



CenturyLink Solutions Featuring:

CenturyLink Integrated Access

Case Study: TLCVision

Customer:

TLCVision Corporation
www.tlcvision.com

Business Challenge:

As eye-care services company TLCVision expanded, its multiple locations relied on a heterogeneous mix of telecom providers. When the company made plans to add 25 new centers, TLCVision looked for a more time efficient and cost effective way to handle voice and data services for its existing and new sites.

Solution:

TLCVision chose CenturyLink Integrated Access for all of its 33 locations and future sites. In addition, each TLCVision office is using Qwest long-distance services and TLCVision administrators use the self-service Web portal Qwest Control® to easily access and track information about their Qwest services.

Benefits and Results:

- Sites that converted from prior vendors to CenturyLink Integrated Access and Qwest long-distance service, have achieved about a 45 percent savings in combined telecom and data costs.
- Return on investment (ROI) achieved in eight months rather than the year that had been predicted.
- The improvement in reliability over past solutions is a significant business benefit since the offices are medical practices and need patient information in a timely manner.
- Excellent customer service with one point of contact for the whole U.S.
- Support of a single, reliable vendor reduces administrative costs and personnel needs.
- Simplified, self-service online management using Control Center.

TLCVision

TLCVision is a \$300 million eye-care services company that provides eye doctors with the tools and technologies needed to deliver high-quality patient care. TLCVision maintains leading positions in refractive, cataract and optometric markets. Reliable voice and data communications are essential to TLCVision's more than 33 offices, for preparing and delivering patient data and other medical information.

FACING THE CHALLENGES

As TLCVision prepared to launch an initiative to open 25 new centers, the company was in a position to solve two problems, according to Roger McIlmoyle, director of technical services, TLCVision.

"We had a number of existing sites that had found their own phone providers over time, and the result was far too many contracts and far too many phone lines in some centers," said McIlmoyle. "So we wanted to reduce those administrative costs while also finding a reliable, cost-effective data and voice solution for the new centers," he stated.



As McIlmoyle looked for a vendor to transfer from old to new and install in entirely new environments, he made the same request of each one. "I told each vendor that I need to be able to phone you and provide an address, and to that address, I require an equivalent of a T-1 line or three-quarters of a T-1 of data, eight phone lines if bound onto a single T-1, and also four separate analog phone lines delivered from a predominant local carrier. I don't want to speak to a local carrier; I want you to handle it all. Then I need to be invoiced centrally in Canada, not the U.S.," he explained.

PROVIDING A SUCCESSFUL SOLUTION

McIlmoyle said that many of the vendors he contacted could not deliver on his requests. "They had all manner of caveats in terms of what they could and would do. However, my account team at CenturyLink said 'You know what? I'll do what's required to make this happen', and

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“The high value, performance, and support we get from Qwest are very important to us as an eye-care services company. Even though our individual offices are small, Qwest® OneFlex® Integrated Access enables us to have what I call a ‘business-class’ T-1 for our data.”

—Roger McIlmoyle, director of technical services

that’s the way it’s turned out,” said McIlmoyle. “Qwest was the right price and definitely the right account team.”

TLCVision chose CenturyLink Integrated Access bundled with CenturyLink long-distance services. Then TLCVision set up a pilot project consisting of installations at five new locations, with a very tight timeline.

“From my point of view, it was seamless,” said McIlmoyle. “Even after the first site, there was no question in my mind that the pilot was going very well. And that’s basically the way it was communicated to the team: Any new site that comes up, any opportunity to flip to Qwest, we would move,” he added.

Following the pilot, CenturyLink Integrated Access service was implemented at 33 TLCVision locations. Voice and data (Internet and fax) services are provisioned locally through a media gateway. Centralized billing is broken out by site and delivered to TLCVision’s Canadian facility.

DELIVERING RESULTS

“Qwest customer service has been incredible. There’s been really no difference in the level of service right from the very first installation to the 34th that I’m working on right now. It’s consistently the same,” said McIlmoyle. “The biggest bang is one point of contact for the whole U.S. If there’s a problem, I can phone Qwest and I know it will be taken care of,” he added.

CenturyLink Integrated Access and CenturyLink long-distance services have met TLCVision’s requirements for a reliable, cost-effective data and voice solution that reduces administrative costs. “I’ve been able to

avoid hiring somebody because it’s taking less time to administer, less time to install, and less support ongoing,” McIlmoyle stated.

SMOOTH INSTALLATION

“The Qwest installation went extremely well. It was actually better than I had expected,” said McIlmoyle. “It literally comes down to sending an e-mail to my account rep and saying ‘Here’s the date that we’re going to open this site; standard package. Let me know if there are any issues.’ And the next e-mail is confirming install dates. I mean, you can’t use any less staff time than that. We’ve just grown to trust it—the product will be there,” he added.

COST SAVINGS

“The measurable benefits we’ve achieved are most readily visible in sites that we converted from prior services to Qwest OneFlex Integrated Access and Qwest long-distance service. We received about a 45 percent savings. The drop in our telecom and data costs was so dramatic that at one point, the TLCVision head office was fairly convinced that they weren’t being billed,” said McIlmoyle.

RAPID ROI

“We achieved our projected ROI within eight months rather than a year,” said McIlmoyle.

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RELIABILITY

“From the perspective of the end-users, once the Qwest service went in, it just didn’t go down. We have sites that have not lost connectivity since the installation, and that just isn’t something we had before,” said McIlmoyle.

VISIBILITY WITH CENTURYLINK CONTRL CENTER

“Our telephone administrator knows that if she puts a ticket in, she can see clearly in CenturyLink Control which ones are open, which ones are closed, and which ones are being followed up on. She uses it quite a lot,” said McIlmoyle.

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

“Working with the Qwest reps has just been amazing. They deal with any issues quickly, they take them seriously, and they keep me informed as to why things happen and what’s needed to resolve them,” said McIlmoyle.

Looking ahead, TLCVision is continuing to roll out the combination of CenturyLink Integrated Access and CenturyLink long-distance service to all of its new sites and any sites going through major renovation. “We hope to be at slightly over 100 sites using Qwest a year from now,” McIlmoyle noted.



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1801 California Street
Denver, CO 80202
1 800-860-1020
www.centurylink.com/business