



## **CenturyLink Solutions Featuring:**

CenturyLink IQ™ Networking Internet Port

**Case Study:** Synacor, Inc.

## Customer:

Synacor, Inc.  
www.synacor.com

## Business Challenge:

Synacor, Inc. builds Internet tools and portals for global service and content providers, which makes reliable data network bandwidth a crucial business matter. With a circuit nearing total capacity and a new video platform launch underway, Synacor needed to significantly expand its available bandwidth to meet expected demand.

## Solution:

Synacor performed in-depth due-diligence of vendors in its region and chose multi-protocol label switching (MPLS)-based CenturyLink IQ™ Networking Internet Port service. CenturyLink's reliable, dedicated Gigabit Ethernet service provides the bandwidth needed immediately and CenturyLink IQ™ Networking Internet Port offers scalability for the future.

## Benefits and Results:\*

- CenturyLink IQ™ Networking Internet Port service supports key business goals by providing reliability day to day and scalability for the future
- On-time implementation and CenturyLink team commitment stand apart from every other vendor install the customer has experienced
- Economical cost of ownership of the CenturyLink solution enhances margins on Synacor's product and service offerings
- CenturyLink experts are an extension of the Synacor team, reducing the need for outsourced network engineering
- CenturyLink resources answer questions quickly and work in close partnership with Synacor

\*These results are unique to this entity and should not be considered an indication of the amount of savings or improvements, if any, that may be realized by any other entity subscribing to comparable services.

# Synacor, Inc.

Synacor builds Internet tools and portals that simplify access to digital media for more than 37 million consumers worldwide. Synacor is based in Buffalo, New York, and its customers include cable operators, telecommunications companies, Internet service providers and other businesses with increasing needs for data network bandwidth.

## Facing the Challenges

With a data circuit nearing total capacity, Synacor needed to upgrade to support new platform and client requirements.

One of Synacor's clients was planning to redirect all of its e-mail users to Synacor's portal product, creating the potential for millions of new users nearly overnight, according to Adam Howell, director of network engineering, Synacor, Inc. The second driver for increased bandwidth was a new video platform launch, since bandwidth and latency are major issues with video.



Howell explained that Synacor wanted "the biggest port we could get our hands on. If we could not get the bandwidth, we would have had to put the transport medium for the video platform on the customer side." By keeping the product in-house, Synacor could maintain control to help retain the customer relationship and grow the product.

The location of Synacor's headquarters raised another challenge. Fortunately, Synacor had seen the bandwidth problem coming, and had completed capacity planning and provisioning studies. In doing due diligence, the Synacor team evaluated the offerings of carriers in the Buffalo, New York region to see whether they could meet the company's expanding needs.

## Providing a Successful Solution

Synacor had an existing relationship with CenturyLink and had established a strong foundation of trust, according to Howell: "As we

“We trust Qwest to help deliver our end product to millions of people worldwide, so I see our relationship with Qwest more as a partner than a vendor. In my world, uptime is everything, and from a service perspective, I can’t ask for anything more than the service Qwest provides.”

—Adam Howell, Director of Network Engineering

considered options, we asked the questions, ‘who hasn’t left us out in the cold?’ and ‘who hasn’t cost us downtime?’, and Qwest was the answer.”

CenturyLink was in the early stages of bringing CenturyLink IQ™ Networking Internet Port service to Buffalo just as Synacor’s requirements became critical. “Qwest was really the only one that could step up to the plate and get the product we needed together. Qwest is very data centric, and they were the only tier-one with large carrier-class routers. Also no one else could touch Qwest’s price point,” Howell noted.

Howell uses the word “Herculean” to describe the heroic efforts of the CenturyLink implementation team. “I called my Qwest account rep, and told him that we needed to move forward fast with the Qwest iQ Networking Internet Port service.” Only a few people at Synacor were involved in the implementation, and the CenturyLink team included senior managers, architects, engineers, analysts, and circuit provisioning people, among others.

“This Qwest install stands above every other install I’ve experienced in my 15 years in this field,” Howell stated. “It was impressive how effectively everyone at Qwest came together and worked to get this accomplished for us. The circuit went in on time, and when it was handed over it came right up.”

“A lot of Synacor’s bandwidth had come from Qwest even before the implementation of Qwest iQ Networking Internet Port service, and today, Qwest is our preferred primary provider.”

## Delivering Results\*

As an online data company, Synacor’s reliance on CenturyLink is a business-critical partnership.

“We’ve got customers in seven times zones in three countries, and our relationship with Qwest is very strategic. As our company continues to grow, the impact of a circuit going down would be significant. With Qwest, we’re confident that we get the important attention that we need.”

“At some companies, there is eight-to-five traffic and the circuits go dormant at night. But at Synacor, we have about four peaks a day, and at any given moment are running 20 percent of bandwidth, so we need somebody who subscribes to the same philosophy of ‘we never sleep’ that we do. We have a great relationship with the Qwest engineers and have established a lot of trust.”

Synacor had outsourced its network engineering resources for some time. “Then as we finally went ahead and hired network staff, we were able to back off the head count because we could get the remote support we needed from Qwest,” Howell continued. “Qwest offers one-stop shopping for our bandwidth. The Qwest team is on our speed dial, and if we need more bandwidth or have a question, it’s just one call.”

## Reliable Technology and Support

“Synacor is serving 37 million customers, so every minute counts. We haven’t had downtime through our Qwest circuits, and we know that our Qwest account team is there for us.”

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### **Cost-Effective Solution**

"For the bandwidth we're getting from Qwest, there would probably be almost a 20 percent cost difference to go to another tier-one provider. Qwest keeps our cost of ownership very low and helped us with the margin on our new video offering."

### **Scalability for the Future**

"As we continue to grow, we don't need to worry about Qwest running out of bandwidth. We know their products will move forward with us. Our future plans include more bandwidth and we're considering a Qwest network operations site."

### **CenturyLink Control®**

"My technical staff and operations team tell me that Qwest Control is especially important given that they are managing multiple circuits. They log into the Qwest site and they can see what's going on, what maintenance is planned and what the trouble ticket history has been. Being able to go in and get details and print them out helps lessen the questions, speed solutions, and make our lives a little bit easier."

### **CenturyLink Spirit Of Service In Action®**

"Any time that I've had a question, I reach out to Qwest and get a response right back. With Qwest, there's always follow-up."



**CenturyLink™**  
**Business**

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