



# US Signal Adds IaaS to Its Industry-leading Networking Services



US SIGNAL DRAWS ON CISCO SOLUTIONS AND SALES PARTNERSHIP FOR MANAGED DATA CENTER SERVICES

## Midwest Network Expands Services into the Cloud

Cisco Partner:	US Signal
Industry:	Telecommunications
Headquarters:	Grand Rapids, Michigan
Revenue:	Privately held



### About US Signal

The US Signal fiber optic network is one of the largest, fully-deployed networks in the midwestern United States, covering Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin. US Signal maintains more than twelve thousand miles of fiber with redundant routing facilities in secure data centers throughout the Midwest. US Signal offers a full suite of data transport products built with dominant networking technologies, Ethernet and Internet Protocol, to power mission critical business applications.

The US Signal optical backbone features Cisco® Systems Dense Wave Division Multiplexing (DWDM) technology and is designed with a Synchronous Optical Networking (SONET), redundant architecture. All of US Signal’s services are delivered over this protected network to help ensure resiliency, flexibility, scalability, and bandwidth availability to the end user. Around-the-clock monitoring provides additional security and confidence. US Signal’s performance guarantee allows quality service and dependable issue resolution to protect users’ profitability and vital customer relationships.

### Moving to Managed Services

US Signal recently released an Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) product offering, what US Signal calls Managed Data Center. Customers have increasingly requested US Signal to host their applications, for financial reasons, scalability, security, and more. Moving data into a cloud managed by US Signal gives customers the ability to access their own applications on US Signal virtual servers with the same fast, reliable, and secure experience they already have been satisfied with. “Today, our customers trust our network, and now they can trust US Signal to prioritize their applications within our data centers for quality administration and delivery,” says Dan Olrich, COO US Signal.

### Extending the Cisco-Powered Network with UCS

The decision to move forward with Cisco data center technology aligned with US Signal’s overall infrastructure strategy because the company was

already using Cisco for 100 percent of its network technology. In the core of the US Signal network, the service provider uses Cisco optical for transport and ties that to next-generation Cisco solutions for routing and switching at the edges, creating a fully reliable Cisco cloud intelligent network.

To extend its Cisco-powered network into the data center, US Signal used the Unified Computing System™ (UCS™) behind Cisco Nexus® switches to create a unified data center and combine compute, network, and storage resource pools. “It makes a better customer experience; it’s easier for us to manage, maintain, and trouble-shoot,” says Olrich. “If we’re putting a Cisco router at the edge, that packet hits a Cisco router in the core, goes across a Cisco transport, hits our managed data center, the Cisco Nexus switches, then the Cisco server platform: it’s more efficient.”

Being a dedicated Cisco organization also means US Signal has a single-vendor training process and

knowledge base to maintain. And US Signal's long partnership with Cisco paved the way for the company to be the first 100-gig Cisco customer. "We have a very good, controlled testing environment, and we've worked closely with Cisco on alpha and beta testing their technology," says Olrich. "We've gone to from a 40 to 100-gig network because it helps bring latency down, and a lot of our customers want more than 10 gig for bandwidth and performance." This dedication to leading technologies and an end-to-end infrastructure solution allows US Signal to maintain the high-level of service that its customers trust US Signal to deliver.

### Customer Service Differentiators

US Signal's network operation center is continuously staffed with engineers that answer customer calls directly and are qualified to resolve network issues quickly. US Signal also assigns a project manager to each implementation order, and that project manager manages the project from start to finish. "We sign our customers over and over, and we've been very good ensuring they have a good experience on our networks," says Steve Stillson, vice president, sales, western region, US Signal. "Now US Signal owns our own cloud, so we're expanding on their great experience by offering additional value-added services in the form of our Managed Data Center product."

### End-to-End Stability and Security

One market advantage of US Signal's managed data center offering is that, as a company that provides network services, it owns the entire delivery network. The US Signal data center resides directly on US Signal's network, and this arrangement increases security for customers and enables US Signal to control the customer experience.

Delivering data transport over a private infrastructure enables US Signal to provide end-to-end service-level agreements (SLAs). The security and stability are huge differentiators for the company, which handles customers' mission-critical applications. US Signal customers whose businesses rely on reliable, safe communication know that US Signal has the ability to rectify any issues very quickly, much more quickly than competitors who are not on their own network.

### Compelling Business Case for Managed Cloud

In addition to being successful data transport and cloud provider, US Signal has also worked to address the concerns of its customers' own internal IT departments. US Signal makes a solid business case for outsourcing by first citing two specific areas: disaster recovery and service expansion. Customers benefit from having their data center managed on US Signal's network instead of a competitor that might require their

connections to hop across several different networks to perform critical backups and test disaster recovery. For customers exploring how to expand their application footprint, US Signal can scale the available resources quickly to accommodate growing organizations that need to store ever increasing amounts of data, get to their information faster, and deploy or decommission additional applications on demand.

### Joint Sales

US Signal expects to see a myriad of mutual benefits as it starts to partner with Cisco sales on IaaS, says Stillson. "We're very proud of our relationship with Cisco, especially when it comes to what they provide within the core of our network; and, of course the Cisco brand is highly respected and recognized. There are times we need to lend even more credibility to what we're selling than what we already have, and the Cisco name does just that. I, personally as a salesperson, am very excited to be expanding our Cisco relationship as we partner with Cisco in the sales process." This close relationship, combined with the expanding opportunities in the cloud, helps ensure that US Signal is positioned well for continued success and delivering high customer satisfaction.



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