

Delivering Business-Class Communication to Small Companies

NorthPoint Executive Suites depends on Cisco® Small Business Solutions to deliver business-class data services.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<p>NORTHPOINT EXECUTIVE SUITES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry: Professional Services • Location: Alpharetta, GA • Number of Employees: 5
<p>CHALLENGE</p> <p>Provide secure, reliable, rich data communications to small business clients on and off site.</p>
<p>RESULTS</p> <p>Secure, dependable, feature-rich solution enhances customer satisfaction, improves loyalty, and unlocks new revenue opportunities.</p>
<p>SOLUTION</p> <p>Cisco Small Business Solutions enables North Point to deliver secure, customized data solutions that meet tenant needs.</p>

Challenge

For NorthPoint Executive Suites, business networks are more than just a communications tool. They are the cornerstone of the company’s entire business strategy. The growing organization, based in Alpharetta, Georgia, rents office space to small business owners and entrepreneurs, delivering everything that its clients need to operate a business.

“We provide the reception area, the administrative services, and we operate the office park for them so they can concentrate on their business and not have to worry about the administrative tasks of running a business,” says Rick Onorato, owner of NorthPoint Executive Suites.

NorthPoint hosts a diverse array of 70 businesses, including real estate brokers, advertising companies, and technology companies. They have one thing in common: they all need reliable, secure data communications. To give these customers the technology that they need, NorthPoint had to have a reliable, easy-to-manage solution that provided secure email and Internet connectivity and wireless services.

“We knew that we needed reliability,” says Onorato. “We also needed security, and a scalable solution could handle our growth and our expansion needs.”

To support a dynamic environment with dozens of businesses, NorthPoint wanted a solution based on a standard model that could be easily duplicated when clients moved or their needs changed.

“We had a replicable solution in mind, so that we could duplicate it very easily without a lot of additional thought or work,” says Onorato.

“We are finding that we’re actually gaining momentum because our tenants have become our spokespersons, are doing our advertising for us. Without the Cisco technology we have in place here, I’m not sure we could succeed in our marketplace.”

– Rick Onorato, Owner, NorthPoint Executive Suites

Results

Working closely with Cisco partner Digital Son, NorthPoint installed a Cisco Small Business solution at its 18,000-square-foot office park. The Cisco solution delivers the rich set of features that NorthPoint customers need, including reliable data networking, secure wired and wireless Internet access and remote access, in an easy-to-use system designed specifically for the needs of small businesses.

“The Cisco Small Business solution has been very robust and versatile in this environment,” says Austin Smith, founder of Digital Son. “You set it up, and you forget about it, and it has allowed us to offer small businesses a lot of the features that only an enterprise would expect.”

“Even though they might be a small business with one or two people, our clients have access to all the networking and communications features that we offer,” says Onorato.

Network security was a top concern for NorthPoint, because all of its clients would be accessing sensitive business and customer information on one system. Using Cisco's built-in security features, NorthPoint was able to isolate each company's data to safeguard critical business data.

“Our customers are very confident that their data is secure, and that they can access the information they need reliably, whenever and wherever they need to,” says Onorato.

The flexible Cisco solution lets NorthPoint clients enjoy wired and wireless technology, so clients can connect to the network even when they are on the move, giving the company a distinct competitive edge.

“We have five wireless access points in our suite, and, to my knowledge, none of our competition has wireless at all, so it's a big advantage for us,” says Onorato.

Customers have been very pleased with the quality and dependability of network services at NorthPoint. Their satisfaction has given NorthPoint a loyal following, which is helping generate new business and revenue opportunities.

“We are finding that we're actually gaining momentum because our tenants have become our spokespersons, are doing our advertising for us,” says Onorato. “Without the Cisco technology we have in place here, I'm not sure we could succeed in our marketplace.”

“It's a wonderful feeling knowing that your customer is going to be a happy client, because you're giving them the quality of service that they deserve,” says Gale Howell, General Manager at NorthPoint Executive Suites.

Solution

NorthPoint worked closely with its Cisco partner to design and build a secure, cost-effective, complete technology solution that aligned closely with its business needs.

“I suppose you could put this system together on your own, but it would have been very difficult, costly, and time consuming,” says Onorato. “It was great having a partner like Digital Son to help us orchestrate the solution and put the right products together.”

The heart of the solution is a Cisco Small Business network, which delivers reliable, secure data communications. The solution also includes built-in security, enabling NorthPoint to create separate, secure networks for each of its clients and create secure VPN connections.

“The integrated security systems played a very big part in our decision to go with the Cisco Small Business solution,” says Smith. “The features made it very easy to make Cisco the final choice.”

Using Virtual Private Networking (VPN), NorthPoint enables its clients to reach the people, tools, and information that they need on the network, inside and outside the office.

“VPN has been an advantage for two reasons,” says Onorato. “It lets our larger clients access data offsite. It also offers an advantage for our virtual clients who don’t actually visit the suite to access their computers. They can access the network from home or from a remote location, anytime they need to.”

Managing the network is simple, because Digital Son remotely monitors the NorthPoint network to identify and stop network issues before they occur.

“Digital Son can monitor network usage, and can regulate traffic if it’s causing network issues,” says Onorato. “They can also detect issues like network intruders or other malicious activity.”

Next Steps

NorthPoint designed its Cisco solution with growth in mind, using a standardized network architecture approach that it could apply to all of its locations.

“We plan on opening up a new office once a year for the next seven or eight years, at least,” says Onorato. “As we expand, we hope to be able to duplicate the model we’ve created here smoothly.”

With this network design model in place and new clients on the way, the NorthPoint Executive Suites is poised for continued success for years to come.

For More Information

To learn more about the Cisco Small Business solution, visit www.cisco.com/smallbusiness or contact your authorized Cisco partner www.cisco.com/go/partnerlocator.



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