Delivering a world-class backup connectivity solution for Verizon retail stores

Verizon Backup Solutions for Business Continuity

Case study

For retailers, customer expectations are higher than ever. To engage customers and capture sales, they must provide a seamless, personalized shopping experience for each customer who walks through their physical and digital doors. And Verizon is no exception.

All about the customer

"We're continuously evolving our stores to focus more and more on customers and offer them efficient, personalized shopping experiences with digital technologies," says Alan Malcolm, senior manager in charge of Wi-Fi planning and connectivity for Verizon's stores. "This includes giving our sales associates the needed tools and connectivity to streamline sales transactions and serve customers better."

Verizon's 1,700 retail stores fully leverage the strength of the company's award-winning networks as well as the latest from its community of technology providers.

So when Malcolm and the Verizon team needed a new router to enhance the reliability of each store's personalized shopping experience, they explored multiple options. "We needed to be able to support 4G LTE Advanced as a backup technology," explains Malcolm. "We also wanted to use our wireline and wireless networks simultaneously for certain functions like updating sales associate tablets. By using 4G LTE as a tertiary, backup option, we were confident that we could keep store operations and customer service running at high service levels."

A winning strategy

Cisco's account team worked with Antonio Martinez and his Verizon evaluation team responsible for testing different routers.

"We considered different options around SD-WAN," explains Roman McDonald, systems engineer with Cisco. "We wanted to help make Verizon's retail business more agile – to turn up stores more quickly in support of its business priorities."

Verizon chose the Cisco 1000 Series Integrated Services Router (ISR 1000) for several reasons: throughput, stability and security.

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"The Cisco ISR 1000 represents the latest generation of LTE technology, providing up to twice the throughput that was available previously," advises Martinez who is responsible for store network connectivity. "Working with our Verizon Wireless Private Network, the combination provides the backup solution needed for stable performance along with encrypted VPN traffic for strong security."

Malcolm adds, "Our customers expect Wi-Fi service that matches their LTE Advanced experience. At the same time, we needed to segment the Wi-Fi network from the network running store operations to manage our security needs. The ISR 1000 acts as a 'software firewall' and protects the different traffic running on different networks."

Cisco and Verizon are now working to implement the routers in stores, using zero-touch deployment and dynamic multipoint VPN (DMVPN), in order to remain transport agnostic. "The stores can power up the ISR 1000 and it is automatically configured without a technician's involvement," explains McDonald. "Every day we're refining the process — which includes converting existing infrastructure — to turn up stores quickly and efficiently."

The most significant benefit

With the new Cisco-based solution, Verizon is simplifying its current configuration for better control of upfront and ongoing management costs.

And as Verizon continues to set the standard for wireless communications, it continues to stay focused on exceeding retail customer expectations. The new Cisco and Verizon solution is a critical part of the shopping experience strategy.

Perhaps the most significant benefit for Verizon retail stores is something that no one will notice — business continuity. "Our goal is to prevent disruptions," says Malcolm. "If our primary network goes down, the Wireless Private Network and Cisco ISR 1000 will step in so that the store can continue to process transactions and customers will continue to experience a positive shopping experience. And that's a good thing."

Why Verizon

Verizon Wireless Private Network gives your company a segregated private network to which your mobile devices can connect. It separates your data from public traffic and provides a direct connection back to your internal network. Access to and from this network is within your control. And it extends your network to reach everywhere the Verizon Wireless network does.

Why Cisco

The newest member of the ISR family, the 1000 Series, is the first fixed-configuration router with Cisco's trusted IOS XE software. Combined with a multicore architecture, the 1000 series yields high availability network services, increased mobility and next-generation WAN and LAN options including LTE Advanced and more. It also delivers enterprise class security including high-performance encryption, VPN, firewall, URL filtering and support for Verizon Wireless Private Network with Private Network Traffic Management.

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Learn more.

To learn more about how Verizon and Cisco can help build a reliable backup solution for your business, contact your Verizon Wireless business representative or visit us at verizonenterprise.com.