

# The Case for Wireless Expense Management (WEM)





# Introduction

## Mobility is transforming business operations but brings new challenges for management.

The adoption of modern technology often drives significant breakthroughs in business performance, but it can also create complexity and management challenges. A prime example is the increasing use of smartphones and other cellular-connected mobile devices.

To put things into perspective, the average enterprise with 1000 cellular-connected devices will get a ~15,000-page invoice monthly. The carriers associated with these devices do not provide companies with the necessary tools and reporting they need to make sense of it all. Adding to the complexity, employees may be on different plans, with varying data allowances, international roaming options, and service features.

It's not uncommon for enterprises to have different contracts with multiple wireless carriers, each with unique terms, conditions, and pricing. As wireless carriers frequently update their pricing structures and plans, managing these changes across a large user base requires continuous monitoring and adjustment. In addition, administrators must regularly keep track of promotional offer expirations and address common issues such as billing errors and service discrepancies.

In many organizations, IT teams often struggle trying to keep track of mobile device inventory, which is essential to ensuring users have the most up-to-date devices. Many enterprises still rely on legacy systems that lack integration with carrier billing systems, resulting in inefficiencies and errors. Generating detailed usage and cost reports for management can be difficult when the data is not standardized or easily accessible across various carriers and plans. Instead, managing mobile and wireless services has become one of the most challenging and time-consuming tasks for many companies. While it remains a crucial technology for business operations, it is becoming increasingly complicated and costly to oversee.

Fortunately, there's a solution that has helped numerous companies achieve the full value from their investment in mobile: **Wireless Expense Management (WEM)**.



## Mobile Device

A mobile device is a portable computing device that typically has a screen, operates on a mobile operating system and has the ability to run applications. Examples include smartphones, tablets, smartwatches and e-readers.

## Wireless Device

A wireless device refers to any device that communicates or connects to other devices or networks without using wires. It includes a broad range of devices, not necessarily portable or mobile.

## Overlap

Mobile devices are “wireless”, but not all wireless devices are mobile: Wireless devices, such as routers or wireless desktop peripherals (like a keyboard or mouse), are not mobile. Both Mobile and Wireless devices are dependent on radio frequency (RF) signals, such as Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, cellular, or other form of wireless network.

## You can make wireless simpler and more efficient with Wireless Expense Management.

Wireless Expense Management (WEM) is the practice of capturing and analyzing mobility and wireless invoice data so that mobile spend can be regularly and consistently optimized. That process can involve massive amounts of data, but fortunately, a new generation of technology has emerged to simplify and accelerate this process.

Enterprises that implement WEM can ...

- Gain the insights necessary to control costs
- Streamline maintenance
- Free employees for more valuable work

After implementing WEM, many enterprises report substantial savings and gains in efficiency — without reducing service or undertaking the burden of switching their entire organization to a new wireless carrier. Solve(X), the platform that powers Spectrotel’s WEM solution, helps users reduce annual wireless spend by 30% or more.

In this guide, you’ll learn the best practices of successful WEM programs and see how they resolve the most common problems plaguing mobility management programs.



# The Essential Elements of a Successful WEM Solution

## Expense Management & Optimization

A WEM solution must help businesses to contain costs and discover efficiencies in their wireless spend. This type of solution should enable users to:

- Audit wireless bills for billing errors and unauthorized charges so the carriers can be pressed for corrections.
- Automate changes to data plans — for example, adding capacity for heavy users that need it while scaling down the plans of employees who aren't using it as much.
- Identify and shut down the data plans of employees who have already left the organization

## Contract Negotiation

WEM can empower you to achieve the best possible deal when signing or renewing contracts with wireless carriers. A complete WEM solution can equip a company with the insights for a successful negotiation by:

- Reviewing existing and proposed contracts from multiple carriers to identify the most competitive offerings, as well as potential problems.
- Drafting and revising new contracts to meet both current and expected needs.
- Representing the company's interests during negotiations with wireless carriers.
- Ensuring that the company's carriers are following the terms of their agreements.

## Inventory Management

When your company has hundreds or thousands of mobile devices, it can be time-consuming to keep track of each one. A WEM solution should be able to track where each device is and who is using it. That's information that can help prevent overbilling, misuse and unnecessary replacements.

## Data Integrity

A WEM platform should integrate seamlessly with an organization's other systems, ensuring that all departments' systems are up to date and share a consistent source for updates. For example, the WEM should be able to identify inaccurate device users, update that information and rewrite it back to the carrier's back-end systems. Other integrations might include an organization's mobile device management (MDM solution), active directory and HR systems.



# WEM Solutions in Action

Learn how to address the most common mobility problems facing businesses.

## **Challenge: Wireless Billing Is Complex and Unpredictable**

The typical carrier contract is filled with impenetrable terms and conditions, which makes it hard to consistently forecast how much the next month's bills will be. A good WEM solution will automatically bring together and analyze thousands of pages of billing information, from multiple customer portals, to give real-time insights on usage.

## **Challenge: Wireless Costs Just Keep Rising**

Look for a WEM solution that can analyze massive amounts of billing data to find new efficiencies. If an individual user is going over their monthly data limit, the WEM platform should be able to move them to a more generous plan in real time, so they avoid getting billed for overages. Or if another worker would be better off with a smaller data plan, the platform should move them to one. An advanced WEM solution gives you the option to automate these changes, making plan changes in the carrier accounts without human intervention.

## **Challenge: Holding managers accountable for budget performance.**

By using cost centers within a WEM solution, budgets can be assigned to various departments, functions, or projects. This ensures that managers are responsible for controlling the costs associated with their specific areas.

## **Challenge: Managing Wireless Is Overwhelming the IT Team**

A WEM solution can make IT teams more efficient and cut their stress levels. This type of solution should automate and centralize device tracking in a single portal, freeing IT personnel to focus on mission-critical priorities. Setting up, repairing and recycling devices also could be outsourced to create more bandwidth.



## **Challenge: We Can't Keep Track of All Our Mobile Devices**

This is especially common in larger organizations, where the company might use several hundred to thousands of devices. Fortunately, a WEM solution can simplify asset management. A WEM solution should maintain an up-to-date inventory of an organization's devices, who controls them and their usage data, making it easier to ensure those devices are being used productively.

In addition to capturing various data points, a WEM solution should prioritize tracking both ICCIDs (unique numbers assigned to SIM cards) and IMEIs (unique identifiers for mobile devices).

By linking the SIM cards to specific devices (tracked by IMEI), businesses can ensure the correct usage patterns and identify any misuse or over-usage that might lead to excessive costs and ensure that the physical assets are properly assigned to employees and tracked throughout their lifecycle.

Tracking both IMEI and ICCID also helps IT departments provide better support. For example, if a phone is malfunctioning or not connecting to the network, knowing both the IMEI and ICCID allows IT teams to determine whether the problem lies with the device itself (IMEI) or the SIM card (ICCID). By tracking both, businesses can also ensure that employees don't use personal devices for work or misuse corporate devices for personal use, which could pose security risks or lead to regulatory non-compliance.

## **Challenge: It's Impossible to Make Informed Decisions About Wireless**

Not because they don't have data on their wireless usage — most companies are suffering from data overload. They have so much data that it's extremely difficult to produce reporting on a timely basis. A solid WEM solution should automate the production of reporting and analytics for more informed decisions.

## **Challenge: Negotiating Carrier Contracts Is Too Complex**

Most companies don't have enough knowledge about industry pricing and discounts to get a favorable deal on their carrier contracts. When considering a WEM solution, ask whether its team can offer insight into the terms and conditions offered by carriers and even help negotiate a contract on the client's behalf.



# WEM Use Cases

## Manufacturer with High Employee Turnover

### Challenge

A large manufacturing company with a high employee turnover rate is struggling to manage its growing wireless expenses. New hires require mobile devices and data plans, but frequent employee exits leave the company paying for unused or inactive lines. The IT department spends a significant amount of time manually deactivating accounts, reassessing mobile contracts, and monitoring usage—leading to inefficiencies and unnecessary costs.

### Solution

By adopting **Wireless Expense Management (WEM)**, the manufacturer gains centralized control and automation over their mobile assets. With automated workflows, mobile devices can be deactivated and reallocated instantly when employees leave. The WEM solution also provides analytics to monitor mobile data usage, flagging underutilized devices and plans for cost-saving opportunities.

The system integrates with HR systems to streamline the process, so when an employee leaves, their device can be immediately reassigned or suspended, eliminating unnecessary costs. This results in substantial savings, better management of mobile assets, and more time for the IT team to focus on strategic initiatives rather than administrative tasks.

### Results

- **30% reduction** in wireless spend through optimization of unused lines and data plans.
- **75% reduction** in administrative time spent on managing mobile accounts.
- **Increased visibility** into device usage, leading to better decision-making on mobile policy.

## Retail Organization Modernizing to Tablet-Based Technology

### Challenge

A national retail chain is upgrading its stores to use tablet-based point-of-sale (POS) systems, sales tools, and inventory management. However, the increased number of devices adds complexity to managing wireless plans across hundreds of locations. Without proper oversight, the company risks overspending on data plans, and devices may be left idle when stores close or shift hours, causing unnecessary charges. Additionally, data security on these mobile devices is a concern, especially for payment processing.

### Solution

With **Wireless Expense Management**, the retail organization can easily monitor and control all wireless devices from a single dashboard. The system provides insights into usage patterns, allowing the company to optimize its data plans based on the actual needs of each store. WEM tools also include automatic provisioning and deactivation of devices, ensuring that wireless plans are adjusted when devices are idle or no longer in use.

To address security concerns, the solution incorporates mobile device management (MDM) features, ensuring that devices are secure and compliant with data protection regulations. This protects the organization's sensitive customer data, while also avoiding overages or excess charges from unused devices.

### Results

- **20% cost savings** from wireless plan optimization across locations.
- **Increased operational efficiency** by automating device provisioning and deactivation.
- **Enhanced security** for tablet-based POS systems, ensuring customer and payment data remains protected.



# The Spectrotel Solution for WEM

The latest in AI-powered technology. Rock-solid expertise and support.  
This is how we deliver WEM.

## The Platform

Spectrotel's WEM solution is powered by Solve(X) from GoExceed. It's a powerful, purpose-built mobility management platform for wireless data analytics, process automation and plan optimization. Key features include:

- **Automated AI optimization:** Analyzes wireless billing each month to suggest ways that costs can be lowered.
- **Inventory management and device tracking:** Keeps an updated inventory of every device in the company's collection, making them easier to manage.
- **Data integrity:** Serves as a single, secure source of truth for wireless usage and costs, feeding critical data to your ERP, as well as your accounting, procurement, IT and other departments.
- **Real-time reporting:** Tracks usage across all devices to identify trends and prevent overages.
- **Invoice validation:** Compares incoming bills to the contracted rates to ensure all charges are accurate.
- **Policy enforcement and compliance monitoring:** Allows the company to set and enforce data limits and roaming restrictions.
- **Compliance monitoring:** Makes sure that employees are aligned to company policies and regulatory requirements.
- **Self-service portal:** Empowers employees to manage their own wireless expenses and usage.



## The Team

Spectrotel's team of strategists, technical engineers and customer specialists can help you ...

- Identify the best solutions and plans for your organization.
- Manage contract negotiations with your wireless carriers or service providers.
- Resolve any technical issues.
- Repair, configure, distribute, and/or recycle devices.





# Best Practices for Wireless Expense Management (WEM)

## Push for the best possible contract

A company's contracts with its wireless carriers set the terms for every aspect of the relationship with them. What service costs, what the carriers are required to provide — everything starts with the contract. Many companies struggle, though, because those documents are so complex. The Spectrotel team can help by overseeing the negotiation process on your behalf, armed with years of experience and industry data.

## Conduct audits regularly

Spectrotel can help you constantly audit your wireless bills for discrepancies and potential savings, giving you the insights you need to constantly optimize your wireless spending.

## Invest in — and use — automation

The dirty secret of Mobile Device Management (MDM) is that a lot of the work is dull, repetitive and time-consuming. All of which makes it perfect for automation, especially around optimization and inventory.

## Get more from your devices with comprehensive service

Extend the useful lives of your devices — and prevent headaches for your users — by operating a robust helpdesk to quickly solve all mobility-related issues.

## Implement MDM solutions now to prevent a crisis later

These solutions can ensure that your devices are always equipped with the most current security protocols, preventing costly breaches and failures. Even better, MDM can automate the installation and updates, freeing your team from that responsibility.

## Standardize your processes for end-of-life devices

Don't miss the opportunity to find new value in smartphones and tablets that seem like they have outlived their usefulness. A comprehensive end-of-life process — like the one that Spectrotel uses — can find ways to resell or recycle these devices or repair them for new users.



## Conclusion

Mobile technology still delivers the speed and connectivity that are essential for today's workforce, but companies must upgrade their management of these resources so they can derive the full value from that investment. With its on-demand reporting and analytics, Wireless Expense Management (WEM) equips decision-makers with the information they need to make better business decisions and control costs.

To unlock the full potential of wireless, the best WEM solutions harness the power of artificial intelligence and machine learning to automate the collection and analysis of usage and billing data. That automation can provide actionable insights on demand while freeing up staff resources to focus on higher-value work.

By adopting the strategies and technologies outlined in these pages, companies can enjoy greater efficiency, lower costs and other important metrics.

To learn more about Spectrotel's Wireless Expense Management (WEM) solution, reach out to our team today.

**Spectrotel | WEM eBook**