



All roads lead to growth

A national auto parts retailer with more than 1,000 locations across North America needed a solution that would increase reliability for voice and data services, reduce costs, simplify network management and speed up deployments to new locations. SD-WAN Concierge™ with landline broadband and wireless LTE connectivity met the customer's immediate needs and positioned them for future growth.

At a glance

Industry

Retail

Customer

Automotive parts

National footprint

Expansion plans

Challenges

Secure connectivity

Network downtime

Slow deployment to new locations

Solutions

SD-WAN Concierge™

Dual access (broadband/LTE)

Professional Services

Results

Optimized bandwidth

Increased security

Higher reliability

Lower operational costs

Reliable/resilient connectivity

Faster location deployment

Missing components stall expansion plans

For retail operations, access to point-of-sale (POS) systems, voice and data services and corporate resources are some of the most important factors of success for the business. As the size of the business continued to grow, network costs soared, performance suffered, network outages were prevalent, calls were getting dropped and their distributed network became complex and difficult to manage. The retailer needed a simple, flexible, cost-effective solution that could be deployed quickly, would simplify the management of their network resources, and allow them to stay operational even in the event of a network outage.

With more than 1,000 branch offices to support—and new locations rapidly opening across the U.S.—the networks were expensive, slow to deploy and far too complex to manage effectively. The corporate IT organization was looking for a secure, reliable, fully managed, all-in-one network solution that would be quick to deploy, easy to manage, and could facilitate both wired and wireless WAN connectivity through a single platform.

Reliable primary WAN with seamless wireless failover was vital, as connectivity for voice and data services is an integral part of any retail operation. The existing solution was not providing the level of reliability expected because in most cases, the secondary broadband wired connection was also failing when the primary connection failed. This was unacceptable because the company relies on many mission-critical applications and services that require connectivity including their POS service, voice services, corporate server access, in-store security and access to cloud-based applications.

The multiple challenges the auto parts retailer faced required a solution that would reduce network downtime, simplify the management of the network, and enable them to quickly provision new locations.

A network overhaul

Windstream Enterprise proposed the SD-WAN Concierge™ solution with broadband connectivity along with a 4G LTE WAN connectivity and an LTE wireless data plan. Windstream Enterprise's Professional Services team worked with the customer to ensure that the final design and implementation would address current needs as well as anticipate future growth.

The solution provided more network flexibility and reliability, reduced the complexity of managing the network, and improved network reliability with diverse broadband and LTE access at each site. With SD-WAN, the retailer gained greater application visibility and control through SD-WAN's portal which functions as a centralized management tool that monitors and selects network paths to avoid slowdowns and congestion for higher performance based on customer-defined business priorities.

SD-WAN also met the company's need for greater security. SD-WAN includes a firewall and dynamic IPSec encryption with end-to-end security for data transmission over public networks.

Up and running

By combining landline broadband connectivity with wireless LTE connectivity, SD-WAN Concierge gave the customer more network flexibility, reduced the complexity of managing the network, increased the security of business applications, lowered the cost of access, and provided reliable and resilient connectivity, even in the event of a natural disaster.

As a result, the company's IT staff was empowered to maximize limited resources and keep each retail location connected to its most critical resources. Of great importance to the customer, Windstream Enterprise's SD-WAN solution with LTE gave the company day-1 Internet access and the ability to open new retail locations quickly and on schedule.

Cloud-enabled connectivity, communications and security—guaranteed.

The timing of opening a new location doesn't always coordinate with network provisioning; however, with SD-WAN Concierge, the auto parts retailer could get locations online quickly, and for as long as needed. Once the landline circuit was installed, they could migrate the LTE connection to another role such as wireless failover to ensure five 9's reliability.

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