

Workforce Management Company Upgrades Technology Platform to Support Growth

Yurcor uses the Cisco Catalyst Express 500 Series and other Cisco network, security, and Unified Communications solutions to connect dispersed employees and support a global customer base.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<p>YURCOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software-Enabled Services • Delray Beach, Florida, United States • 20 employees <p>BUSINESS CHALLENGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable more network scalability required to support growing global customer base • More effectively connect remote employees with corporate network system • Help ensure tight security and 24-hour availability of essential business services <p>NETWORK SOLUTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deployed Cisco Catalyst Express 500 Series and other Cisco network, security, and voice solutions provide a more scalable, robust network foundation. <p>BUSINESS RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced competitive positioning through the ability to better support global customers and continuing growth • Improved customer service, operational efficiency, and bottom line thanks to a highly reliable, Web-based business environment • Improved employee satisfaction and retention • Increased business resiliency

Business Challenge

Yurcor is a provider of workforce management software and services with a unique business model—providing hosted Web-based software and services that businesses use to procure, manage, and pay their consultants. When the company was founded in 1994, its leaders could not have envisioned how quickly the company’s customer base would grow. Today, Yurcor has 20 full-time employees that help hundreds of businesses across the United States—from small firms to Fortune 100 corporations—to manage their consultants.

For an organization like Yurcor that operates primarily over the Internet, the company network is more than just an important tool. It is the primary portal through which businesses, suppliers, and consultants interact.

“We are quickly becoming a global company,” says Richard McCann, chief executive officer. “We rely on our network to allow all of the parties in our supply chain to communicate.”

Yurcor’s corporate network had served the business well for many years, but by 2005, the company had outgrown it. The basic, unmanaged routing and switching foundation and the small-scale remote connectivity solutions that the company had used in the past simply could no longer meet the needs of the rapidly growing customer base and provided no upgrade path. Yurcor needed a network foundation that could scale with the company’s growth, provide greater security and reliability, and that could support the richer feature set required by a company that operates globally.

As Yurcor leaders considered the possibilities for revamping the network, they also realized that a more robust network core would allow them to enhance the company’s communications. Yurcor’s leaders believe in bringing in the best talent, regardless of location. Over the years, the company had hired a number of employees who operated at remote sites. These employees typically relied on mobile phones as their primary business lines.

“Even though we have employees and consultants operating out of remote offices throughout the country, we need to maintain all of the efficiencies of a single, integrated business,” says McCann. “We were concerned that dropped calls in certain areas, battery issues, and other problems associated with mobile phones might detract from the sense of professionalism we wanted to convey to our customers.”

With the right network in place, Yurcor would be able to extend the company telephony system over the network and the Internet just as easily as it extended data applications. However, Yurcor leaders needed to help ensure that any new solutions—whether for voice, remote connectivity, or the basic network foundation—provided the utmost reliability.

“We have customers in different time zones throughout the world and individuals logging onto our service 24 hours a day,” says Marc Krawatsky, chief information officer, Yurcor. “Availability and reliability are critical. We cannot afford downtime.”

Network Solution

Yurcor worked with Steinhoff Consulting, an expert technology advisor and experienced Cisco® partner, to help plan and deploy the network upgrade. With the firm’s help, Yurcor deployed new network routing, switching, security, virtual private network, and IP communications solutions. For all of these technologies, Yurcor chose Cisco.

“Based on the Yurcor’s specific requirements, we looked first to Cisco,” says Adam Steinhoff, founder and chief operating officer of Steinhoff Consulting. “I believe strongly in Cisco technology and in Cisco as a company, and I felt that their money would be best spent using Cisco solutions.”

To serve as a key component of Yurcor’s network (and of the globally expanding business), Yurcor uses the Cisco Catalyst® Express 500 Series switch, along with a Cisco Integrated Services Router, in the core network. The Cisco Catalyst Express 500 Series is a family of managed Ethernet switches that combines the reliability, scalability, and rich feature set that growing businesses need in a cost-effective and easy-to-manage platform. With integrated support for advanced security, quality-of-service (QoS), and power-over-Ethernet (PoE) capabilities, the switch provides the ideal foundation for a small or medium-size business’ converged voice and data network.

“The capabilities of these solutions are excellent, the support that we receive is excellent, and Cisco’s reputation as a company is excellent. We expect to be appreciating the benefits of having Cisco equipment on board for a long time.”

—Marc Krawatsky, Chief Information Officer, Yurcor

“In our firm, we place a lot of emphasis on making sure that the product matches the company,” says Steinhoff. “The Cisco Catalyst Express 500 Series really did. It was not overly expensive, but it came packed with features. Cisco left out the things that are not really necessary to a small or medium-size business but included all of the things that make it easy to manage and make the most of your network.”

To protect the company network and essential business systems, Yurcor uses the switch’s advanced security features, such as flood control capabilities that automatically shut down a port when a virus or worm is detected—before an attack can overwhelm the network’s resources. Yurcor also uses Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliances as both firewalls and as virtual private network (VPN) concentrators that can allow hundreds of remote users to securely access company resources over the Internet.

With the upgraded network's integrated QoS capabilities, Yurcor was also able to deploy a Cisco Unified Communications solution and replace internal extensions and remote workers' cell phones with Cisco IP Phones. The Catalyst Express 500 Series' integrated PoE capabilities also mean that employees at company offices can connect and power their phones with a single Ethernet cable—reducing the cost of adding new extensions and offices as the company continues to grow.

PRODUCT LIST

Routing and Switching

- Cisco Catalyst Express 500 Series Switch
- Cisco 2600 Series Integrated Services Router

Security and VPN

- Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliance

Unified Communications

- Cisco Unified CallManager Express
- Cisco 7960 IP Phones

Business Results

Today, Yurcor's Cisco network provides the scalability and capabilities necessary to serve as the technology foundation of a growing, global business. By providing highly reliable, 24-hour access to Yurcor applications from anywhere in the world, the company has been able to improve customer service, increase efficiency, attract and retain the best employees, and enhance the bottom line. Over the past several years, Yurcor has enjoyed 15

percent annual revenue growth and 10 percent annual profit growth. The company has been able to meet rapid customer expansion without having to significantly boost staff. Yurcor's fully Web-based, self-service business environment has also helped to improve marketing, reduce errors, decrease the number of customer service calls, and accelerate customer payments.

The ability to connect employees and customers anywhere in the world, as well as the new Cisco Unified Communications capabilities, allow Yurcor to present a single, unified face to customers regardless of where employees may be located. This "anywhere, anytime" access to applications and voice services also plays an important role in helping ensure the availability of Yurcor services in the event of a disaster.

"Our headquarters is located in South Florida," says Krawatsky. "Now that we use Cisco IP phones, if there is any disruption in power, we can send employees to any alternate location that has power. As long as they can connect to our WAN, they can connect to our voice and data network and operate just as if they were in the office."

The ability to work effectively from anywhere also allows Yurcor employees to achieve a greater balance between work and home life—contributing to the company's nearly 100 percent employee retention rate over the past several years. These enhanced remote voice and data connectivity capabilities will also allow Yurcor to continue bringing in the best talent regardless of where potential employees may live.

"Being able to focus on talent rather than location is a huge advantage," says McCann. "Location is not an important issue. This gives us much more flexibility when recruiting for the best talent."

Ultimately, Yurcor leaders are confident that, whatever the future may hold, the Cisco network that they have in place will allow them to make the most of it.

"The capabilities of these solutions are excellent, the support that we receive is excellent, and Cisco's reputation as a company is excellent," says Krawatsky. "We expect to be appreciating the benefits of having Cisco equipment on board for a long time."

For More Information

To find out more about the Cisco Catalyst Express 500 Series and other Cisco network solutions for small and medium-size businesses, visit: <http://www.cisco.com/go/smb>.

For more information about Yurcor, visit: <http://www.Yurcor.com>.



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