Chapter 4

Developing an OSS Strategy

An integrated OSS platform is nearly impossible to construct without a clearly developed strategy. There are many factors to consider extending far beyond the OSSs themselves. Every aspect of an IIC’s business — from its target customers, to its sales model, its network technology, its funding strategy, and its legacy systems base — will have some impact on the OSS-related choices it makes. Thus, a coherent OSS strategy is inextricably tied to an IIC’s overall business strategy. OSS strategies have been the difference between success and failure for many emerging IICs.

One of the main factors to keep in mind is that an OSS platform should be built with long-term business strategy in mind. Five-year growth plans, future products and services, new customer segments, envisioned acquisitions or partnerships, and alternative channels all need to be considered in OSS selection, integration and deployment. The time and capital investment put into the OSS platform requires that the operational infrastructure stand the test of time. Minimal changes should come in the form of enhancements rather than replacement of applications.

The type of business model the IIC chooses to follow will influence how quickly the OSS can be deployed and how much investment will be required. For example, IICs employing traditional network technologies will have a clearer view of their OSS options and more choice because more packages and vendors are available to them. Those pioneering technologies or new business models, such as voice over IP may not readily find the systems they need or be able to anticipate their future OSS needs adequately.
1. VALUE PROPOSITION AND BUSINESS STRATEGY

The first set of factors that drive an IIC’s OSS strategy includes its value proposition and business strategy. Figure 13 depicts how business drivers lead to an operational infrastructure design. This design in turn influences the enterprise architecture’s overall design and configuration.

The IIC must define a certain market segment or business model. Choosing between wholesale or retail, business or residential and pure play or