

BNSF Logistics agent leverages faster, more reliable network

Logistics business boosts efficiency with help from Spectrum Enterprise connectivity

The last few years have been invigorating yet hectic times for Greg Harlan, President and owner of NC Agents, Inc. an agent for BNSF Logistics in North Carolina. Whether managing over-the-road truck loads, solving serious supply-chain issues, or fixing customer service problems, Harlan dedicates himself to ensuring his many clients get what they need when they need it, and are wholly satisfied with the results.

He needs advanced connectivity to make his enterprise work fluidly.

In the commercial logistics business, goods and services are constantly being moved, often under highly complex and time-sensitive conditions. BNSF Logistics clients expect creative, quick solutions to an ever-changing array of priority needs. Millions of dollars in inventory must be transported to the right place within a finite time period.

“I tell people we are in logistics but we operate like a fiduciary,” Harlan explains. “We have a lot of say-so in people’s financial well-being.”

Getting the right partner

For years, Harlan counted on network hardware managed by a multitude of vendors. He found his business coping with third-party vendor service and a multitude of software licenses.

“So when we would have a problem with our WiFi, it was a multi-part problem,” Harlan recalls. “We had to identify what was the problem, what created the problem, where the failure is, and then get that provider on the phone.”

Jeremy Delk, Enterprise Account Manager for Spectrum Enterprise, noted how Harlan struggled to manage a multiplicity of equipment issues. Bought from different providers over time, his equipment was not being properly supported with service and updates.

“Their IT group had a lot of strain on them, managing all that legacy infrastructure themselves,” Delk recalls. “Greg is a very hands-on leader who likes to take on more, but having to work so closely with third-party support staff was too much even for him.”

Many times, Harlan found his operations dogged by latency issues and lost connections. He needed a network that was faster, smoother and more reliable. Harlan turned to Delk and his Spectrum Enterprise team for a holistic solution. Today he reports a marked and measurable performance lift.



In logistics, delays in shipping and other critical services are unacceptable. Notes BNSF Logistics Agent Greg Harlan: “Having our internet and telecom up with no interruptions is really important.”

Client profile



Company

BNSF Logistics

Industry

Professional Services

Services

Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI)
Managed Network Edge
Unified Communications with Webex

Overview

- The president and owner of NC Agents, Inc., a North Carolina-based agent of BNSF Logistics, wanted a single network to manage all his field and office operations from one place.
- Because the owner found Spectrum Enterprise fiber solutions reliable in any challenge, he examined how their network tools could solve his connectivity needs.

Outcomes

- Spectrum Enterprise Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI) connects office locations, while Spectrum Enterprise Managed Network Edge allows complete network control and configuration.
- Having control over logistics operations conducted anywhere in the U.S. is better supported with Managed Network Edge.
- When issues come up, or changes need to be made, Spectrum Enterprise can be counted on to give it complete attention — from initial call to final resolution.

Why it matters

- The ability to seamlessly manage clients' logistical challenges has led to a sizable efficiency boost. With a managed solution, the IT department no longer is tasked with taking care of software or licensing issues.
- As demand for expert logistics support continues to boom, the scalability of Spectrum Enterprise solutions figures to be critical to long-term expansion.



Connectivity is critical to a comprehensive logistics strategy. This, in part, includes tracking shipments at ports and warehouses while they are readied for the next leg of the journey.

“With all the issues we had in the past at multiple locations, we have become measurably more efficient since we went all in with Spectrum Enterprise,” he says.

A success story built on fiber

Harlan has worked with a number of network and telecom providers over the years. Each in turn failed to measure up to his basic need for steady service at a stable cost. Throughout this time, Spectrum Enterprise was his only constant, a source for fiber connectivity that kept him connected whatever the challenge.

Harlan’s offices are spread out across North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, but their operational reach extends across the entire country, Mexico and Canada. Being able to bring all his services under Spectrum Enterprise took time and effort, but he realized he needed connectivity he could count on, provided by someone who saw him as a true partner.

“We had a couple of offices in Florida when a hurricane went through there,” he notes. “As soon as they lost telecom and power, we didn’t

miss a beat. We just redirected everything to another office. Having that connectivity with Spectrum Enterprise and the ability to redirect business at a moment’s notice is key to what we do.”

What Harlan calls the “backbone” of his business is based on having Spectrum Enterprise [Dedicated Fiber Internet \(DFI\)](#) installed at all his locations.

“It’s about the reliability — I’m going to call it the uptime — I feel it’s superior to anything we had,” he says. “Response time, if there ever is an issue, is quicker. And we don’t have any latency issues. We’re running video, voice and our computer internet across that fiber and nothing interferes.”

“We go through every effort we can to make sure we are prepared for any crisis. Partnering with Spectrum Enterprise was the final piece of that solution to keep us always prepared.”

– Greg Harlan, President, NC Agents, Inc.



Shipments by train are also central to logistics. While Harlan is headquartered in the southern United States, his work with BNSF Logistics spans the whole of the United States, Canada and Mexico.

To help manage Harlan's network needs, and leverage his access to high-speed data, Delk proposed Spectrum Enterprise [Managed Network Edge](#). "In the past, we have had issues with our third-party equipment," Harlan explains. "With the network Spectrum Enterprise put in place, we have none of that now, so it's not even an issue anymore."

Recently, Harlan has sought the same kind of single-source control over his communications network. "I want to stay focused on my job and not have to spend time working on getting the calling system figured out," Harlan says. "It'd be very tough to explain my job as 'I handle logistics, but I specialize in troubleshooting telecom equipment.'"

Having a simple-to-understand, reliable system that will grow with his business is a central component of his future plans. He found the answer he was looking for when he opted to have Spectrum Enterprise [Unified Communications with Webex](#) installed at all his locations.

"Knowing I have a communication system that grows with my business and gets quick attention if an issue needs to be addressed is what I want," he says.

Ready at any time for any emergency

Being a part of BNSF Logistics means staying busy 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Knowing he is backed by the commitment of Spectrum Enterprise is reassuring to Harlan. So is having a managed solution where he retains control but can lean on the expertise of Spectrum Enterprise engineers and technicians.

"The reason why we switched everything over to Spectrum Enterprise is their reliability, uptime and customer service," Harlan says.

"We're actually able to reduce the amount of equipment and service providers we need for doing what we do by going through Spectrum Enterprise fiber."

- Greg Harlan, President, NC Agents, Inc.

Average growth for his logistics firm is about 14% a year, he adds. Being so successful means being ever-ready to work through crises and disasters.

Whatever unexpected situations occur, Harlan knows he can redirect operations via his Managed Network Edge portal.

"We've had situations where we are down for eight hours straight," he explains. "Having these remote offices out there and having the connectivity with Spectrum Enterprise and the ability to just redirect business at a moment's notice is key to what we do."

Not only is Spectrum Enterprise service more flexible and reliable than what he has before, it is also less cumbersome.

"We're actually able to reduce our amount of equipment and our number of service providers by going through Spectrum Enterprise," he says.

Creating office space people enjoy

Harlan wants his offices to be pleasant as well as productive spaces for the people he employs. His newest office makes room for a recreational area with dartboards and video games, translucent quartz desks trimmed with LED lights, and custom leather chairs.

"We try to build that work environment where you actually like being here," he says.

Harlan sees Spectrum Enterprise as a technology partner who makes such plans achievable. Having reliable, scalable connectivity across his enterprise means he can not only manage operations remotely, but accommodate employees who need to work outside the office.



Teamwork is at the center of Harlan's formula for success. He places a premium on finding smart people and giving them tools they need — like a managed network to promote better collaboration.

"I tell people, 'As long as you have connectivity, you can take the job with you.'"

Harlan plans to build more office locations, with Spectrum Enterprise as his technology partner. The demand for innovation is heavy in the logistics business; Harlan knows he is ready for whatever comes next.

"The one thing I can count on is service is always up. Our uptime is pretty much 100%, always there when we need it."

- Greg Harlan, President, NC Agents, Inc.

"Greg is someone at the forefront of digital transformation in the logistics industry," Delk notes. "He always wants to know where there are gaps or problems, and how he can fix them. He's the kind of client you want to have, because he's aggressive about change."

Harlan likes working with Delk and other members of the Spectrum Enterprise team, too: "When I do have an issue, no matter what it is, I throw it over to Jeremy. He always says, "All right, I'm going to get answers, I'll be right back. Having that single point of contact, that's how we base our business as well. It makes life a whole lot easier."

About Spectrum Enterprise

Spectrum Enterprise, a part of Charter Communications, Inc., is a national provider of scalable, fiber technology solutions serving many of America's largest businesses and communications service providers. The broad Spectrum Enterprise portfolio includes [networking and managed services solutions](#); [Internet access](#), [Ethernet access and networks](#), [Voice](#) and [TV solutions](#). The Spectrum Enterprise team of experts works closely with clients to achieve greater business success by providing solutions designed to meet their evolving needs. For more information, visit enterprise.spectrum.com.

Spectrum Enterprise is a registered trademark of Charter Communications. All other logos, marks, designs, and otherwise are the trademarks and intellectual property of their respective third-party owners. Not all products, pricing and services are available in all areas. Pricing and actual speeds may vary. Restrictions may apply. Subject to change without notice.

©2024 Charter Communications. All Rights Reserved.