Communications Inventory Checklist

zLinq

Owning your success begins with shifting from tactical reactivity to a strategically proactive approach to communications management. Creating a clear line of sight into your communications ecosystem is the only way your business can effectively align around the highest-value work and execute in ways that minimize effort, costs, and inefficiencies.

While most IT teams have tools in place for this like asset management systems, vendor portals, or spreadsheets, the challenge is that critical data points you need to track about your services are rarely in one place.

Data Point	Example	Invoice	Service Record (CSR)	Contract	Spreadsheet
Locations	Address	✅			
Services	100Mg Port, 5 UC Seats	✅			
Costs	Amount, quantity, taxes	✅			
Normalized Naming	100Mg MPLS vs Premium IQ				✅
Relationships	Port and Loop = 1 Asset				✅
Engineering Data	IP Addresses, Trouble Reporting #				✅
Contract Data	Expiration dates for each Asset			✅	
Analog/Pots	Location, #, phone number		✅		

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Here is a two-step process for acquiring the visibility necessary to effectively manage your infrastructure.

Step 1: Begin by assessing the challenges you're facing with disparate data sources and naming inconsistencies. Include plans for ongoing inventory management, project tracking, and ability to demonstrate your progress with your stakeholders.

Combine data from disparate data sources

Your critical information is often stored in different places. Develop a single repository to have an at-glance view of all of your data points.

Normalize naming and data points to right-size inventory

Carriers often use different naming conventions based on geography, service type, etc. Normalizing naming will simplify your inventory management processes.

Develop a process to keep inventory updated

Your inventory changes frequently, so it is important to keep it up to date. Assigning a single owner and update cadences will ensure that your inventory stays current.

Have a dashboard that shows you what you have today by: asset vendor/category/etc.

Customize what you track to your business's needs. Consider the needs of your department and your stakeholder's priorities.

Have visibility into projects and changes that are in-flight

Project details, timelines, and spend are all dynamic, and often there are multiple projects happening at once. Getting real-time visibility on project status help with effective resource allocation and management.

Ability to capture brag points that make IT look like rockstars

Demonstrate the positive improvements you have been driving to management and other stakeholders.

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Step 2: Develop systems, reports, and collect the data that allows you to accomplish your objectives. The list below contains common best practices.
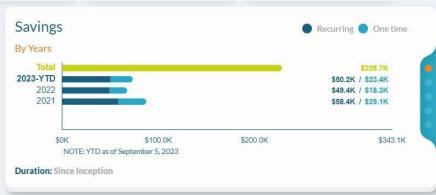
● **Asset distribution across physical locations**

● **Asset distribution by category and type**

● **Asset distribution by provider**

● **Real-time information including:** Disconnects, Orders, Services, Invoices, Product Status

● **Real-time data spend information:** By asset type, location, and provider

● **Summary Information:** The total number of assets in states, provinces, and locations served by different providers in multiple asset categories, as well as savings by category and over time

● **Asset details:** Spend by provider, spend by asset category, ganular level data for each asset (contract details & expiration/renewal date)

How zLinq Does It