

Quickstart guide to generating wholesale fiber ROI

Introduction



The complexity of the telco IT landscape leaves operators with a tightrope to walk. They must balance the need to manage and maintain their existing offering while adapting and adopting new services to stay competitive. New-generation fiber services have the potential to unlock significant revenue, but can operators launch and monetize quickly?

With the right approach – yes.

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Fiber: pain vs. payoff

The fiber market is thriving, with global fiber to the x (FTTx) market revenues anticipated to reach **US \$17.3 Billion by 2033**. The introduction of XGS-PON standards is a particularly exciting advancement within the industry. By enabling downstream and upstream speeds of up to 10 gigabits per second (Gbps), it unlocks a variety of potential applications and is anticipated to be a significant revenue driver. Despite the clear business argument for a fiber offering, the challenges of integrating new services into an existing ecosystem certainly give operators pause – is it worthwhile? For many operators, introducing fiber or making the transition over from legacy services can be time-intensive and investment-heavy.

In addition, managing fiber services is inherently complex, with a different stack required to accommodate the different processes. However, if those processes can be streamlined and the timeline between investment and revenue generation condensed, then it becomes a much more straightforward business decision. This is where getting the BSS aspect right becomes essential. It must be able to take care of the multiple elements needed for a revenue-generating fiber business, from fulfillment and assurance to billing and operations. In addition, a wholesale model requires additional capabilities for delivery – a BSS solution must be able to accommodate this.








Finally, agility is essential; a BSS solution must be able to adapt to the business and meet evolving requirements. If these criteria are met, service providers can reap the rewards of a highly successful wholesale fiber arm.

There are four elements of an effective fiber business strategy.

In this whitepaper, we will look at what is needed to smooth the path to launching or expanding fiber services, making the most of all wholesale opportunities, and generating fast fiber ROI.

The four pillars of an effective fiber strategy

Making the most of the fiber opportunity promises to drive significant revenues. However, the right approach is essential to unlocking those revenues on an accelerated timeline and therefore must include the following four pillars of a successful strategy:

-  — 1. End-to-end support for fiber processes 
-  — 2. Capabilities to simplify wholesale fiber complexity 
-  — 3. Easy integration and adaptability 
-  — 4. Scalability for business evolution 

By ensuring that the BSS solution used across fiber services integrates these four pillars, operators are ideally placed to launch a quick-to-market, successful fiber business.



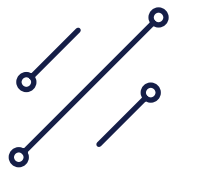
1. End-to-end support for fiber processes

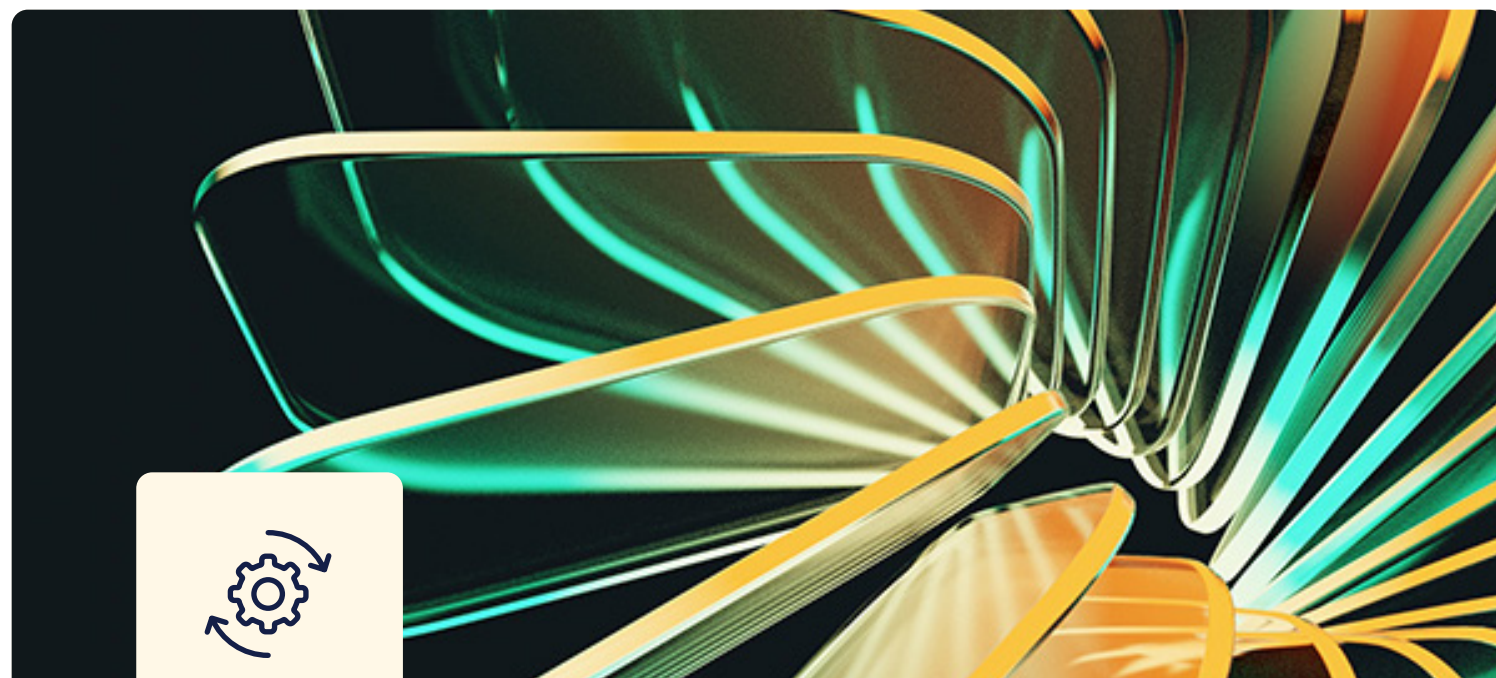
Fiber has its own unique challenges and processes. It needs to be handled in a particular way to allow operators to make the most of their fiber infrastructure. This makes a BSS system capable of delivering full, fiber-specific end-to-end support a critical pillar in an effective fiber strategy.

It must support different services and system capabilities based on pre-configured workflows, using a data model best suited for fiber, so that operators do not need to start from scratch. Additionally, stitching together all business requirements and integrating them with the rest of the IT and partner ecosystem is complex and needs a dedicated, overarching stack capable of achieving this.

To meet these requirements, operators need a BSS provider with the fiberspecific knowledge and experience to:

- Offer semi-automated product fulfillment
- Support mixed fiber operator and seeker ownership
- Open doors to both small resellers and large operators

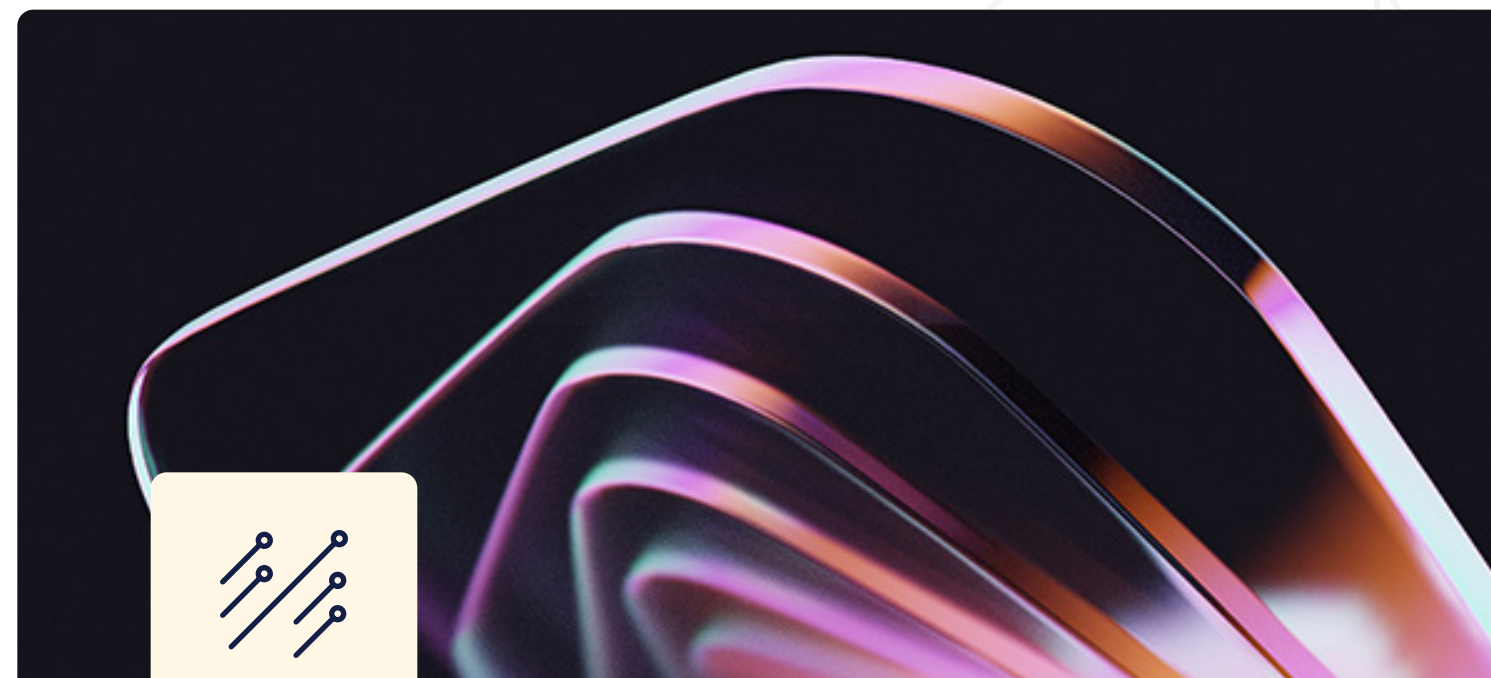




Offering semi-automated product fulfillment

Fiber demands unique fulfillment requirements to combine multiple automated tasks. This may include feasibility checks based on address inventory, CPE allocation driven by logistics and ERP, and conditional installation appointment reservations depending on the connectivity and installed equipment on customer premises. To manage this complexity, operators require a BSS provider that can support a **blend of manual and automated steps** for efficient and effective delivery.

Operators also need to effectively handle more complex fiber-related use cases (transfers between operators, missed appointment penalties, or pre-orders for future serviceable addresses). To ensure fast time to market, the different product families of the catalog, such as FTTx or XGS-PON, should be pre-configured to work with the workflows and processes suited to fiber.



Supporting mixed fiber operator and seeker ownership

When we talk about the ability to manage the end-to-end ecosystem there are additional complexities associated with fiber wholesale. For example, the operator may own part of the equipment and oversee its fulfillment, while the seeker partner is responsible for provisioning additional services like the WiFi router CPE or TV set-top box.

If the wholesale provider can orchestrate processes and have end-to-end ownership, including installing equipment on behalf of the partner, it offers significant advantages to both parties. The right BSS should support such complexities with **hybrid ownership** models in the ecosystem to unlock these benefits.



Opening doors to both small resellers and large operators

When offering fiber services to different partners, **large operators** are looking for full automation across the service lifecycle, including activation, modification, trouble ticket management, and termination. This needs to be able to integrate into their systems using standard APIs. These operators typically operate on L1, offer additional services, have their own network, and agreements with them are usually more personalized.

Smaller operators or fiber resellers, on the other hand, are looking for a ready-to-go portal where they can have a digital experience for ordering, problem management, and billing in one place. These companies often do not have their own network or equipment.

2. Capabilities to simplify wholesale fiber complexity

For telecom providers to launch their fiber services quickly, they need a solution that can easily integrate into their IT landscape in a cost-effective way. However, to launch successfully as a wholesale business, the capabilities needed differ in slight, but significant ways.

As well as bringing together services in their own ecosystem, operators need a full suite of BSS lead-to-cash capabilities to provide fiber to other partners in a B2B2X model. By adopting a BSS solution that includes these six elements tailored toward wholesale requirements, operators can make sure they do not shut the door on all possible opportunities to be explored:

- Simple Customer and Partner Management
- Streamlined Agreement Management
- Revenue Management, Billing, and Financials
- Universal Product Catalog
- Unified Order Management
- Case Management





Simple Customer and Partner Management

Partners and customers in the digital ecosystem play a critical role in the success of service providers. In a world of B2C/B2B/B2B2X spanning retail and wholesale, managing consumer and enterprise customers and their partners, relationships, and hierarchies is key.

A customer and partner management module should act as a master source for customer and partner accounts, enabling fast acquisition, tracking, and management of all their data and services in the real-time domain. It should automate the full onboarding life-cycle process and facilitate a complete sales experience in a fully digital manner.



Streamlined Agreement Management

When opening a wholesale business, operators need different agreements with different partners that allow them to sell various services across price points. These agreements frequently change and have complex terms and conditions that can be challenging to integrate into the full BSS process.

An agreement management module supports custom business contracts for an operator so that wholesale fiber partners can receive a personalized service. The agreement is driven by the product catalog and is integrated with ordering and billing, meaning it can have high levels of complexity with customized terms that are fully configurable. It should also support full version control, tracking, and approval to align with the operator's processes.



Revenue Management, Billing, and Financials

When it comes to revenue, operators must issue invoices to wholesale partners for all the assets they have, based on the agreements and subscription dates. Accordingly, operators need to publish the invoice information to partners, report on financial systems, and handle the account receivables.

A revenue management module will handle all wholesale billing needs and provide flexibility to change the billing setup and invoice settings. It will also manage integration with account receivables and ERP financials for smooth reporting.



Universal Product Catalog

The product catalog is an important application for managing complex product offerings and quickly responding to new market challenges. Specifically for the wholesale fiber business, the product catalog needs to store the products and prices available for each partner based on their agreement so that it can bill the products accordingly.

Additionally, the product catalog drives the order capture on the self-service portal and order fulfillment, as well as managing the product-to-service decomposition.

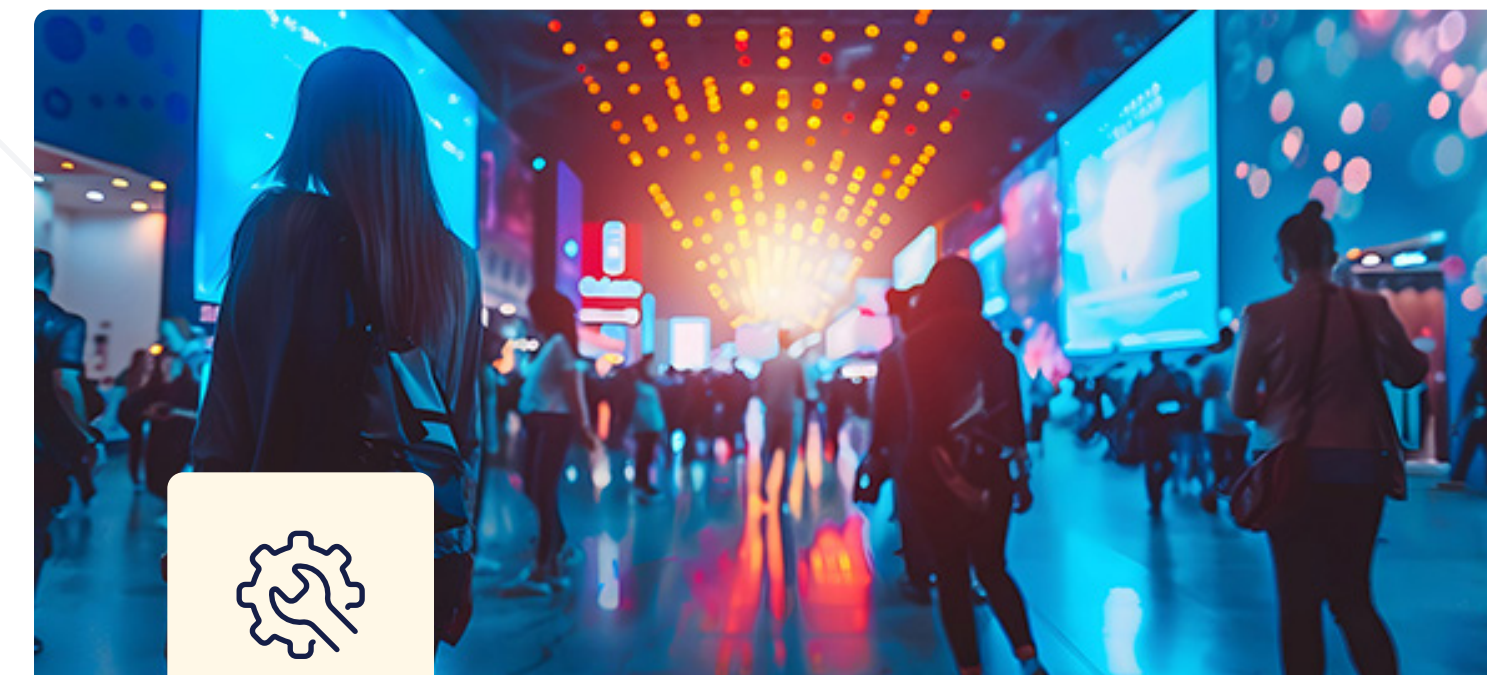
It needs to support the full product lifecycle from inception to configuration, release and reporting - enabling fast new internet speeds, whilst staying flexible to different partners' needs.



Unified Order Management

When testing and developing a new BSS stack, order capture, orchestration, and fulfillment are some of the most complex processes. The order capture process needs to be smooth and aligned with the catalog, while the order orchestration is usually very specific to each operator, even if it is for the same fiber products. It requires a huge amount of flexibility to support integrations with both external systems and internal BSS applications such as the catalog, product inventory, and billing.

A unified order management module provides ultimate flexibility by supporting catalog and workflow-driven processes. This enables operators to define the decomposition and fulfillment steps for different products based on their needs. In addition, order capture and integration with wholesale partners can be simplified by offering channel support APIs for order submission, order validation, catalog, and product inventory.



Case Management

Problem management and trouble ticketing are important to ensure the service runs smoothly. Providers often want to drive their own case acceptance and resolution processes, which might involve workforce management, or raising master incidents.

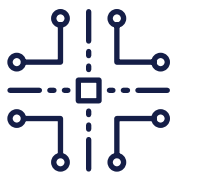
A workflow-driven case management solution is needed with the flexibility to adapt to the operator's needs. It must integrate seamlessly with other applications such as Order Management and Product Inventory to facilitate the end-to-end ticketing process, as well as with external applications such as Incident Management and Workforce Management. Solutions with pre-integration with external SaaS platforms such as Salesforce, Service Now, and Pega will further reduce the time to market.

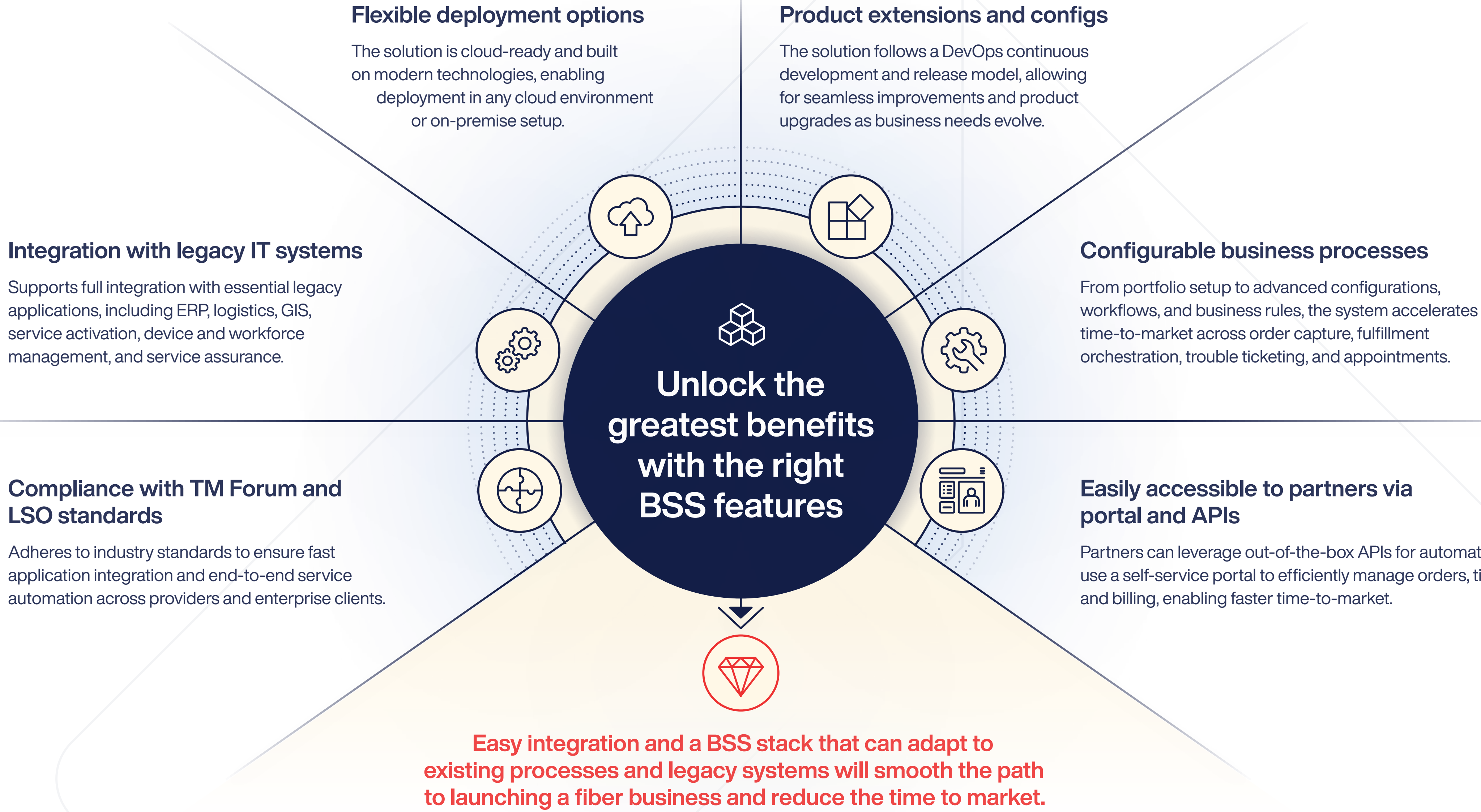
3. Easy integration and adaptability

Operators need a BSS that is open to partners and channels, allowing them to utilize its capabilities and integrate with the rest of its IT and network ecosystem. They require ease of integration with external applications and adaptability to the operator's needs and processes. They also need exposure to all capabilities through APIs via a partner API Gateway. This makes things as straightforward as possible for the operator and its customers, allowing the option of a self-service partner portal that can be customized to the operator's landscape.

To unlock the greatest benefits, the BSS stack should encompass the following features:

- Seamless integration with any legacy IT application
- TM Forum and LSO compliance
- Easily accessible to partners via portal and APIs
- Configurable business processes
- Product extensions and configurations
- Deployment on any cloud or on-premise





4. Scalability for business evolution

When starting a new fiber business, operators often lack key capabilities in their IT landscape and require flexibility in their systems to work around this. They need a BSS provider that can help them launch an MVP quickly to generate revenue while being able to build out and scale as required.

In order to do this, operators should look for BSS providers that enable them to:

- Launch fast and automate as the business evolves
- Implement a pay-as-you-grow business model





Launch fast and automate as the business evolves

Specialist BSS providers understand revenue generation has to be the priority and will have experience when it comes to delivering a quick launch with the potential to scale.

For instance, if the operator lacks a proper service activation layer, the BSS provider could complement the missing capabilities as a light Service

Order Management (SOM). Alternatively, if the operator lacks a workforce management system, they could introduce manual processes via workflows or temporarily bypass certain steps.

As the fiber business grows, operators will need to automate more capabilities, completely integrate with legacy or new systems, and fully build out the BSS capabilities. However, selecting a BSS partner with the experience and agility to deliver a solution that can evolve to meet these requirements is a crucial part of condensing the timeline to revenue while building an efficient business.



Implement a pay-as-you-grow business model

Operators face several investment challenges when launching fiber. The scale of the investment in the network itself is significant, and to layer considerable IT costs on top can create a barrier to entry for some operators. They need a cost-efficient solution, especially in the early phases when the new fiber business is not yet revenue-generating.

A flexible BSS provider can adapt the software pricing so that operators pay as they grow. This way, operators do not need to make a big investment upfront; they can defer it to a time when their fiber business is successful.

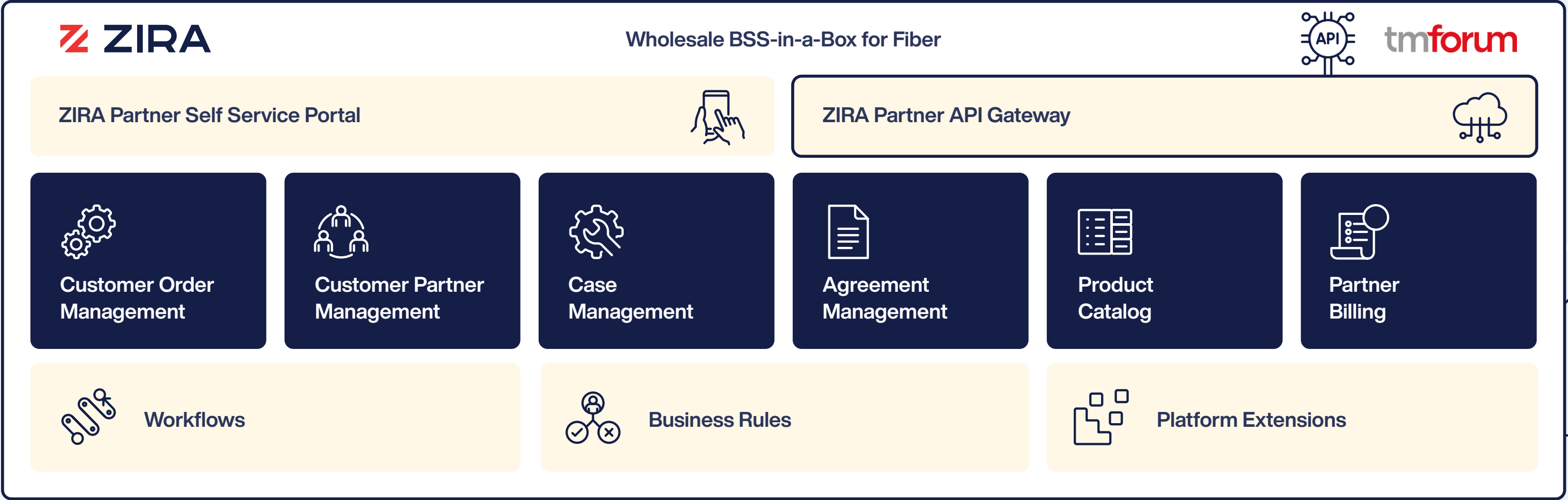
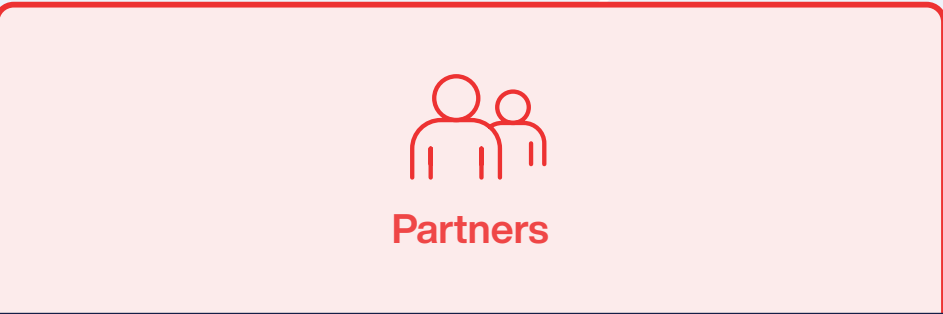
Now we have been through the checklist of requirements for businesses looking to capitalize on the wholesale fiber opportunity, what does a BSS solution that ticks all those boxes look like in practice?

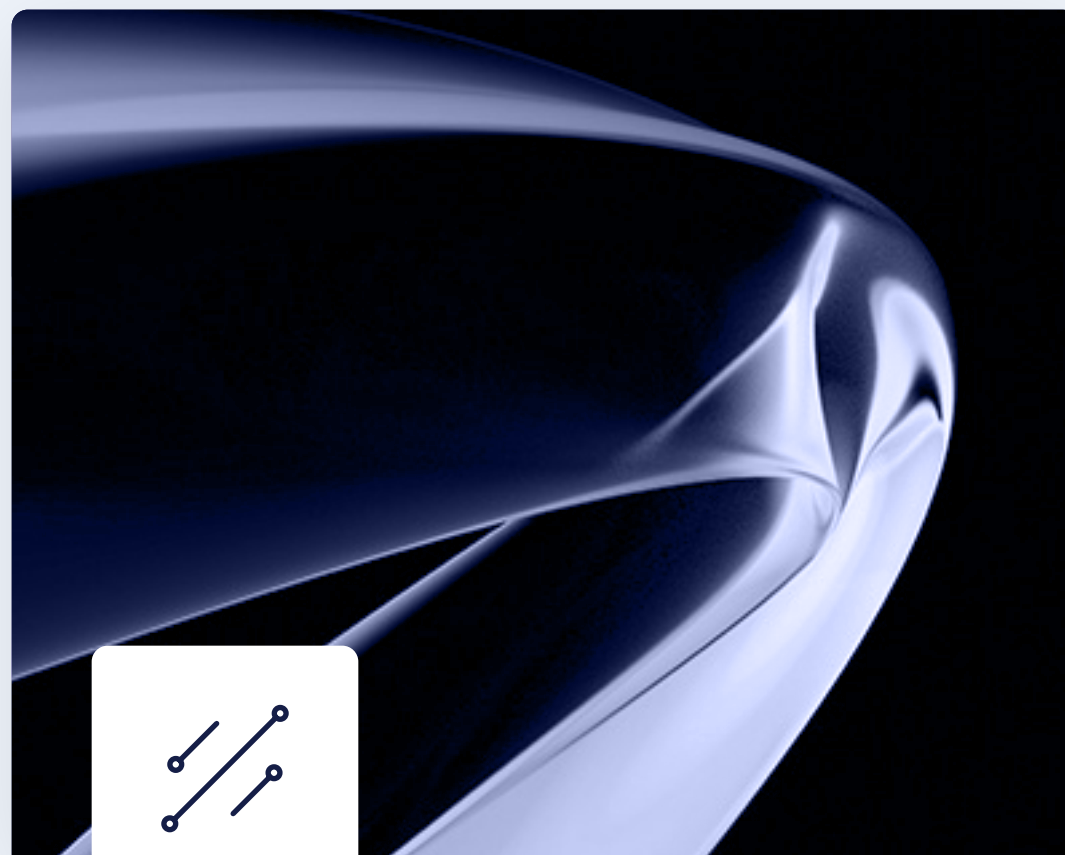
Building a fiber business in practice

This is where ZIRA comes in. We offer a unique approach for telcos looking to launch fiber with wholesale capabilities with a **Wholesale BSS-in-a-Box for Fiber suite**.

Operators can benefit from a pre-integrated full BSS suite that allows them to transform their IT in a phased approach, incorporating the four pillars that are essential to wholesale fiber success.







End-to-end support for fiber processes

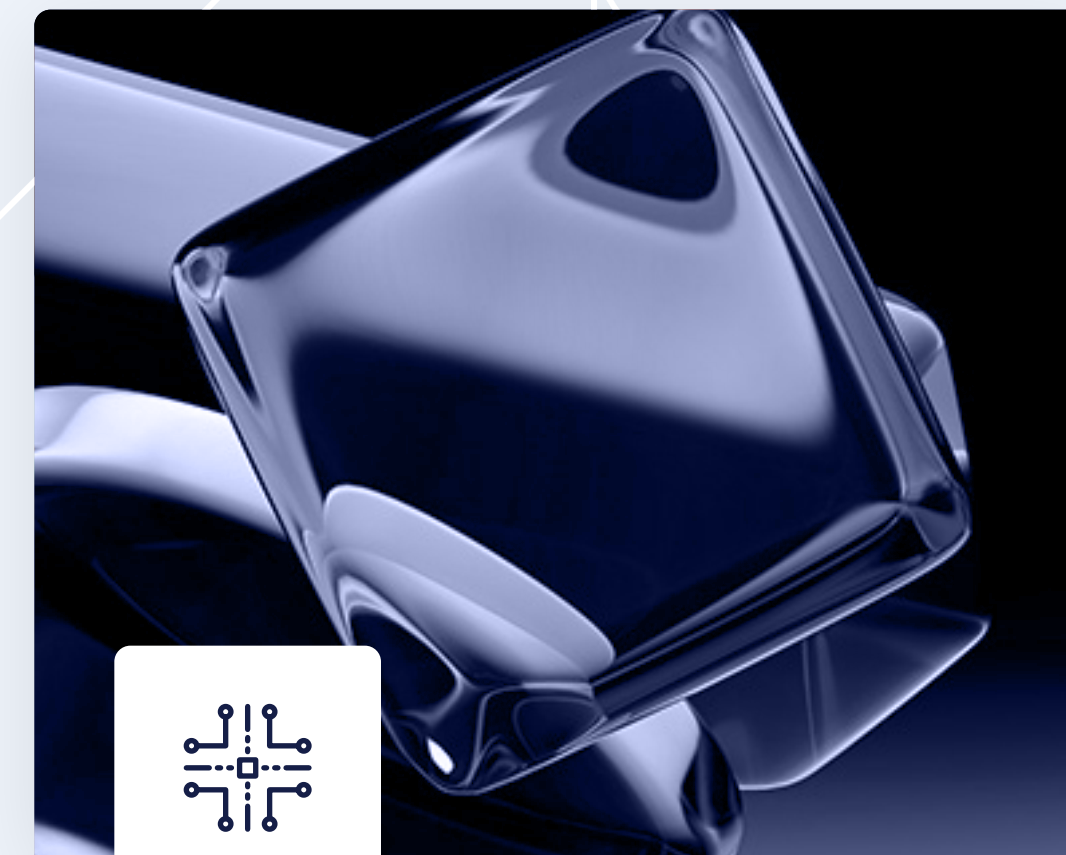
The Wholesale BSS In-a-Box solution enables operators to integrate across the fiber ecosystem, streamlining operations for maximum revenue. It includes pre-configured processes, workflows, catalog models, and best practices tailored for wholesale and B2B fiber.

With full fiber process support, operators can meet partner demand across business models—from large operators to small resellers. The pre-integrated BSS stack eliminates piecemeal integration by unifying applications into one streamlined solution.



Capabilities to simplify wholesale fiber complexity

Providers need open BSS for partners and channels to use the capabilities, whilst integrating with the rest of the operator's ecosystem. ZIRA simplifies the operational complexities of wholesale fiber with the full capabilities checklist (product catalog, customer and partner management, order capture, order and service fulfillment, agreement management, trouble ticketing, and billing). These components meet specific wholesale fiber requirements for a full BSS solution that answers the needs of operators and their customers.



Easy integration and adaptability for existing processes

ZIRA can integrate easily with external applications, offer a customized self-service partner portal, and expose all capabilities using TM Forum standard APIs via a partner API Gateway.

It also includes a unique extensions framework to adapt to the operator's process and be extendible to integrate with the rest of the operator's landscape.



Scalability for business evolution

Finally, ZIRA fully understands the business challenges of launching a wholesale fiber business. To solve this challenge and meet customer demands, the solution is scalable and configurable.

It allows for tailoring of the Wholesale BSS-in-a-Box for Fiber, so that operators can easily include the scalability and pay-as-you-grow elements needed to get their business off the ground.

Conclusion

With the market expanding rapidly, there is no doubt that owning a wholesale fiber offering is an attractive proposition for operators.

However, it is also understandable that the complexity of building a BSS solution to ensure it is a commercial success is a barrier to entry for some operators. A Wholesale BSS-in-a-Box for Fiber solution can translate fiber infrastructure into revenue, taking many of the challenges out of the hands of operators, alleviating delivery and management challenges, drastically reducing time to market, and leaving them free to pursue the opportunities that fiber presents.



Get in touch

ZIRA offers award-winning solutions for Revenue and Order Management, Product Catalog, and Customer Partner Management, with B2C, B2B, and B2B2X options that simplify the lead-to-cash process, minimize risks and costs, and safeguard legacy investments.

With 30+ years of experience and a reputation for quick implementation and efficient operations, ZIRA has helped 50+ telecom operators and digital service providers across 30+ countries introduce new digital services and provide exceptional customer experiences.



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