



Retail Portfolio Saves \$1.85M+ and Cuts Next-Year Budget 16.9%

A CASE STUDY

Bearstone's BearGuard™ Expense Management Turns Line-Item Chaos into Measurable Savings

At-a-glance results

\$1,852,314 in credits recovered (Jan 2023–Jul 2025)
\$2,122,436 in overcharges identified; \$270,122 currently in process
16.9% reduction in expected telecom budget from FY2024 → FY2025
114 of 120 monthly invoices auto-audited in BearGuard™ (≈95% coverage)

Source & period: SPARC Value workbook + Bearstone overview deck (Jan 2023–Jul 2025).

The Challenge

A multi-brand retail portfolio (Aero/Nautica, Brooks Brothers, Eddie Bauer, F21, Lucky, Reebok) needed to **control telecom spend across hundreds of stores** while balancing openings, relocations, and closings. Complexity and billing opacity had created a familiar pattern: **unused services, outdated rates, bundled surcharges, over-tiered bandwidth, and charges at inactive sites**—the five recurring errors Bearstone flags most often.

The team also lacked a **single, accurate inventory** of all services and contracts—making it hard to reconcile invoices, dispute errors, or forecast with confidence. Bearstone’s philosophy centers on **monthly validation, transparency, and a customer-first partnership**, all of which were missing in the status quo.

The Solution

Bearstone onboarded the portfolio to **BearGuard™**, its cloud TEM platform and managed service:

- **Automated invoice ingestion & audit** of 114/120 monthly invoices; line-item validation down to taxes, one-time fees, new services, and cancellations still billing. **Incorrect charges are disputed and followed through to resolution.**
- **Always-current inventory** of circuits/lines by brand & store; BearGuard becomes the **system of record** that ties billing to services and contracts.
- **Red/Yellow/Green variance report** each cycle (to-the-penny matches are green; tolerances are yellow; exceptions are red) to focus the team only on true exceptions.
- **Dispute management as a service**: Bearstone files on carrier forms with CSV-level evidence, handling the administrative work end-to-end.
- **Vendor collaboration**: regular reviews with Granite and AT&T; tracking issues and credits across providers.

Bearstone’s process—monthly audits, full visibility, and hands-on dispute management—reflects its customer-first, transparency-driven brand ethos.

The Outcome

Total financial impact (Jan 2023–Jul 2025)

- **\$1,852,314 in credits recovered** across brands; **\$2,122,436 total overcharges identified**; **\$270,122 currently open/in process**. *Source: SPARC Value.xlsx (Bearstone Value tab)*.
- **16.9% budget reduction** from FY2024 → FY2025 through elimination of redundant services and rate corrections.
- **≈95% invoice coverage automated** in BearGuard™ (114 of 120 monthly invoices).

Brand-level highlights (Disputed → Credits → Remaining)

- **Aero/Nautica:** \$975,194 → **\$872,747** → \$102,447
- **Brooks Brothers:** \$6,105 → **\$199** → \$5,906
- **Eddie Bauer:** \$267,975 → **\$367,225** → **-\$99,250** (credits exceeded disputes; historical corrections)
- **F21:** \$531,001 → **\$286,295** → \$244,706
- **Lucky:** \$264,413 → **\$271,228** → **-\$6,815** (credits exceeded disputes)
- **Reebok:** \$77,749 → **\$54,621** → \$23,129

Source: SPARC Value.xlsx (Bearstone Value tab).

Operational wins

- **Single source of truth** for inventory & invoicing, enabling **budgeting/forecasting with one click**.
- **Recurring error detection** month-over-month (Bearstone typically sees ~10% monthly carrier over-billing across clients), preventing re-accumulation of waste.
- Issues surfaced in both directions (e.g., Office@Hand under-billing variances) so finance can plan accurately and avoid surprises.

“We’ve never met with a company and not found overbilling—often without changing carriers.”

Why Bearstone (and BearGuard™)

- **Monthly validation & transparency** as a service—not a one-off audit—so errors don't creep back.
- **Proprietary platform** built to match invoices to an **accurate, living inventory** and contracts—your source of truth.
- **Hands-on dispute management** that carriers take seriously—because we come with their own CSV-level data.