



# U.S. Cellular Safeguards Revenue Generation and Customer Services with Proactive Infrastructure and Application Monitoring



## CLIENT PROFILE

**Industry:** Telecommunications

**Organization:** U.S. Cellular

**Employees:** 10,000

## BUSINESS

The fifth largest wireless carrier in the United States, U.S. Cellular serves more than five million customers. It differentiates itself through its comprehensive offerings, excellent customer service and high-quality network.

## CHALLENGE

A critical billing, provisioning and inventory management system was experiencing daily outages after moving to a new platform. With new sales opportunities looming, U.S. Cellular needed to resolve the issues quickly.

## SOLUTION

CA Unified Infrastructure Management and CA Application Performance Management provide the operational insights needed to prevent and resolve problems before they impact customers or business users.

## BENEFIT

U.S. Cellular can deliver the excellent levels of service expected by today's telecommunications customers. This not only helps to safeguard its reputation but also revenue generation.

## Business

A wireless carrier with a difference

U.S. Cellular is the fifth largest wireless carrier in the United States. Its 10,000 associates serve more than five million personal customers across the mid-west through a network of retail stores and online services.

Customers can also purchase plans and products at Wal-Mart and other supermarkets, as well as on Amazon.com.

The Chicago-based carrier differentiates itself by its excellent customer service. Its comprehensive range of wireless products and services, responsive customer support, and high-quality network has helped it maintain one of the industry's highest customer satisfaction and loyalty ratings.

## Challenge

Meeting increased customer demand

A decade ago, not everyone had a cell phone but those who did accepted that voice calls would occasionally drop. What customers expect – and what telecommunication companies must deliver – is very different today.

Kevin Martin, Senior Manager of Enterprise Infrastructure at U.S. Cellular, explains, “People don’t just expect reliable voice calls, they also expect constant access to apps, social media, music and videos from their smartphones.”

Meeting such demands has significantly expanded and increased the complexity of the carrier’s IT environments. “We have more things to monitor,” explains Martin. “When a system or a service is unavailable, we need to understand what the wider impact might be.”

### Preventing system downtime

During the summer of 2013, U.S. Cellular moved its critical billing, provisioning and inventory management system to a new Java-driven platform. The carrier depends on this system for serving its customers and selling new phones, but the move did not go smoothly.

“We were really struggling with daily outages,” reveals Martin. “We needed to reduce their frequency and the mean time to repair.”

With Black Friday and a new iPhone launch on the horizon, U.S. Cellular needed to ensure it could handle a peak in sales.

“We knew we had to do something quick to ensure IT could support these new business opportunities,” adds Martin.

With no insight into the cause of the issues, U.S. Cellular needed quick access to system performance data that would help it prevent future outages.

“We needed to reduce the frequency of outages and the mean time to repair.”

### Kevin Martin

Senior Manager of Enterprise Infrastructure, U.S. Cellular

## Solution

Rapid implementation delivers rapid insights

“The community that participates in the CA Technologies forums adds a lot of value to our solutions.”

**Kevin Martin**

Senior Manager of Enterprise Infrastructure, U.S. Cellular

U.S. Cellular chose CA Technologies market-leading solution CA Application Performance Management. CA Technologies made a commitment to U.S. Cellular to implement CA Application Performance Management very quickly, demonstrating its value as a partner.

“CA Application Performance Management was in place by October,” reveals Martin. “Having CA Technologies deliver on its promise meant we could identify the source of the performance issues quickly and greatly reduce the mean time to repair.”

The success of the implementation led the carrier to implement CA Unified Infrastructure Management later that same year. As Martin explains, “We ran proof of concepts on a couple of tools, but selected CA Unified Infrastructure Management because of its simplified implementation and configuration. With CA Unified Infrastructure Management, we knew we could get the things we wanted fast.”

As well as assisting the carrier with both implementations, CA Services documented the solutions’ architecture and ran knowledge sharing sessions. “Even after the engagement formally finished, the CA Services team has remained available to answer questions and offer advice,” adds Martin.

**Better system performance**

CA Unified Infrastructure Management and CA Application Performance Management have become critical to the IT operation at U.S. Cellular.

The solutions don’t just monitor the Java-based billing, provisioning and inventory management system but also the customer-facing web portal that allows customer to view their usage, pay bills and order new products.

The solutions’ dashboards provide the carrier’s engineers with important operational information in a format that is easy to understand, so they can reduce the number of performance issues. The dashboards are so easy to implement that more and more people around the business are creating their own.

The carrier also relies on the CA Technologies user community. When the IT team has a query about one of the solutions, it consults various forums before raising a ticket with the CA Technologies support team.

“The community that participates in the forums adds a lot of value to our solutions,” comments Martin. “But what is really unique is the support that CA Technologies provides the community.”

## Benefit

Safeguarding the customer experience

“Ensuring the availability of our systems not only safeguards our reputation but also our revenues.”

**Kevin Martin**

Senior Manager of Enterprise Infrastructure, U.S. Cellular

The CA Technologies solutions help U.S. Cellular identify and resolve issues before they impact its customers or business users. As Martin confirms, “We’re on track to reach our goal of reducing outages across our systems by 20 percent with CA Unified Infrastructure Management and Application Performance Management.”

With the IT infrastructure and business requirements constantly evolving, new systems and applications often need to be monitored at very short notice.

With the CA Technologies solutions, agents and probes can be quickly deployed and new dashboards created. This has helped to reduce the monitoring set-up time for a new system by around 75 percent.

CA Unified Infrastructure Management and CA Application Performance Management have also helped IT build trust across the wider organization. As Martin reveals, “The engineers and analysts trust the data, so it’s now their first stop for information.”

The CA Technologies solutions have enabled U.S. Cellular to:

- Improve availability of its critical business systems
- Enhance customer service levels
- Increase competitive advantage.

“The CA Technologies solutions ensure we deliver the high levels of service that our customers expect. Ensuring the availability of our systems not only safeguards our reputation but also our revenues,” concludes Martin.



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