



The logistics of performance

A leading provider of shipping services, LSO is a regional parcel carrier with 60 locations throughout the U.S. Despite its size, LSO provides levels of service equal to those of its national competitors, at a rate that is 40% less expensive, while extending money-backed guarantees for additional quality assurance. When faced with unexpected and reoccurring outages, LSO turned to Windstream Enterprise for a more reliable, scalable and cost-effective network technology solution.

At a glance



Industry

Logistics/regional parcel carrier

Customer

1,000 employees

One of five regional carriers in the U.S.

60 locations; headquarters in Austin and Nashville

Serves TX, OK, AR, TN, LA, FL, MS, AL, NM and Mexico

Challenges

Multiple, remote locations

Frequent network outages

Integration of two legacy network systems

Solutions

SD-WAN Concierge™

Dual access

Professional services

Results

Superior reliability

Improved ROI

Increased bandwidth

Business/IT agility

Driven to expand

The delivery industry serves two masters—time and the customer—and success or failure is determined by a company's ability to please both equally, which is no small task, especially when customers are relying on critical deliveries such as medical supplies or legal documents. Even in this environment and with competition from industry giants like UPS and FedEx, LSO has carved out an impressive niche among carriers that's even bigger than the state where it began.

LSO began as Lone Star Overnight, a Texas parcel delivery firm more than 25-years ago. In 2014, they acquired Nashville-based Express Courier, and as their business expanded outside of Texas, they changed the name of the company to LSO to better convey the depth and breadth of their service. Today, the company has 1,000 employees including some 200 performing administrative functions. However, the majority of the workforce consists of 800 'on-road resources,' that pick-up and deliver thousands of packages every day.

Growing pains

An expanded company footprint meant greater market opportunity, but the first task was integration. Enter Neal Cung, who joined in 2016 as CTO and CIO to handle the many technical challenges of bringing two companies together including two headquarters—Lone Star's in Austin and Express Courier's in Nashville—and some 60 total business locations in metro areas across the states they serve. In addition to multiple vendors, operating systems, and network platforms,

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Neal Cung
CTO and CIO

all had a heavy reliance on legacy technologies like MPLS with single 1.5Mbps T1s. Network outages became common, and a lack of redundancy meant that when connections to the data center went down, the operational integrity of this 24/7 business went down with it. As a full-service parcel carrier, LSO is responsible for tracking the status of the 50,000 customers shipping the parcels, as well as providing the status for the consignees (recipients of the parcels), numbering in the millions.

With implications of that magnitude, Cung's approach to remedying the situation was strictly business. "Technology is first and foremost an enabler of what the business does. We pick up and deliver packages and the technology solution must support both strategic and tactical goals. The multiple challenges we faced required a solution that would reduce network downtime, and enable us to adapt quickly to the changing business environment."

Special delivery

After exploring other options and providers, Cung and LSO chose Windstream Enterprise to implement a software-defined wide-area network (SD-WAN) as an overlay that made it easier to knit locations and operating systems together. LSO also deployed dual access connections to enable the SD-WAN to provide the required uptime for business continuity. "IT agility and turning up new locations is important. Our facility in Austin has outgrown its location and though we are 'just' moving down the street, it's a major operation. We're confident as that site comes online, Windstream Enterprise will ensure everything is in alignment."

In conjunction with their SD-WAN implementation, LSO also opened a second network/data colocation facility in Atlanta so that in the event the Austin facility goes down, the system would remain online and business can continue without interruption. Windstream Enterprise's Professional Services team was instrumental in migrating LSO's legacy network to SD-WAN.

Down the road

LSO is already realizing operational cost savings and anticipates more as implementation continues and they become increasingly familiar with SD-WAN's features and benefits. As they anticipate increasing performance and reliability, LSO looks forward to leveraging the monitoring and self-service management tools to further optimize network reliability performance, and utilizing the operating alerts that Windstream Enterprise SD-WAN can uniquely provide.

LSO is looking next to improving their voice/unified communications and call center capabilities by deploying Windstream Enterprise's UCaaS and CCaaS solutions over their SD-WAN service. Thanks to Windstream Enterprise SD-WAN and these future planned improvements, LSO's ongoing integration and network transformation ride should lead to non-stop progress and rear-view mirror views of milestones achieved and exceeded.

"As a tech leader, I have to look at the latest and greatest proven tech available. SD-WAN has not been around a long time but with the benefits I'm seeing, I am 100% confident it was the right solution."

Neal Cung
CTO and CIO

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