



Feeding America

Cisco Support Helps Feeding America Use Technology to Increase Efficiency and Cut Costs in Fight Against Hunger



The issue

The number of people who need help providing food for their families is growing, but resources at food banks nationwide are limited.



As struggling families continue to depend on food banks for sustenance, Feeding America is using Internet-based solutions to maximize resources and feed more people at risk of hunger.

Feeding America is the largest domestic hunger relief organization in the United States. Through its network of 202 member food banks, it distributes 3 billion pounds of donated food and grocery products each year, feeding more than 37 million people, including 3 million seniors and 14 million children. Since 2009, Cisco has contributed US\$1.4 million in cash, products, and employee time to Feeding America, supporting technology projects, such as the Athena Technology Program, that will streamline operations and save money across its entire network.



Networks

Human Networks:

Cisco employees, Feeding America employees, 202 Feeding America member food banks, 61,000 local charitable agencies

Technology Networks:

routers, switches, servers, antennas, product licenses, wireless infrastructure, adaptive security appliances, high-definition video cameras, open source platforms



12 Million

meals provided with savings from Transportation Optimization Project *



1.5 Million

in projected savings through Transportation Optimization Project †



4800

volunteer hours from Cisco employees at Feeding America member food banks ‡



384,000

meals provided with Cisco match of employee volunteer hours *

* Feeding America calculates that \$1 provides the equivalent of eight meals

† Fiscal year 2012

‡ Over five years

you + networks = impact^x



Photo courtesy Feeding America

The Issue

Nearly 50 million Americans live in food insecure households, meaning they cannot afford a consistent supply of nutritious food. Hunger puts children at risk for illness and low academic achievement and makes adults more likely to develop chronic illnesses. Food insecure families often rely on nonprofit food banks to supplement what they can afford to buy. But, as demand increases in a tough economy, food banks' resources remain the same. Feeding America and its member food banks are feeding 1 million more Americans each week than they did in 2006; they must find new ways to cut costs so they can increase services.

Human Networks

Feeding America relies on a vast human network—202 member food banks that deliver 3 billion pounds of food to 37 million people each year through 61,000 local charitable agencies. Recognizing that technology could enable this already powerful network to reach even more people with more resources, Cisco and the Cisco Foundation have contributed cash, products, and employee expertise to several key technology initiatives. Thousands of Cisco employees are also part of the Feeding America network, contributing volunteer time to Feeding America member food banks nationwide.

Technology Networks

Feeding America is committed to using technology to enhance its network's capacity to move food and resources throughout America in the fight against hunger. The Athena Technology Program is a five-year effort to migrate member food banks to a common technology platform. Food banks that are piloting the Athena platform are already enjoying reduced costs for such things as transportation, purchasing, marketing, and IT. And the organization's new web-based Transportation Management System is expected to reduce transportation costs across the entire network and free staff to spend their time identifying cost-cutting measures instead of managing deliveries.

Impact*

The Transportation Optimization Project funded in part by Cisco could save as much as US\$1.5 million over five years, enough to provide 12 million meals. Cisco employees are devoted supporters of Feeding America member food banks, contributing 4800 volunteer hours in the last fiscal year alone. A Cisco Foundation match of US\$10 per volunteer hour translated to US\$48,000 in cash donations to the food banks in fiscal year 2012—enough to provide 384,000 more meals for people at risk of hunger.

“This technology solution not only benefits Feeding America but it also benefits our 202 food banks that are stretched across the country to anticipate surges in demand and do things more effectively and efficiently which is going to lead to more food for more people.”

– Bill Thomas, Chief Supply Chain Officer, Feeding America

More Information

For more information on Cisco's partnership with Feeding America, please visit:
csr.cisco.com

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Cisco Corporate Social Responsibility

We believe that businesses have a responsibility to operate in ways that respect and ultimately benefit people, communities and the planet we live on; we call this Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Our core CSR philosophy is that impact multiplies whenever human and technology networks combine to solve a problem.

This is why we approach CSR the same way we approach business—by applying our technology, employee expertise and partnerships. We are focused on four primary goals: improving the well-being of people and communities around the world, reducing our environmental impact and helping our customers do the same, conducting our business ethically, and creating a workplace where our employees thrive.