



SD-WAN improves network performance and the customer experience

Founded in 1972, James River Equipment (JRE) is a leading John Deere equipment and tractor retailer serving commercial and residential customers. The company manages full-service equipment sales, rentals, maintenance and part supplies through a network of retail centers spanning three Mid-Atlantic states, plus a sister operation in four western states. For the last four years, John Deere has recognized JRE with its Partners in Excellence Award.

At a glance



Industry

Equipment retail sales and service

Customer

Headquartered in Ashland, VA

50+ full-service retail stores; 1,800+ employees

100+ field service vehicles

Challenges

Current network could not support growth

Network performance negatively impacted customer experience

Lack of in-house resources to address issues

Solutions

SD-WAN Concierge™

MPLS

Results

Increased bandwidth and network uptime

Improved application performance and cost structure

Readiness for cloud migration/e-commerce

Evolving needs for bandwidth and uptime

Ten years ago, the company converged its voice and data services onto a single MPLS network, which was then state-of-the-art. After years of corporate growth and increasing bandwidth demand, the network could no longer keep up. The company strives to connect every incoming customer call to a live representative during business hours, while also ensuring that applications are highly responsive to bolster employee productivity. Both the customer experience and the internal user experience were beginning to fall below expectations.

Under the direction of IT Manager John Bussert, JRE initially undertook a do-it-yourself approach to upgrading network performance with SD-WAN. “We soon learned that DIY upgrading would require a great deal of resources, manpower, and learning,” says Bussert. “Our staff of seven

IT professionals is highly capable, but we clearly needed assistance to get this right.” At this time Windstream Enterprise,

“We tried implementing SD-WAN ourselves, and realized we needed help. Windstream Enterprise made the transition simple and relatively pain-free, and their ongoing day-to-day network management frees my staff to focus on strategic initiatives.”

the provider of JRE’s converged MPLS network, reached out to Bussert with its new SD-WAN solution.

Building on an existing relationship and infrastructure

A long history of customer satisfaction with Windstream Enterprise gave the company the confidence to upgrade from MPLS to SD-WAN. Windstream Enterprise representatives worked with the company's IT team to plan an SD-WAN implementation that would run "over the top" of existing MPLS and bring-your-own broadband circuits. This approach preserved the company's existing network investments and enabled a far smoother and more efficient implementation than would have been possible otherwise. Migrating MPLS and broadband circuits from current devices to SD-WAN edge devices typically required only 15 minutes of downtime per location.

The JRE Experience preserved

JRE IT has worked for years to deliver an excellent "JRE Experience." This includes a combination of responsive voice services that immediately deliver live connections for customer calls, and applications that enable employees to further enhance the customer experience, such as rapid enterprise resource planning product look-ups for fast location and retrieval of in-store inventory during customer visits.

The relatively painless network upgrade to SD-WAN has improved the customer and internal user experiences to JRE's complete satisfaction. "Application speed has increased dramatically because of additional bandwidth; we experience far fewer temporary outages; and our customers are able to connect with live representatives on every call to every location during business hours," says Bussert. "Because Windstream Enterprise delivers our SD-WAN as a managed service, my staff and I are able to spend more time on strategic initiatives rather than focusing on the day-to-day tasks of network monitoring."

In addition to the JRE Experience, the "Windstream Enterprise experience" is highly valued by JRE. "My staff and I recognize that a move to the cloud is inevitable, and that we will soon be moving headlong into e-commerce," says Bussert. "As a strategic partner, Windstream Enterprise continues to proactively recommend enhancements by presenting opportunities to deploy new technologies. They delivered a smooth transition to SD-WAN, and I know I can count on Windstream Enterprise to help us continually improve our network to support new initiatives. We already have a great head start with the high bandwidth and reliability we enjoy today."

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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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