

One Provider or Many?

Customer Operations Provider-Model Decision Framework

FILLABLE DECISION TOOL

Use this tool to compare a single-provider, hybrid, or multi-provider model against your operating reality.

Decision context

Organization / program	
Decision owner	
Assessment date	
Current model	☐ Single provider ☐ Hybrid ☐ Multi-provider

How to use this framework

- 1. Score each dimension from 1 to 5.
- 2. Use the suggested weight if a weighted view is helpful.
- 3. Record any critical constraint that could override the arithmetic.
- 4. Pressure-test the preferred model before committing.

Decision scorecard

Dimension	Weight	Score 1-5	Weighted	Constraint?	Notes
Demand variability / surge	15%				
Specialized capability needs	15%				
Geographic / continuity risk	15%				
Scale & capacity flexibility	15%				
Governance capacity	15%				
Switching / transition cost	10%				
Performance leverage	10%				
Total economics	5%				

Scoring anchors

Dimension	1 - favors one	3 - balanced	5 - favors many
Demand variability / surge	Stable, predictable	Some variability	Large swings or surge
Specialized capability needs	Broad generalist work	Mixed requirements	Several distinct specialties
Geographic / continuity risk	Low concentration concern	Moderate exposure	Material concentration / continuity need
Scale & capacity flexibility	Consistent scale	Some flexibility needed	Frequent reallocation / rapid scale
Governance capacity	Lean team; simplicity critical	Can govern a few relationships	Strong orchestration capability or managed layer
Switching / transition cost	High switching cost	Manageable	Low or staged transition cost
Performance leverage	Deep partnership creates advantage	Some benchmark value	Competition / allocation creates useful leverage
Total economics	Consolidation benefits dominate	Close trade-off	Diversification benefits justify added overhead

Interpretation

Mostly 1-2	The economics and operating reality may favor one strategic provider.
Mostly 4-5	The operation may benefit from a diversified multi-provider network.
Mostly 3 / mixed	A hybrid design may preserve simplicity while adding targeted optionality.
Critical constraint	A regulatory, continuity, capability, geography, technology, or transition constraint can outweigh the composite score.

Pressure-test the preferred model

Use realistic operating scenarios. The goal is to test whether the model works when conditions change.

1. What failure are we trying to protect against?

Notes:

2. Which provider capabilities are genuinely differentiated?

Notes:

3. Can alternative capacity be activated quickly enough to matter?

Notes:

4. Are providers independent enough to reduce the risks we care about?

Notes:

5. Who owns allocation, forecasting, governance, performance, escalations, and provider-mix changes?

Notes:

6. What new management cost does each additional relationship create?

Notes:

7. What is the realistic switching or transition cost?

Notes:

8. What outcome would justify changing the current model?

Notes:

Recommendation

Recommended model

☐ Single provider

☐ Hybrid model

☐ Multi-provider network

Why this model fits

Critical constraints / override factors

Key conditions for success

Risks and mitigations

Decision principle

Design for optionality, not complexity.

The goal is not to maximize provider count. Preserve the capabilities and choices the operation actually needs, with governance strong enough to make those choices usable.

Decision record and review trigger

Decision approved by

Decision date

Next review trigger / date

90-day actions

Action	Owner	Due / review	Evidence of completion
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

Final notes