

Arkansas's Largest Ambulance Company Profits by Using CradlePoint Solution to Switch from DSL to Wireless in Branch Offices

Switch to 4G LTE lowers Internet costs 75%; increases access speed 1500%

SUMMARY

This large non-profit ambulance service was paying a high price for slow, intermittent DSL service to its central and distributed satellite offices. The company worked with Little Rock, AR based Cellular Data Systems LLC to replace DSL with 4G LTE wireless using CradlePoint COR IBR600 series wireless routers. It now experiences far faster access speeds, greater uptime, and much lower costs.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Headquartered in Little Rock, the company has satellite offices across central Arkansas. The largest emergency medical services provider in the state, it is privately owned and contracts with the state to provide emergency medical services throughout the region.

BUSINESS NEEDS

The ambulance service needs network and Internet connectivity for a number of reasons. Its emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are required to take continuing medical education classes, and usually take them online in the office between emergency calls. It also needs a secure network connection at each location to manage digital time cards, post work schedules, and send secure email.

Previously, the company had been using DSL for its network and Internet connectivity. The system was slow (delivering an average of less than 3 Mbps), intermittent (often crashing from no more than a rain shower), and expensive (costing the company hundreds of dollars per month, per location).

SOLUTION

The ambulance service worked with Cellular Data Solutions to replace its DSL service with 4G LTE, installing CradlePoint COR IBR600 series wireless routers at each of its locations. It also installed a CradlePoint device in its Mobile Command Center, which it uses when providing emergency medical services at marathons and other community events.



DEPLOYMENT: CradlePoint IBR600 Series with 3G/4G LTE

APPLICATION: Branch Office Networking: Update existing DSL service to LTE to increase speed and reliability, lower cost.

MARKET: Health Care, Branch Office

BENEFITS

SPEED AND RELIABILITY

The company's headquarters and satellite offices were once getting speeds at and below 3 Mbps. With 4G LTE, speeds are never lower than 20 Mbps, and average between 20 and 45 Mbps.

“ *We're getting speeds as high as 56 Mbps,” says the company's IT manager. “This has been very well received by our EMTs. The online medical courses they take run much better at these faster connection speeds, and the service has been consistent with none of the downtime we used to see with DSL.”*

AFFORDABILITY

The company previously paid hundreds of dollars per month for DSL. By implementing CradlePoint LTE networking solutions, it has reduced its annual Internet access costs by more than 75%.

“ *By switching to LTE, the company should be able to pay back its investment in the CradlePoint solutions in a little more than a year,” says Chuck Denton, Cellular Data Solutions president. “That's pretty strong ROI.”*

MORE CONNECTIONS

With its previous DSL-based system, the ambulance company was limited to having no more than one or two of its EMTs per location online at any given time. Each CradlePoint device enables up to 35 users to get online at each location at one time.

SMALLER FOOTPRINT

The small size of the CradlePoint devices enables the company to keep them out of harm's way. This reduces both clutter, and the possibility that an employee might inadvertently damage or disable the device.

“ *We mount the routers on the wall in small Plexiglas boxes. We cut two holes in the top for the antennas, and then lock the box so people won't disturb them,” says the IT manager. “It's just one less thing for us to worry about.”*

MOBILE, BUT SECURE

The IT manager says that company policy prevents the use of WiFi when transmitting sensitive information. The configuration on CradlePoint devices allows the company to use the device to bring in a wireless signal when it is at community events, and then connect multiple devices without using WiFi.



“ We use LTE for our data. On the other end of the CradlePoint we install a small switch, and then hardwire in our laptops,” says the IT manager. “We don’t use the local WiFi or hot spots when we’re out on location.”

LESS HASSLE

The ambulance company has not yet needed to call CradlePoint customer support. However the IT manager suspects that if he does make the call, it will be a far easier process than the one he routinely endured when seeking DSL support.

“ With DSL, I got really tired of dealing with support. Tired of being asked the same questions. Tired of having someone with a lot less experience than me telling me to try really basic things like unplugging the modem. I haven’t had to call CradlePoint customer support yet. But if I ever need to, I’m sure it will be a lot easier than with DSL.”

