

## LetsTalk keeps tabs on corporate wireless costs

BY MIKE DANO

Imagine your phone bill arriving in a box, overflowing with reams and reams of records.

Some large corporations deal with this very situation, forcing administrators from each department to haul away stacks of paper inches thick. Company accountants generally have neither the time nor the patience to effectively tally all those numbers for all those employees—but if they could there's money to be saved, said LetsTalk President and Chief Executive Officer Delly Tamer.

Which is where LetsTalk Inc., an online wireless retailer and distributor, comes in.

The company launched its Enterprise Wireless Management Suite, which LetsTalk will sell to businesses as a way to rein in and control employees' wireless usage. LetsTalk is following the same path as other online retailers, including Reason Inc., by expanding its Web-based businesses.

Tamer said the management suite has been years in the making. LetsTalk operates a Web site for consumers, allowing them to compare various wireless service plans and devices. Tamer said businesses have the same types of needs as individual consumers, only on a larger and more complex scale.

"Corporations started approaching us with their wireless needs," he said. "We found out that they were very frustrated. It was tough for them to manage this expense."

This led LetsTalk to see what could be done. The company looked at its Web site software and decided it could use the same basic features to help businesses keep tabs on wireless users and usage.

"We have all the core competencies in our company to address this need," Tamer said. "We developed a product in parallel with their needs."

LetsTalk set up a trial run for its corporate management suite with several large-scale companies in order to find out what exactly they needed. The results, Tamer said, were striking. LetsTalk was able to compile employees' phone usage in a clear, searchable way, which then allowed business managers to smooth out the rough spots. Employees who were not using their

Approve Change?	Est. Savings	Name/Cell Phone # Carrier	Department/Cost Center	Minute Usage	Airtime Charge	Plan Name	Est. Airtime Charge
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$883.21	John Lucas (201) 494-0924 Nextel	Default New York, NY	Total: 10027 Long Dist: 7852 Roaming: 0	\$2,189.94	Nextel National Plan 4000 Mo. Rate: \$399.99	\$1306.73
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$348.88	Paul Wachowsky (303) 637-9334 AT&T Service	Default Denver, CO	Total: 1642 Long Dist: 454 Roaming: 257	\$607.61	AT&T Digital One Rate 1100 Mo. Rate: \$119.99	\$258.73
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$253.80	Martin Patel (303) 334-5296 AT&T Service	Engineering Denver, CO	Total: 692 Long Dist: 139 Roaming: 194	\$373.78	AT&T Digital One Rate 450 Mo. Rate: \$59.99	\$119.98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$193.46	Ana-mae Soderbergh (201) 471-6356 Nextel	Default New York, NY	Total: 2590 Long Dist: 1139 Roaming: 0	\$502.44	Nextel National Plan 1200 Mo. Rate: \$129.99	\$308.98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$190.14	Mark Wilbur (303) 330-1889 AT&T Service	Default Denver, CO	Total: 452 Long Dist: 71 Roaming: 165	\$310.12	AT&T Digital One Rate 450 Mo. Rate: \$59.99	\$119.98

### LetsTalk's Optimizer program

phones at all were quickly uncovered, as were employees who racked up thousands of dollars of airtime. Using their software, LetsTalk engineers were able to weed out employees who weren't using their service plans like they should, and—using the company's rate optimization program—could then suggest a service plan better suited to each users' phone habits. Workers who barely touched their mobile device were switched to a cheaper plan, while chatty employees were changed to the all-you-can-talk service. The end result was millions of dollars in saved expenses, Tamer said.

"All it's done is switch him from the wrong plan to the one that's best suited for him," he said, pointing to an example from one of LetsTalk's trial runs. "It's extremely powerful and it's real dollars."

The company's management suite is a Web-based program that business administrators and employees can access. Administrators can track the number of devices in use, search for specific parameters and switch employees' wireless plans, all with the click of the mouse. Employees can take initiative and change their plans

proactively, or can search for better suited devices and accessories. There's even a user manual and frequently-asked-questions list for each device, so workers don't have to bother the company's overworked information technology department.

"The focus here is to save the company money," Tamer said. "We empower the corporation with a lot of information."

Tamer said the company is in talks with a variety of potential customers but has not announced any sales yet. Tamer said the company is also considering the possibility of selling its management suite to wireless carriers, which could in turn offer similar services directly to subscribers.

"We may go down that path," he said. "It's purely a matter of execution."

And in case LetsTalk has the opportunity to score a deal with a carrier in the future, the company made sure its management suite doesn't churn users from one carrier to another.

"What we would not advocate is churn," Tamer said. "That's one reason we don't switch carriers." ■