



*Controlling Wireless Costs:
11 Best Practices for 2016*

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Overview

The fastest growing IT cost in most organizations is wireless, with the fastest rising area being data transmission. More and more, the enterprise relies on Smartphones, Aircards, and data over standard phones and other telemetry devices to connect with their employees, and more importantly to enable their employees to be productive and mobile.

International roaming is also fast growing cost as employees travel the globe in search of business. Add to this the increasing number of devices and operating systems employees select to bring into the enterprise on their own and costs can spiral quickly.

This paper will focus on proven best practices in wireless expense management (WEM) which mindWireless has employed successfully for numerous enterprises. We'll discuss a variety of actions that employees and wireless expense managers can take to keep their monthly wireless costs down.

These actions are most effective if the enterprise wireless program is managed under corporate liability. When wireless device usage is managed as a corporate liable expense, management has greater control and leverage to keep costs low. If wireless devices and plans are left to end user selection and expensed, the corporation can only approve or deny reimbursement. mindWireless, in line with every major industry analyst group, strongly recommends adopting a corporate liable program (pros and cons are discussed in "Wireless Communication Costs: Personal vs. Corporate Liability," available for download at mindWireless.com).

11 Cost Saving Best Practices

1. Create a Corporate Wireless Policy
2. Automate manual wireless support processes
3. Disconnect/suspend inactive devices
4. Analyze usage monthly
5. Control texting
6. Preplan for international use
7. Tether utilizing existing smart phones
8. Communicate with users
9. Recycle or sell old devices
10. Renegotiate carrier contracts
11. Select a strong wireless TEM partner



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The following best practices will go a long way in helping telecommunications and department managers keep their wireless expenses under control.

11 Best Practice Tips for Controlling Corporate Wireless Costs

Based on our experience, mindWireless recommends the following 11 Best Practices to control and reduce costs and deliver million dollar annual savings.

1. Create and regularly review a Corporate Wireless Policy.

Having a Corporate Wireless Policy in place gives enterprise users a clear and common guideline for their wireless usage, and provides management a platform for enforcement. It is important to review enterprise standards for management, procurement and ownership of wireless devices with employees. The policy should define tight limitations for approval of new activations and upgrades. Once in place, the Corporate Wireless Policy outlines:

- Enrollment or annual re-enrollment to align all registered devices with the appropriate user
- Entitlement definitions for approved devices and plans based on position or role
- Restrictions for text messaging to business need
- Download limitations, blocking entertainment downloads, and recommends a Mobile Device Management process for controlling enterprise application downloads
- Limited personal use on a company paid device

2. Automate manual telecommunication expense management processes.

One recent study conducted by a mindWireless client found that they had reduced their man-hours devoted to wireless telecommunications expense management by 8 FTE's (full time equivalent). At \$50k per year, that's \$400,000 in savings achieved via WEM automation.

3. Remove unused and inactive devices from your carrier bills.

It is very common to see enterprises with 10% of the devices at zero usage for 12+ months. mindWireless encountered one client that had over 800 devices with zero usage in 12+ months, at \$65 per phone they were spending more than \$52,000 per year for unused devices!



4. Review and analyze monthly usage to identify trends and savings opportunities.

Being aware of monthly use and spending behavior for corporate wireless device users enables a telecommunication manager to make quick adjustments in reaction to trends or abnormal expense. Many wireless expense programs only include quarterly reviews. mindWireless recommends and provides monthly analysis to quickly spot increases and changes in wireless usage and spending. By analyzing and optimizing monthly, you can find areas of savings and respond by:

- Consolidating accounts with voice pooling
- Disconnecting zero or low usage devices (under 10 minutes per month) or placing them on Flat Rate Plan
- Replacing expensive Aircards with tethering
- Taking advantage of MiFi for small, mobile groups

5. Control text messaging costs by reviewing text charges monthly and identifying text message abusers early.

Anything other than making and receiving calls in your local calling area will cost you more money. And removing the features that are no longer used saves money. While most plans no longer charge for interstate domestic calls, text messaging charges can drive costs up, sharply.

Without a texting plan, domestic texts can be as high as \$.25 per text.

One mindWireless client saved over \$270,000 per year in text messaging charges alone. Their corporate wireless policy stipulated that texting was not allowed, but...texting still happens.

6. Preplan for international calling to avoid huge cost increases.

Use an international loaner phone to save up to 40% or add international features to a device before traveling, if the destination country is included in your approved voice and data plans. You may also consider providing GSM-based phones and International in-country SIM cards to heavy international travelers to save on International data roaming charges. It is a best practice to use calling cards and land lines whenever possible and never tether or text when traveling internationally.

We worked with one client that ended up with a \$26,000 bill... for one aircard.



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7. Use Smartphones to tether laptops instead of using Aircards.

Using the WiFi functionality of already deployed Smartphones, you can enable mini wireless hubs, tethering laptops, tablets or any Bluetooth enabled device, and eliminate expensive Aircard charges.

A mindWireless client eliminated 600 aircards for users that already had Blackberries in their possession. The savings achieved topped \$468,000 annually!

8. Communicate regularly and proactively with users.

A successful wireless expense management program includes regular and informative communication with users. This can be accomplished via a Wireless Savings Tips column on the corporate intranet, via monthly or quarterly email blasts to all users, or individual emails to top users/spenders. Here are some suggestions on tips to offer your users, repeatedly:

- Monitor top 100 spenders/users and send an email when their usage or spending exceeds the average range, requesting an explanation. If necessary, modify their plan.
- Suggest 411 alternatives to obtain information, such as 1-800-FREE-411 or other services on a smart phone.
- Take advantage of landlines, if available, to check voice mail or make calls.

9. Recycle or sell old devices.

There are many good reasons to recycle your used cellular devices. It's good for the environment. In some locations, it may be required by law for the business. It forces you to ensure that all corporate data is fully deleted. Perhaps best of all for business, you can recover part of your expense for the recycled device.

10. Renegotiate carrier contracts.

A carrier contract can be renegotiated at any time, even if a the contract is not up for renewal. Work with primary carriers to implement Individual Liable (employee personal phone) campaigns linked to corporate intranet or procurement portal for higher user discounts. All contracts should include:



- Flat Rate and Add-a-Phone plans
- Early termination fee waivers
- Free shipping
- Benchmarked rates
- Free activations
- Free texting (250)

11. Partner with a skilled corporate mobility management provider.

mindWireless is a highly experienced outsource provider for mobility management that can help your company achieve these goals.

If any of these useful tips seem beyond your ability to implement, mindWireless is ready to help. Visit mindWireless.com to request a free demo or give us a call at 512.615.7538 and we'll show you the potential savings available to your organization. Or, email us today at bizdev@mindwireless.com and we'll be sure to contact you.