



Local heroes

As one of the most popular teams in the National Football League—and the only community-owned major league pro sports team in the U.S.—the Green Bay Packers enjoy the unwavering loyalty of a huge fan base. Come football season, that loyalty translates into serious voice and data traffic at Packers HQ, creating wild fluctuations in bandwidth demand. The local heroes at Windstream Enterprise came back with a solid game plan to ensure that Packers coaches, players, front office executives, contact center staff and fans all have reliable voice and high-speed Internet every day, including game days.

GREEN BAY PACKERS

Industry

Professional sports/entertainment

Customer

Major NFL franchise

Two locations in Green Bay, WI

Employees: 300 full-time, a few thousand support staff

Challenges

Handling call volumes

Meeting fluctuating bandwidth demands

Lack of disaster recovery

Solutions

Dynamic IP

Managed Router

Fiber build to both locations

Results

Bandwidth flexibility

No bottlenecks at peak periods

Resilience

When 80,000 of your closest friends show up

“Monday through Friday, 365 days of the year, we operate as any other business would,” says Mitch Kluska, corporate sales executive at the Packers. “We have similar business units as the majority of companies across America. The main difference for us is, we also host these high-profile events.”

Those high-profile events, of course, are game days. During football season, 80,000 fans converge on the stadium at historic Lambeau Field in Green Bay every time the Packers play at home. To serve those fans, the organization’s internal headcount increases by an order of magnitude—from just under 300 office and administrative staff to a few thousand support staff.

The fans who don’t make it to Green Bay are hitting up the Packers Pro Shop—typically, the number one or number two highest-selling pro shop in the league—either online or by phone. Which means the Packers’ call center, housed in the Pro Shop’s warehouse and shipping facility located several miles from the stadium, gets bombarded with orders for Packers jerseys, Cheesehead hats and more.

The Packers’ existing system was at a tipping point. Bottlenecks occurred whenever the team ran sales or promotional events. Voice traffic from both the stadium and the call center ran through the Lambeau Field offices, putting the entire organization at risk if an outage occurred—there was no redundancy built in or disaster recovery plan in place. The organization also had E911 concerns.

Management at the Packers organization knew they wanted to migrate to SIP to better manage the extreme ebbs and flows of seasonal voice and Internet traffic. But with so much riding on their communications system, they wanted a strong local presence they could trust.

“Local support was at the top of our list,” says Kenny Ansel, Assistant Director of Information Technology at the Packers. “We’re homers. So having someone to partner with around here was important.”

Home advantage

With a presence in Green Bay, Windstream Enterprise was able to devote the time and attention to the Packers’ particular needs. “They brought in local engineers. We were pretty wowed with their knowledge,” says Kenny. “Working with them on site was virtually flawless—if they had to re-engineer something on the fly, we just kept moving forward.”

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Using Dynamic IP from Windstream Enterprise, the Packers can leverage their existing phone equipment while enabling SIP-based trunking for voice and data connectivity over a point-to-point fiber connection. With 1 GB capacity at Lambeau Field and 10 Mbps at the Packers Pro Shop call center, the organization is ready for whatever the fans throw at it. The solution’s built-in redundancy—enabled by Windstream Enterprise direct trunk overflow (DTO)—allows for multi-location

survivability and business continuity if an interruption ever occurs. With one call to make for all of the Packers’ communication needs, the arrangement works. “Having all the services under one umbrella made sense,” says Kenny. “The price was right, too.”

A provider with a stake in the game

With their newly upgraded system, the Packers are ready to take their customer service and support all the way. They’ve got the bandwidth and the flexibility they need to handle the call volumes and network traffic on peak days. The network is resilient enough to keep the business operating if a site goes down. And they’ve got a communications partner who shares their values of local pride and involvement. “Windstream Enterprise has that presence in Wisconsin that makes us feel more comfortable,” says Mitch. “It supports our business case for switching. But it supports our brand case as well.”

About Windstream Enterprise

Windstream Enterprise collaborates with businesses across the U.S. to drive digital transformation by delivering solutions that solve today’s most complex networking and communication challenges.

To learn more about
Windstream Enterprise, visit
windstreamenterprise.com

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