across the organization. This was particularly important for telcos, for example, both residential and enterprise services may be using ServiceNow field service management capabilities. 2. Scale what works: expand the deployment of a successful AI pilot, such as Now Assist for customer service agents. 3. Track key performance indicators for churn, cost-to-serve, fulfillment times, etc. and continuously gather user feedback to iterate and optimize workflows. 4. With a solid foundation in place, execute on new product introduction to include, for example, your network on demand, unified communications as a service, etc.

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Conclusion: From Telco to Techco

The Partner for the path forward

Executing this roadmap requires more than a system integrator; it requires a trusted partner with domain and industry expertise, who has navigated this journey before. The partner's operational expertise is what ensures the platform delivers on its promised value.

Ateko is uniquely positioned to unlock value for telecoms. We have proven experience successfully delivering AI-driven transformation for Canada's largest telecom. We are a member of ServiceNow's TMT product advisory board – meaning we have a seat at the table providing input into the direction and development of the telco product roadmap. We provide our telco customers with access to Bell's operational leaders who serve as subject matter experts on B2B telco service orchestration, optimizing networks, field operations, customer service, etc. To top it all off, we are ServiceNow's first globally certified telecom service management partner.

We don't talk about transformation in theory like the other guys. We understand your operational reality and know what works in practice. We will help de-risk your transformation and ensure you realize value faster than any other system integrator.

The invitation

The pressures of the "patchwork enterprise" will only intensify. The carriers that thrive in the next decade will be those that build a resilient, unified operational foundation today.

Are you ready to become more agile, more efficient, and grow your B2B revenue?

Before your next budget cycle, let's have a conversation.

Ready to start your assessment?

info@ateko.com

Book an assessment

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