COMCAST BUSINESS
ETHERNET NETWORK SERVICE

ENHANCES LIFEWORKS NORTHWEST OPERATIONS

SITUATION
- Oregon mental healthcare provider
- 700+ employees
- 16 locations
- Help nearly 19,000 individuals annually with mental health, addiction, and prevention services

CHALLENGE
- MPLS network with hub and spoke configuration
- Limited capacity

SOLUTION
- Comcast Business Ethernet Network Service

RESULTS
- 50 Mbps of scalable, low-latency capacity
- Improved performance for medical documents and other applications
- Cost-effective services

OREGON MENTAL HEALTHCARE PROVIDER DEPLOYS COMCAST BUSINESS ETHERNET NETWORK SERVICE TO CONNECT MULTIPLE PORTLAND METRO AREA LOCATIONS

PORTLAND-AREA NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION PROMOTES STABLE COMMUNITIES BY PROVIDING QUALITY MENTAL HEALTHCARE FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS

Oregon's LifeWorks Northwest (NW) provides mental healthcare, addiction and prevention services to establish a healthier community. It started as a child guidance center in 1961 and grew to serve the needs of the community at large. Today, it has multiple locations across the Portland metro area.

The organization has more than 700 employees that care for nearly 19,000 people annually. LifeWorks NW's mental health services meet the needs of people across the age spectrum: children, families, teens, and adults, including seniors.

ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH AND DEMAND FOR SERVICES CREATED NEED FOR GREATER TECHNOLOGY CAPACITY

LIfeWorks NW had long relied on a 25 megabits per second (Mbps) MPLS network to connect its 16 largest locations to support electronic invoices, fee processing, emails, and client check-ins, among other routine operational needs. As LifeWorks NW continued to grow it needed its computer systems to grow too, to be able to meet capacity and new application demands. The need became apparent when it became commonplace for applications to run slower with increased demand.

The capacity issues were further compounded by the MPLS network's "hub and spoke" configuration. When one of the LifeWorks NW locations experienced an outage, the whole network would go down. And when a system update was pushed through, all of the computers at LifeWorks NW would get the update at the same time, causing the network connection to slow down.

"One time, a system update was pushed out automatically and it took a while for all of the computers across our company to download a 50 Mbps file," said Nate McAlmond, Information Technology Director. "With so many individuals depending on us, we knew that we needed to find a better solution to continue to provide high quality care."

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COMCAST BUSINESS ETHERNET NETWORK SERVICE DELIVERS RELIABLE CONNECTIVITY AND SCALABLE CAPACITY

LifeWorks NW knew it needed to implement a technology solution and since it was already working with Comcast Business at some of its smaller sites, it made sense to engage Comcast Business to solve this capacity need. After a system analysis, Comcast Business deployed a 50 Mbps Ethernet Network Service that connected LifeWorks NW's 16 largest locations.

"We knew that Comcast Business was the right solution for us, because of its extensive network footprint, positive reputation and ability to cost effectively deliver Ethernet services," said McAlmond. "And in just four months, the new Ethernet network was installed. Needless to say, we are impressed with the services we have received and anticipate we will continue working with Comcast Business for future technology needs."

With a Comcast Business Ethernet Network Service, LifeWorks NW locations are connected as if they are on the same Local Area Network (LAN). With this mesh network model, if one location experiences a service issue, the network stays up and running.
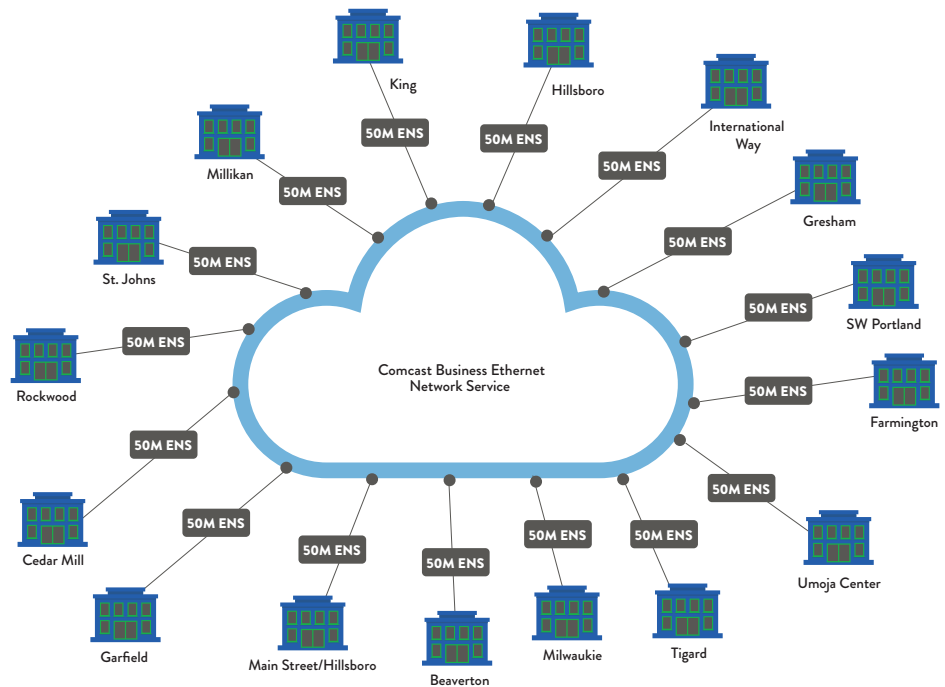
Following installation of the 50 Mbps network, LifeWorks NW staff noticed an immediate boost in application performance. Documents could be sent efficiently, and other business applications worked seamlessly.

The LifeWorks NW IT team was also able to accelerate its business continuity efforts. Added McAlmond: "With our other network, it would take a couple of weeks to get everything backed up across our network. With our Comcast Business Ethernet Network Service, now we can create a complete image of our full data center and replicate it across the network to a backup site in just a couple of days."