

# Cable Provider Gains Efficiencies Through Network Visibility

Customer Case Study



## ZON Multimédia Cuts Operational Costs by Managing Complex Install Base with Help from Cisco Inventory Solution

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Customer Name:** ZON Multimédia  
**Industry:** Media and telecommunications  
**Location:** Lisbon, Portugal  
**Number of Employees:** 1620

#### Challenge

- Maintain high service levels while keeping operating expenses in check.
- Manage lifecycle of all Cisco equipment across vast inventory.
- Avoid inefficient, inaccurate manual processes for tracking equipment.

#### Solution

- Cisco Smart Net Total Care tracks inventory through self-managed portal.
- Cisco Services provides on-demand assistance for complex issues.
- Cisco Smart Call Home offers proactive diagnostics and real-time alerts.

#### Results

- Eliminated manual inventory processes, saving significant amounts of time
- Cut operational costs, reduced operational risk, and improved network availability
- Enjoyed high level of network support necessary to deliver first-rate service to customers

#### Challenge

ZON Multimédia is the largest cable operator in Portugal, with services including cable television, cable Internet, and voice over IP (VoIP). The company frequently leads Europe in making advanced features and services available to more than 2.5 million subscribers.

Like many service providers around the world, ZON is under tremendous pressure to counter a steep rise in operating expenses. This circumstance is due in part to the economics of content delivery: as more content is funneled through telecommunications networks, service providers manage the delivery of that content even as the revenue often goes elsewhere. ZON must, therefore, find ways to maintain high levels of service and keep operating expenses in check, all while developing new lines of business to increase average revenue per user (ARPU).

One operational challenge has been especially daunting for the ZON team. For years, the company has looked for an efficient way to manage its vast inventory of Cisco® equipment. “Unless you have a very sophisticated asset management process, it can be virtually impossible to determine which equipment needs to be replaced, and when,” says Luis Cunha, IP networks team manager at ZON. “Very often, we would seek out support for a piece of equipment, only to find that it was no longer supported. That would send us scrambling to replace it. When you’re trying to manage an IP network of this size, you don’t want surprises like that.”

ZON would track the state of its inventory using a massive Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, setting aside a full week every year to document network components, determine what was due for replacement, and update the spreadsheet accordingly. “Inventory management was simply a laborious process,” says Cunha. “Worse still, entering the data manually would often lead to inconsistencies and errors. We obviously needed to find a better approach.”



**“We appreciate that Cisco offers us excellent support at all times, with the Cisco team frequently acting in the role of trusted advisor. Year in and year out, they provide us with the level of support we need to deliver first-rate service to our own customers.”**

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Jorge Seabra  
Director of Services for Platforms and Networks  
ZON Multimédia

### Solution

Since 2000, ZON has depended on the Cisco Technical Assistance Center (TAC) for around-the-clock support. Until recently, however, the company lacked the ability to assess the status of its vast inventory through a self-managed portal. “Three years ago, Cisco approached us about trying the beta version of Cisco Smart Net Total Care,” says Jorge Seabra, director of services for platforms and networks at ZON. “They showed us the portal, demonstrating how we could track our own inventory and generate our own reports, always with support from Cisco Services as necessary. We also loved the software release management feature, which reduces operational risk by giving us an efficient overview of what’s going out of support.”

### Comprehensive Service Offering for Enhanced Visibility and Greater Control

The Smart Net Total Care service vastly simplifies the management of ZON’s install base by efficiently discovering devices on the network, tracking the lifecycle of all network components, and generating bug reports. The ZON team can access this information anytime through an easy-to-use online portal. The data is further validated with help from Cisco Network Admission Control (NAC) Profiler, which maintains an automated inventory of all endpoints, including the location of noncompliant devices.

With the Cisco Security IntelliShield Alert Manager Service within Smart Net Total Care, ZON can monitor network security threats, identifying and preventing IT attacks with up-to-the-minute information. The company is also in the early stages of deploying Cisco Smart Call Home, also part of Smart Net Total Care, a service that offers proactive diagnostics and real-time alerts on Cisco devices, helping ensure optimal network security and availability. Whenever an issue arises, Smart Call Home automatically opens a case with the TAC and sends a notification to the ZON team for total transparency and alignment between the organizations.

At all times, ZON can depend on Cisco Services to provide on-demand assistance for even the most complex issues. “Smart Net Total Care gives us an excellent foundation for managing our install base, and Cisco Services offers further support whenever we need specialized help or encounter a particularly difficult problem,” says Pedro Cravo, network solutions manager at ZON. “Together, these service offerings help us stay one step ahead in a fast-moving business.”

### Results

With the proactive management capabilities of Smart Net Total Care, ZON is able to eliminate manual processes and save significant amounts of time. “Not so long ago, we would spend a full week every year updating a massive Excel spreadsheet with the latest information from our install base,” says Cunha. “Thanks to Smart Net Total Care, we can avoid that time investment altogether. We’ve gone from one week to no time at all, just like that.”

By moving toward a more efficient, accurate model for managing network inventory, the ZON team not only cuts operational costs but also reduces operational risk. “With better inventory data at our fingertips, we can accurately forecast our equipment needs, focus support efforts where they’re needed most, and avoid thorny logistical issues,” says Cravo. “That helps us ensure that we’re always maintaining optimal network resilience and availability.”

ZON is so pleased with Smart Net Total Care that the company recently renewed its contract with Cisco. “That alone is compelling evidence that this service is extremely important to us,” says Seabra. “We appreciate that Cisco offers us excellent support at all times, with the Cisco team frequently acting in the role of trusted advisor. Year in and year out, they provide us with the level of support we need to deliver first-rate service to our own customers.”

### Next Steps

After more than a decade of working closely together on a large number of projects, ZON and Cisco fully expect many more years of fruitful collaboration. “This is simply a great working relationship,” says Seabra. “Cisco provides us with innovative services, we give them honest feedback, and together we lead the way in the European cable industry.”

### For More Information

- To learn more about Cisco Services, go to [www.cisco.com/go/services](http://www.cisco.com/go/services).
- To find out more about Smart Net Total Care, go to <http://www.cisco.com/go/total>.

### Product List

- Cisco Network Admission Control (NAC) Profiler

### Services List

- Cisco Smart Net Total Care with Cisco Security IntelliShield Alert Manager and Cisco Smart Call Home Services



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