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Implementing Service Level Management

7.1 Introduction

Service level management (SLM) is the managing of various phases in the entire lifecycle of a telecom service. SLM is also sometimes referred to as total service level management.

The lifecycle phases can be reduced to the following five:

1. Service design and development.
   (a) Model a new service.
   (b) Deploy the OSS infrastructure. Preferably, the service provider's existing OSS infrastructure would be sufficiently flexible that "deployment" of OSS infrastructure for a new service would merely involve reprogramming, installing plug-in OSS modules or extending OSS modules using APIs.
   (c) Service import/export.
   (d) Define service level objectives.
2. Negotiation with prospective customers and sales, including definition of SLA for customer(s).
3. Execution, including service level monitoring.
4. Re-assessment.
5. Repeat the previous four steps.

Implementing SLM involves more than integrating a technology solution with existing OSS systems. It also involves creating business processes. We will identify aspects of SLM that need to be considered. In addition, we will provide some pointers on how to ensure a successful implementation with reference to several industry initiatives.

7.2 The SLA universe

There are three areas associated with the application of SLAs to an operator's business. Internal SLAs formalise day-to-day matters such as how long people at the NOC expect a field technician to take to reconfigure a switch. As shown in Figure 7.2, internal SLAs are most often focused on managing components of the service delivery
chain. The components are aggregated to form the measurable corresponding to the end-to-end service. By their nature, these SLAs are often not truly customer-focused as they are not written in terms that can be understood by the end-customer. The key users of these SLAs are the functions responsible for managing the service