

WALTERS-DIMMICK PETROLEUM

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Dale Williams ■ Director of Retail Operations
WALTERS-DIMMICK PETROLEUM



New Edge Fuels Convenience Store Success

Walters-Dimmick Petroleum, Inc. (WDP), a marketer and distributor of Shell petroleum products, operates 58 convenience stores in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. These retail hubs feature grocery items and fuel pumps as well as additional services in select locations ranging from quick-service restaurants to car washes. For several years WDP has trusted New Edge Networks for a broadband wide area network that improves communications and productivity in its stores and across the company.

Network Challenges

Convenience stores can reap numerous advantages from using broadband network technology in their core business activities. Well-managed broadband services provide a foundation for connecting store locations, speeding payments, and powering applications and operations. Originally, WDP used only local dial-up connections to link its locations to the Internet and to one another, but the limitations – particularly intermittent data loss and slow transmission – led the company to seek out a high-quality broadband solution.

“The dial-up telephone connections we were using were expensive and could not support new online store operation systems and controls we needed in today’s business environment for speed, convenience and efficiency,” says Dale Williams, WDP’s director of retail operations.

Through a consultant, Williams was introduced to New Edge Networks, which has a track record as a leader and innovator in retail broadband services (including a Frost & Sullivan 2007 Customer Value Enhancement Award and 2008 Service of the Year Award). New Edge designed WDP a cost-effective broadband solution that allowed for the implementation of several key retail applications on one multi-site network.

More Bandwidth and a Private Network

In place of dial-up, New Edge installed high-speed DSL connections at WDP headquarters and most of its stores. Data transmission between sites travels via the host over a CPE-based virtual

Challenges

- Convenience-store retailer with 50+ locations and multiple operations
- Dial-up access provided insufficient bandwidth
- Need a cost-effective, flexible network solution

Solutions

- CPE-based virtual private network (VPN)
- High-speed DSL connections

Benefits

- Increased productivity, efficiency and security
- Improved communication between headquarters and stores
- Faster payment processing
- Network monitoring, including video surveillance and fuel tanks
- Bandwidth and scalability to add future applications

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private network (VPN). Under this network design, the host connects to remote locations using the public Internet, but with the security of a dynamic tunnel that is established by software running on routers (CPE, or customer-premises equipment) owned and managed by New Edge. The VPN's encryption and tunneling technologies guard against Internet security threats and support the communication of sensitive business and customer information.

The DSL connections not only facilitated the cost-saving elimination of some phone lines that were dedicated to dial-up, but also gave WDP the bandwidth to achieve productivity gains in its retail and restaurant operations. The applications running over its DSL-based network include several core convenience-store functions:

- **Communications and reporting.** Email and Internet access share a robust, always-on platform, and stores can easily send daily sales reports and download pricing and inventory updates over the network. "Broadband has upgraded our interoffice communications in two ways," says Williams. "It's made information exchange among all our sites faster and less expensive and, as a result, communication has improved greatly."
- **Check verification.** Using a broadband connection to TeleCheck has expedited check-payment processing, reducing customer wait times.
- **Card payments.** WDP's quick-service restaurants rely on their DSL connection to securely process credit card transactions, giving customers even faster service.
- **Video surveillance.** With digital security cameras monitoring store environments, WDP management can review the images over the network. This arrangement optimizes the allocation of security resources and also contributes to loss prevention and the safety of employees and customers.
- **Fuel-tank monitoring.** Gasoline contractors can check the fuel supply of individual convenience stores and use this information to make timely deliveries to replenish on-site tanks.
- **Car-wash monitoring.** WDP has added a car-wash facility to one of its locations. It monitors the car wash over the network to have access to instantaneous information on performance or any servicing needs that arise.

Flexibility and Scalability for the Future

Just as WDP delivers convenience to its customers, New Edge's CPE-based VPN with DSL is a highly flexible, convenient network platform. It is a fitting solution for companies such as WDP with many locations and a small IT staff. Adding new stores to the network infrastructure is as simple as installing a DSL line and configuring a router. The DSL connections also provide sufficient bandwidth so that WDP can consider adding more network applications.

"We're always focused on maximizing the efficiency of our operations," says Williams. "With our private broadband network, we're able to proactively look at future cost-saving applications that weren't possible with dial-up."



Why New Edge Networks?

New Edge Networks, an EarthLink company, eliminates the inconvenience and complexity of managing multiple carrier relationships, technologies and geographies. We enable you to focus on your core business while we manage the broadband network infrastructure to stringent performance metrics. Our customers benefit from one seamless network, one provider and one point of contact.

Get Started

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