



# Catering to new guest expectations for casual dining

As consumers lean into technology more and more in all aspects of everyday life, their expectation of digital innovation extends to their dining experiences as well. For this popular casual dining restaurant with over half a century of success, embracing the latest technology enhanced their guest experience across hundreds of locations worldwide. But their efforts were hindered by frequent outages, limited visibility and a disjointed experience via multiple vendors. This became an ongoing threat to each restaurant's operations efficiency—which in turn could have a negative impact on guests' dining experiences, company revenue and overall brand value. They needed a better, more unified solution and a trusted partner to manage it all—one they found in Windstream Enterprise.

## At a glance

### Industry

Casual dining restaurant

### Customer

U.S. corporation/global franchise

250+ U.S. locations

### Challenges

Frequent switch outages

Expensive & unreliable T1 MPLS access

Burden to manage BYOB cable access

Lack of visibility into switches

Multiple technology vendors

### Solutions

Fortinet Secure SD-WAN High Availability

Fortinet Managed Network Security

Fortinet LAN Services:

- + Fortinet Secure WiFi & Analytics
- + Fortinet Cloud-Managed Switches

Remote Reboot Service

Cable & Cellular Broadband

WE Connect Portal

### Results

Eliminated switch outages

Gained greater network visibility

Enhanced guest experiences

Realized significant cost savings

Leveraged a single-source partner

## Bringing tech to the table

Part of the company's digital transformation was deploying high-availability SD-WAN to enable efficiency-boosting changes, such as table-side credit card transactions and real-time order entry via servers' tablets, while also providing guests with secure WiFi service. However, the network technology was supported by a different vendor's switches, which would typically crash at one to two locations each month. Because each SD-WAN device supported half of the tables, each crash reduced that location's operations capacity to 50% for a day or more. Spare switches had to be kept on hand for the inevitable crashes, and IT staff time and resources were spent on the extensive repairs. The network challenges were further exacerbated by the multiple technology and access vendors.

Windstream Enterprise deployed a Fortinet full stack solution which included Fortinet Secure SD-WAN with Fortinet Managed Network Security and Fortinet LAN Services (Secure WiFi & Analytics and Fortinet Cloud-Managed Switches). Every site had Fortinet Secure SD-WAN deployed in a high availability configuration for maximum uptime. Windstream Enterprise also provided a

managed power source so that the support team could perform a remote reboot when required.

***“We are pleased with our new solution and dedicated service from Windstream Enterprise and have a high level of trust in the Fortinet technology.”***

IT Manager

The customer is already seeing the advantages of the changes, saying, “We are pleased with our new solution and have a high level of trust in the Windstream Enterprise solution powered by Fortinet technology.” The advantages of the Fortinet solution are measurable, including a 50% cost reduction overall. The Cloud-Managed Switches are performing as desired without any crashes, and by eliminating the frequent emergency replacements, restaurants no longer lose productivity and revenue to network downtime. And with secure, reliable WiFi & Analytics, the company can leverage data-driven insights to build customer-loyalty with more personalized guest experiences, including rewards, offers and promotions tailored to their preferences.

## Made to order

The restaurant was using a combination of T1 circuits from a previous MPLS network and BYOB cable Internet. The BYOB was a burden to manage for each location, and the T1 circuits were expensive and unreliable legacy access—adding up to inconsistency and inefficiency.

Windstream Enterprise designed reliable, cost-effective solutions to fit their needs, supplying all the cable broadband connections and replaced the T1 circuits with Cellular Broadband in an active/backup configuration. Migrating to dual broadband connections allowed for significant cost savings, greater bandwidth and eased the hassle of managing cable broadband.

## No hidden ingredients

Although the customer had visibility and control of the SD-WAN solution, they did not have visibility into the switches, which were a main cause of the revenue-losing network crashes.

This challenge was met with the award-winning WE Connect portal, providing complete visibility and co-management control for the entire Fortinet solution—SD-WAN, Managed Network Services, Secure WiFi and Cloud-Managed Switches. The company had successfully streamlined from four separate technology platforms into one. The customer uses the portal daily to check on the connectivity status for all locations including bandwidth usage, enabling them to provide layer 1 troubleshooting.

## Recipe for success

Having hundreds of locations around the globe is complicated enough but operating with multiple vendors added another layer to the challenges. Separate vendors supplied the company with WiFi and security solutions, making four different technology vendors in total.

With Windstream Enterprise as their trusted partner, the company could count on one single service provider to manage everything related to the network connectivity. The company's management shares that the change is already making a positive impact, saying, "Windstream Enterprise project management and service delivery teams have done an excellent job of converting our locations to the new solution and ensuring we are ready for business when the doors open."

Like other businesses in the service industry, restaurants are leveraging technology to improve their performance and to enhance customer experiences. A busy dining room is a good thing, but no one likes a long wait for their food to arrive or for their credit card to be processed in another area. When innovations—like the network solutions enabled by Windstream Enterprise—speed up processes like placing orders in real-time directly from a tablet and handling card transactions at the table, everyone benefits. Restaurants can operate more efficiently, servers can turn tables faster and guests can rely on better service.

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Cloud-enabled connectivity, communications and security—guaranteed.

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