

GSA's Telecommunications Approach in Buildings: A Roadmap

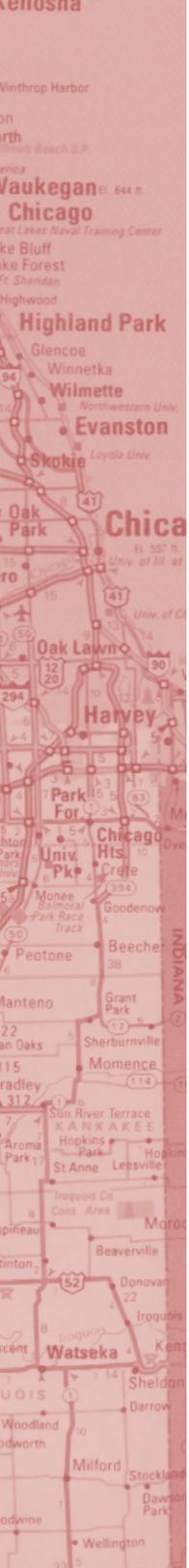




In the rapidly evolving world of telecommunications, GSA seeks to obtain the best array of services at the lowest cost for its many customers. Our approach centers on encouraging competition for the provision of telecom services, whether in federally owned buildings or in private sector buildings where we are a leaseholder.

As the telecom marketplace becomes further deregulated, more firms are entering the marketplace and seeking to entice our customers with a diverse array of services. Choice is a good thing, of course - and GSA seeks to leverage those opportunities while ensuring that the potential liabilities are managed effectively.

Coordination between the Public Buildings Service (PBS) and Federal Technology Service (FTS) is essential if we are to seamlessly 'thrill' our customers. While PBS primarily focuses on building related matters and FTS primarily focuses on telecom, we both have important - and complementary - roles to play. This booklet highlights the basic elements of that approach.



A New Playing Field

Telecommunications deregulation has prompted many new companies to enter the field, challenging the incumbent Regional Bell Operating Companies (known as RBOCs). The new players are known as Competitive Local Exchange Carriers (CLECs) or, more broadly, Competitive Access Providers (CAPs). Given this expanded playing field and intensified competition, tremendous advantages in savings and range of services are possible.

GSA's goal is to translate these opportunities into concrete benefits for our customers. The challenge is to do so in a considered, systematic manner that anticipates and solves problems rather than creates new ones.

Basis for Selecting Preferred Providers

Customers in federally owned buildings are now able to take advantage of wide-ranging telecom services - at significantly reduced rates - through contracts negotiated by FTS.

The companies contracted to provide those services are chosen through an open, competitive process overseen by FTS. Efficiencies are achieved since FTS not only does the groundwork in qualifying those firms, but also helps the customer choose the combination of services that best meets its goals.

These programs are:

- FTS 2001, which provides long-distance voice and data service across the country and internationally
- Metropolitan Area Acquisition (MAA), which delivers local voice, data, and video service to major metropolitan areas, and other region specific contracts
- Commerce, Internet, Electronic Mail Access (CINEMA), which provides Internet e-mail, and e-commerce services on a nationwide basis
- Federal Wireless Telecommunications Services (FWTS), which provides national wireless equipment and service.



These competitive procurements essentially establish GSA's preferred providers for telecom services. You can learn more about these programs at <http://www.gsa.gov/telecominbuildings>.

Considering Alternative Telecom Providers

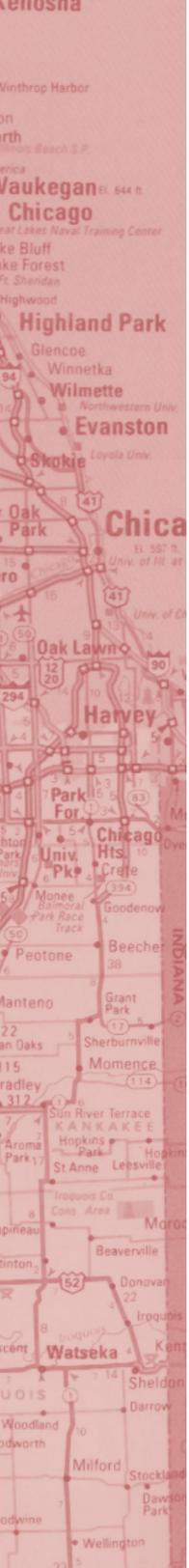
In an open marketplace, the firms selected by GSA as its preferred providers are not the only ones able to approach us and our customers with offers of service. If, for example, a customer approaches us with the desire to use an alternative provider in meeting its telecommunications needs, GSA will try to accommodate that alternative. FTS and PBS will first coordinate with the customer to assess the extent to which, by using that alternative provider, the customer would realize an advantage, whether in terms of reduced cost, increased responsiveness, higher bandwidth, better billing service, etc. This process will serve to further educate the customer on the types of services and options available.

It must be recognized that space limitations in a given building may preclude GSA from considering offers of service from alternative telecom providers. If the equipment rooms and risers simply cannot accommodate any more wiring, we will have to say 'no' in as gracious a way as possible.

Question of Ownership

The transition from a Regional Bell Operating Company (RBOC) to one or more Competitive Local Exchange Carriers (CLECs) raises numerous issues that must be resolved before the new service can commence.

First and foremost, it must be established exactly who owns the wiring and telecommunications equipment in the given building: the federal government or the incumbent RBOC. The answer will



vary by state and by the age of the building. This information must be established up front, as it will influence the terms and conditions under which the CLEC begins to operate in the building.

FTS is in a position to clarify such ownership issues and provide the relevant information to their colleagues in PBS. Three avenues are available to gather this information:

- GSA's own documentation
- Contact with the state Public Utilities Commission
- Contact with the incumbent RBOC.

Need for Written License Agreement

Once having established ownership of the wiring and equipment, GSA requires an agreement to be secured in writing with the given telecom provider. Having such a license agreement ensures that the provider:

- Documents how the building is to be accessed and whether any building elements will need to be altered.
- Verifies that any work to be performed meets applicable codes and standards.
- Identifies its employees or agents who will be doing the work, as a Government background check may need to be performed for security reasons.
- Indemnifies GSA in the event its work results in any interruption of service or claims of damage.
- Acknowledges that the telecom service to be established will benefit federal customers solely - and requires GSA to be advised if service to commercial customers is contemplated.
- Accounts for the cost for utilities associated with operation of its telecom equipment.
- Takes responsibility for removing equipment the provider may have installed when the license agreement expires, or if the telecom firm should cease operation.

Such a license agreement must be *non-exclusive*. In other words, the telecommunications provider must indicate their understanding that competing firms may also enter into a written agreement with GSA to serve the given building.



PBS is currently developing two model license agreements: one for telecom firms that provide wired service, the other for firms that provide wireless (rooftop) service. We will be entering into these agreements with both the incumbent RBOCs that are already in our buildings as well as the newer CLECs that are seeking to do business with us. As soon as these templates are completed, they will be made available to GSA personnel and to any and all telecom companies interested in working with us. For the moment, any such firm should be acquainted with our general expectations and advised that a license agreement will be provided to them based on the type of service they are offering.

The Service Provider as Tenant

Broadly speaking, telecom providers are a type of tenant - as their equipment occupies space in our buildings and they seek access to such space for revenue producing purposes. Thus, GSA recommends that telecom firms be treated essentially as *tenants*.

This means we will enter into written agreements with any and all providers that wish to gain access to our buildings or are already occupying space in them. Furthermore, as owner GSA is within our rights to negotiate a reasonable compensatory arrangement for accessing the property.

Such arrangements represent a new concept in the public sector. Accordingly, GSA will be developing a fiscal model to determine appropriate parameters. This model will be conducted in two parts. First, we will calculate the costs of managing building related issues with telecom firms in selected GSA-owned properties. Second, we will look at private sector scenarios as a source of ideas, including:

- A one-time fee;
- A fixed monthly fee;
- A revenue-sharing plan under which GSA would realize a certain percentage of the income generated as the telecom provider signs up customers in the building;
- Other forms of in-kind consideration.



Based on the findings of this model and further examination within GSA, information and guidance will be provided to PBS realty specialists across the country so that they may negotiate a reasonable compensatory arrangement, if they so choose, with telecom providers that GSA plans to do business with.

Metropolitan Area Acquisition (MAA) providers represent a special case, as the services they have contracted to deliver to our customers are being provided at extremely low rates. In order to maintain those rates, GSA will *not* negotiate a separate compensatory arrangement with MAA firms as part of our license agreement with them. Any compensation that would have been provided to GSA will instead be accounted for internally with FTS.

Additionally, it may sometimes be appropriate for PBS to assess the *customer* a fee—as when a telecom firm seeks to make after-hours repairs to customer provided telecom equipment, and a building engineer is needed to accompany and/or assist. These determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

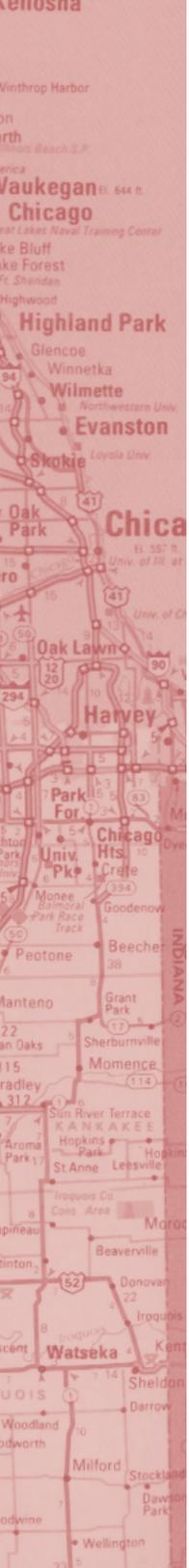
The Site Survey Process

Before establishing service in a building, a Competitive Access Provider may want to visually survey the premises to gather pertinent information about the layout, wiring, etc. Such surveys generally take 1-2 hours, depending on the size of the building. Visits may be made to the telecom equipment rooms, riser closets, basement and/or roof.

More than one telecom company may seek to perform a site survey at any given building. The number will depend upon the number of companies competing to provide service for that metropolitan area as selected by FTS. Or the company may be an alternative provider with whom GSA intends to execute a license agreement. In either case, a site survey may be scheduled so long as the following procedure is observed:



- The telecommunications firm will deliver in writing, at least one week in advance of the date it wishes to conduct the site survey, a request to the relevant PBS Customer Service Center noting the building(s) it would like to visit and stating that the information gathered during the survey will be used to provide telecom service exclusively to Federal customers.
- The letter provided by the telecommunications firm will include the name, date of birth, social security number, and drivers license number of each of its representatives who will be conducting the survey. Additionally, the letter will provide the name of a contact person, his/her phone number and email address.
- If the telecommunications firm is competing to provide service for the given metropolitan area through a contract awarded by GSA's Federal Technology Service, FTS will provide the telecom firm with a local point of contact for site surveys. The telecom firm will then notify this FTS contact person of its interest in conducting a site survey at the given building, as the FTS contact may choose to attend once a time for the survey is arranged.
- If appropriate given the security profile of the particular building where a site survey is to be scheduled, a background check will be conducted on the representatives of the telecommunications firm who are seeking entry into the building.
- The site survey will be scheduled at a time agreeable to the building manager and/or realty specialist.
- The building manager or his/her designee will accompany representatives of the telecommunications firm throughout their visit to the given building. If appropriate, building security personnel may also be present.
- Representatives of the telecommunications firm will disturb nothing on site without the consent of the building manager or his/her designee. This includes drilling into the roof, taking photographs, and moving or installing wiring or equipment.
- Representatives of the telecommunications firm will not distribute information or canvass occupants of the building during the site survey.
- If a follow-up visit is required, this same procedure will be followed.



Establishing Wireless Service

As wireless telecom service gains in popularity, rooftop space is becoming as valuable as telecom closets, risers, and mechanical chases. GSA will treat access to those rooftops the same as access to any other part of the building. This means that telecom providers who wish to access the roof must agree to substantially the same terms and conditions as a 'wired' provider, via a written license agreement. GSA may also choose to negotiate a reasonable compensatory arrangement for granting the placement of antennas, taking into consideration our cost of managing building-related issues with telecom firms in GSA-owned properties as well as the range of practices being negotiated in the private sector for similar properties. As described elsewhere in this document, however, compensation will *not* be sought for firms that have entered into MAA contracts. Instead, arrangements will be made internally with FTS to reflect any compensation that would have been required.

Insofar as our *customers'* placement of antennas is concerned, GSA charges for rooftop and other space needed on our owned buildings based upon private sector practice. With regard to leased properties, we will not charge for our customers' placement of antennas – unless the private sector owner is charging GSA, in which case the cost will be passed through to the customer agency.

Servicing Customers in Leased Buildings

In private sector buildings where the federal government is a tenant, GSA seeks to ensure access for our preferred telecom providers. New language in the PBS model Solicitation for Offers (SFO) spells this out. Similar to the approach followed in our owned portfolio, we are calling on lessors to grant access to GSA's preferred providers. This applies to the provision of wireless services as well as wired. For the specific language, visit <http://www.gsa.gov/telecominbuildings>.



An important note: this policy is in no way intended to compel private sector owners into granting access for all telecom providers, regardless of whether they have been selected through FTS' competition. Nor does the policy specify the terms and conditions under which access should be provided. Instead, our approach emphasizes two points: 1) GSA reserves the right to contract for its own telecom services on behalf of our collective customer base; and 2) We expect that our partners in the commercial real estate industry will facilitate that right.

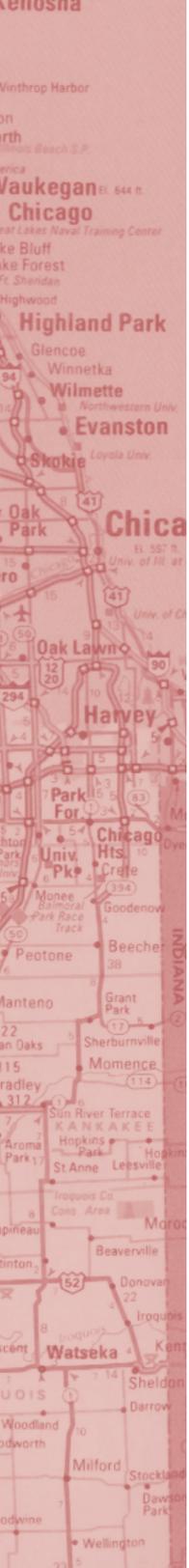
Improving the Telecom Infrastructure

In the fast changing world of telecommunications, customers are looking for services ranging from high-speed Internet to the ability to host videoconferences. GSA acknowledges this reality and welcomes offers for innovative service that may meet an unanticipated need or enable us to further cost-effective solutions for our customers. It is in our interest to keep pace with evolving technology - enabling us to anticipate and meet our customers' changing needs and expectations.

FTS offers two avenues for agencies seeking to assess their telecommunications needs and carry out desired upgrades within their space. Through the Wire and Cable Services (WACS) and Technical and Management Support (TMS) programs, the companies selected and overseen by FTS can:

- Inventory the building's telecommunications assets
- Identify the wiring that runs vertically through a building's risers
- Upgrade or replace that wiring
- Develop a plan for improving the building's telecom infrastructure
- Assist in the analysis and selection of qualified service providers
- Manage the building's telecom infrastructure on an ongoing basis.

You can learn more about these programs at <http://www.gsa.gov/telecominbuildings>.



Building-centric Services

An intriguing new type of telecom service, known as building-centric service, is gaining popularity. Providers offer to upgrade a building's capacity so that tenants gain high-speed voice and data service. As part of the arrangement, a building-specific web site (known as an intranet or portal) is created, through which the management can apprise tenants of the latest building news and tenants can email requests directly to the management. Tenants can also take advantage of discounts offered through the building portal on office supplies, travel arrangements, concierge services, etc. The provider does not charge the owner but makes its money by signing up tenants directly. An additional enticement is that the owner may share in the proceeds, generating revenue to go back into the building's operation.

By improving our buildings' telecom infrastructure - and offering building-centric services - GSA will be better able to thrill our customers, 'brand' our services, and increase the useful life of our properties.

Our Commitment: Thrill the Customer

In an ever more competitive - and interconnected - business world, telecommunications services are a key to success. Through the complementary roles and responsibilities of PBS and FTS, we are committed to facilitating telecom services in a timely, efficient, professional, and cost-effective manner. We will explore innovative arrangements in an ongoing effort to offer our customers the best range of telecommunications features and options at the lowest possible cost. And we pledge to stand behind our customers to see to it that they are thrilled, not just satisfied.

That's the type of follow-through that will guarantee GSA's success as we help our customers achieve theirs.



If You Have Questions

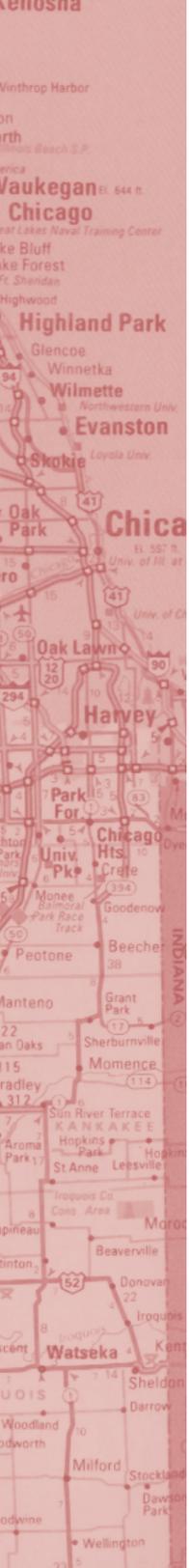
Questions regarding the overall approach described in this document can be directed to either of the following:

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Margaret Binns

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Questions regarding the provision and installation of telecommunications services in any particular region of the country should be directed to the following:

GSA Region 1

Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut

Building Related Issues

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Provision of Telecom Services

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GSA Region 2

New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico

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GSA Region 3

Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia
(Note: District of Columbia is GSA Region 11)

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Building Related Issues

Provision of Telecom Services

GSA Region 4

Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida

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GSA Region 5

Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois

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GSA Region 6

Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas

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Charlotte Nevels
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Building Related Issues

Provision of Telecom Services

GSA Region 7

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GSA Region 8

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Building Related Issues

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Provision of Telecom Services

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Smarter Solutions

The mission of the U.S. General Services Administration is straightforward: provide other Federal agencies the workspace, products, services, technology, and policy they need to accomplish their missions.

No longer a mandatory source for our customers, GSA has committed to bringing the best practices, the latest technology, and the strongest service support to the Federal workplace.

- **GSA's Federal Supply Service** helps Federal agencies acquire supplies, furniture, computers, tools, and equipment. FSS also arranges for travel and transportation services, manages the Federal vehicle fleet, and transfers or sells items our customers no longer need.
- **GSA's Federal Technology Service** provides IT solutions (smart government) and network services (connected government) to help federal agencies meet their missions. In addition, FTS offers wireless products and services that serve our increasingly mobile workforce.
- **GSA's Public Buildings Service** provides office space for more than a million Federal employees. PBS designs, constructs, leases, operates and protects 1,800 government-owned buildings – and leases space in 6,500 more properties in communities nationwide.
- **GSA's Office of Governmentwide Policy** literally writes the book on how things are done in the Government, by creating and communicating policies that affect the rest of the Federal establishment.

The private sector is our partner in carrying out this mission. We work with thousands of companies each day to provide Government agencies and employees the best value for the products, services, and solutions they need.

Together, we deliver *Smarter Solutions*.



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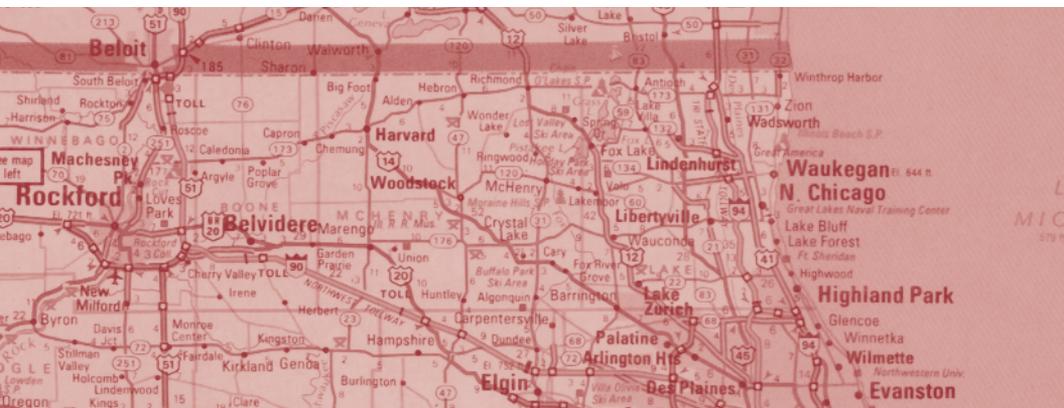
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