



Cashing into connectivity: How Ephrata National Bank invested in SD-WAN Concierge and their future

Since 1881, Ephrata National Bank (ENB) has always been devoted to serving their customers and community with very personalized banking. But when their outdated MPLS wasn't keeping up with the high bandwidth and resiliency demands required by modern banking, they knew it was time to go all in on optimized and resilient SD-WAN. Windstream Enterprise helped ENB to modernize their network with a much more flexible, secure and efficient solution.

At a glance



Industry

Banking

Customer

14 retail branches

A 140-year history

Challenges

Limited bandwidth

Unreliable on-premises voice system

Frequent network outages

Limited visibility into MPLS network

Solutions

SD-WAN Concierge™

High Bandwidth Ethernet

Broadband Cable

Cellular Broadband

WE Connect

Results

Increased bandwidth and reliability

Improved quality of voice services

Significantly reduced network outages

Clear visibility into network

Reduced expenses

Putting money where your mouth is

ENB is an independent community bank that has assured simple, convenient personal and business banking services to Lancaster County and surrounding areas.

For more than 140 years, ENB has been committed to serving local communities throughout their 14 branches with infinite financial opportunities, educational resources and advanced products and services—all at an affordable price. Their dedicated team of professionals is focused on top quality and value to deliver unmatched attentiveness and responsiveness.

As a longtime Windstream Enterprise MPLS customer, ENB recognized that the technology fueling the banking industry has changed tremendously in recent years. Financial institutions that were not reliant on any technology as little as 20 years ago can no longer exist without advanced connectivity.

“We have to be up 24/7,” said Randy Covington, SVP, information and technology officer at ENB. “That’s why it’s very important for our networks to always be up, available and constantly working.”

As banking continues to modernize, ENB acknowledged their need to upgrade network solutions in order to provide better resiliency and bandwidth that support the growing demand for cloud-based applications.

“Windstream Enterprise SD-WAN Concierge has given us the resiliency to meet our objective of 100% uptime for our customers.”

Randy Covington

SVP, Information and Technology Officer
at Ephrata National Bank

Their existing MPLS network wasn't aligning with the yearning for 100% uptime—ENB experienced roughly half a dozen network outages each year. While MPLS had a backup, it was painfully manual and required an engineer to be on-site to physically bring the circuit back online.

Adding to that inefficient process, the MPLS connection was bandwidth limited at some of the branches, which resulted in a poor employee experience at those locations.

Further challenges faced by ENB were that the legacy on-premises voice systems had a reliability issue, let alone they were costly to maintain. And there was an overall lack of visibility allowing Randy's team to understand what was happening within the network. This made it difficult to troubleshoot and provide corrections.

With these concerns standing in the way of business resiliency, ENB turned to Windstream Enterprise to implement modern-day solutions that would cater to their modern-day customers.

Modernizing connectivity at the drop of a dime

The first step to addressing ENB's outdated network was to replace MPLS with SD-WAN Concierge™ and three access connections for their 14 SD-WAN locations. Windstream Enterprise set up a primary Ethernet connection followed by a secondary cable connection that was provided by ENB in an active/active configuration. For extra measure, they set up a tertiary backup using a Cellular Broadband connection from Windstream Enterprise.

SD-WAN Concierge with high bandwidth Ethernet, cable broadband and Cellular Broadband undoubtedly reinforced the company's growing utilization of high-performing cloud applications and locked-in an automated failover to thwart off network outages.

This SD-WAN solution provided a highly reliable network that made it easier for ENB to transition to a cloud-based voice system. The previous MPLS network wouldn't have been able to do this.

Furthermore, SD-WAN Concierge encompassed the SD-WAN portal within WE Connect. This single pane of glass gives users a panoramic view into their network so it's easy to monitor performance analysis and trends in their applications, network access and devices across all locations.

A network in mint condition

Since implementing SD-WAN through Windstream Enterprise, Randy is pleased to report that complete network outages are an extremely rare occurrence. If a single access connection goes down, applications continue to function with seamless failover, thanks to the backup connections.

The IT staff is no longer burdened with manual procedures whenever a circuit fails—rather, they now allocate their time more meaningfully toward IT innovation and improvements.

With Ethernet and cable connections working in tandem, ENB no longer faces bandwidth issues or complaints regarding slow app performance. The increased bandwidth allows ENB to grow with the times, to support the cumulative use of cloud-based apps—an ongoing trend for the banking industry. It's also been incredibly helpful in supporting the rising demand experienced by the shift to fully remote work environments during the global pandemic.

Randy and his team are all now avid users of the SD-WAN portal within WE Connect, ensuring that mission critical apps are getting the bandwidth they need. "The WE Connect portal provides visibility and control to prioritize our applications and to easily troubleshoot issues," said Randy.

"The Windstream Enterprise team is highly responsive to our needs and been a great technology partner."

Randy Covington
SVP, Information and Technology Officer
at Ephrata National Bank

Operating SD-WAN to support the modernized voice system also resulted in better reliability and quality without breaking the bank—it actually reduced the expenses it took ENB to maintain these services.

You can bet your bottom dollar that ENB feels more prepared to answer the wants and needs of their local communities. SD-WAN from Windstream Enterprise has helped ENB to stay true to their mission of providing simple, convenient banking services to their customers.

Cloud-enabled connectivity, communications and security—guaranteed.

To learn more, visit windstreamenterprise.com

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