

WHITEPAPER



Setting the Standard: Built for Multi-dimensional Customer Choice



Setting a Multi-dimensional Standard Built for Customer Choice

The era of digital transformation is upon us. With it, industry leaders have shifted from a product-centric to a customer-centric go-to-market approach. Gone are waterfall development cycles that batch up multitudes of capabilities that are delivered every 18 months to two years. Agile development is mainstream. Products are updated in weeks, and capabilities are continuously iterated and improved. Organizations have moved from selling products to services. Most often those services are delivered digitally. Monetization models have also adapted to this new world, changing from one and done to continuous recurrence.

CIOs in every industry are struggling to keep pace and meet skyrocketing customer expectations. In the digital era, where customers can purchase with a click of a finger, they are not only demanding more choice in the products they buy, but also in how and when they pay for products. They expect flawless self-service and require instant gratification.

Overcoming Legacy Constrictions

These market dynamics work in concert to flummox the technology professionals who must service their customers, and handle billing, invoicing, provisioning, and accounting on a recurring basis. Technological innovation is important, but it now revolves around the needs of the customer instead of traditional development cycles. And the two could not be more out of sync.

Many companies built, and still rely on, traditional business models and legacy back-office systems for a world where products were physical and designed for one-time sales. New customer acquisition was the focus, and mobility of accounts and services were an afterthought — if thought of at all.

The *Altimeter 2016 State of Digital Transformation* report underscores the problem: 55 percent of those responsible for digital transformation cite “evolving customer behaviors and preferences” as their primary catalyst for transformation. But only half (54 percent) of survey respondents have completely mapped out the customer journey within the last year or are in the process of doing so.

Whether selling to consumers or businesses, success depends on developing a different set of differentiators based on customer needs versus product features. Leading companies are finding ways to enhance the customer experience and empower customers to choose their product, packaging, consumption, and payment options.

To enable customer choice and improve revenue predictability, the market is rapidly transforming to service models. Successful companies are going a step further and enabling multi-dimensional customer choice. It’s the Burger King “Have it Your Way” of pricing. Companies like Amazon offer an a la carte menu of subscriptions and usage-based models with flexible payment options and timing. The notion is that more people will buy if you can offer the options that matter to them. And, it’s working. Amazon stock is priced at a jaw-dropping \$966.63 — up over 26% in the last 12 months. Who doesn’t want a piece of that action?

The customer now calls the shots and enterprises serving them must adapt accordingly. Aria’s cloud-based billing and monetization platform is designed for how customers buy, which is increasingly recurring and usage-based.

The First Monetization Platform for Multi-dimensional Customer Choice

With Aria, businesses can quickly deliver highly tailored product offerings that are at the core of a customer-centric business strategy. User friendly configurations define multiple attributes including: pricing, promotions, consumption options, payment methods, dunning processes, product and account hierarchies, and business terms such as payers, channels, business units, geographies, entities, and the like.

Aria reflects your customers' choices (whether direct or through channels) in how they structure their relationship with you. For example, Aria can aggregate bills for multiple locations and make services portable for customers as they change location, device or use case. In addition, a customer can select split-billing where some services are paid for directly while others are redirected to another account for payment.

Importantly, Aria provides all of this capability without replacing legacy systems. With state-of-the-art integration, businesses can benefit from Aria's agile augmentation while allowing incumbent systems to remain in place.

Aria benefits both customers and the businesses that serve them:

- **Customer-centric** — Facilitates multi-dimensional choice so customers can buy the products they want, how they want. Customers can define and buy the exact set of product attributes, pricing, promotions, consumption options, payment methods and terms to meet their preferences. Aria also delivers transparent and accurate billing and invoicing.
- **Line of business-enabled** — Removes the billing bottleneck that has shackled marketing from delivering and iterating on offerings, bundles, and promotions. Built so business owners can deliver more of the offerings and services that their buyers want. Supports vendors' ability to precisely tailor product offerings and create sophisticated account hierarchies to meet customers' unique requirements. Businesses can tie them to their hierarchy of accounts with combinations of payers, channels, business units, geographies, entities, and schedules. Allows fast delivery, testing, and iteration of the widest variety of product offerings. Minimizes unnecessary steps, clicks, and overall complexity of sophisticated monetization scenarios and products. Eliminates SKU proliferation and reduces tiresome scrolling to save manpower and computing power while creating a better user experience.
- **Extensible** — Enables boundless permutations of products, bundles, and promotions with one-to-many accounts to entities, devices, and locations hierarchies via Omni-node™ n-tier product catalog and hierarchical account management technologies. Empowers flexible and efficient handling of any product, offering, or service that enterprises might dream up now or down the road. Designed to meet the explosion of IoT data monetization.
- **Enterprise-ready** — Employs enterprise-grade, industrial-strength hardware and software technologies to meet and exceed the most stringent availability, reliability, security and privacy standards.

Customized Offerings at Scale

With Aria, leading enterprises can create products, services, and bundles quickly and at scale. Consumers and enterprises alike can buy products and services that are tailored to their unique needs – and when desired change what is consumed and how they pay.

For instance, in the B2C world, if Jane E. Customer wants to purchase an internet plan and a gaming plan under one account and then have the internet plan billed to her business MasterCard and the gaming plan billed to her personal VISA card, then she can. The seller has a single record that tracks all the activity and history but can specify different processes and treatment to each individual product. If the VISA card expires and a payment is rejected, a company-specified dunning process can address the offering on the expired card without affecting the other offering. In contrast, the previous standard necessitated two accounts for each purchase, which couldn't be aggregated. It required manual lookups for a complete view of the account, which was both time consuming and error prone.

Likewise, in the B2B world, an n-tiered account structure means bills can be split in multiple ways to better suit customer needs. A bill can be parsed to any entity and be delivered to company specifications. Products can also be rolled up for charging all along the hierarchy. Aria supports sophisticated parent-child hierarchies for complex corporate entities and multinationals. Each child account can have its own currency and taxation. For example, a global multinational can pay in dollars, a regional entity can pay in euros, and a national entity can pay in British pounds.

Software with Your Customer in Mind

Aria raises the bar for cloud billing and is the first agile billing and monetization platform designed with the end-customer in mind. Aria helps the line of business optimize every account to meet exacting customer needs, create initial sales, and upsell and cross-sell opportunities at every customer touchpoint. Customers have greater choice, buy more and are retained for longer periods of time. Companies have the agility to drive and react to an ever-changing marketplace. The ultimate payoff is increased customer lifetime value and sustained revenue growth.

About Aria Systems

Aria Systems cloud-based monetization platform is the analyst' choice, top ranked by leading research firms. Innovative enterprises like Verizon, Roku, Adobe, and Audi depend on Aria to accelerate time to market and increase flexibility, enabling them to maximize customer value and grow recurring revenue through subscription and usage-based offerings.

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