



Tampa Bay Buccaneers

CenturyLink global communications services amplify bandwidth for fans, coaches and players

Overview

Challenge

In the sports entertainment business, fans expect an experience second to none — which today is shaped by connected devices, live streaming and up-to-the-minute statistics. What's more, the players and coaches at the Buccaneers training facility rely heavily on digital playbooks and other apps connected to Wi-Fi. With mushrooming bandwidth requirements, the Buccaneers needed a consolidated network solution that supported on-demand and scheduled increases in data capabilities.

The team was also looking to couple expansive coverage with local support. “The challenges that we were trying to resolve were that we had many networks spread throughout the world,” said Steve Rutkowski, Network Administrator at the Buccaneers headquarters in Florida.

Managing vendors in varied locations created unnecessary complexities and delays. Not to mention, these disparate legacy network systems weren't always reliable when communicating with fans, players and employees.

Solution

CenturyLink global network provided an attractive solution for delivering communications services to the entire organization. By selecting a mix of MPLS, internet, and voice offerings, the Buccaneers technology team consolidated their infrastructure and wide area network (WAN) with a single provider.

Customer Profile

Since joining the NFL in 1976, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers have grown their fan base to include a global audience of connected viewers and employees. But with digital transformation revolutionizing the way spectator sports are disseminated and consumed, the organization's IT management team needed a single-provider solution for reliable network services.

“CenturyLink was able to provide the network in the areas that we have, and we didn't have to rely on a third-party vendor to provide the last section to the endpoint,” said Rutkowski. The services that the Buccaneers selected and the network they designed now support centralized voice and internet communications between the organization's global operations.

In addition to providing more consistent service and support, the solution helped improve the Buccaneers' return on investment (ROI) by reducing day-to-day maintenance resources and replacing older technology. And with CenturyLink. The team now enjoys increased flexibility and scalability — an important IT requirement for any spectator sports organization.

Designing for future growth with CenturyLink

On most football Sundays, the Buccaneers are challenged to reach 70,000 connected fans. With a core team of CenturyLink engineers and managers in the Tampa Bay area, they're now able to leverage 24/7 local support on game days, as well as during the off-season.

With several scalable and reliable services in place, the Buccaneers are confident they can support high bandwidth periods, expand capacity and prioritize network traffic as needed. The combination of CenturyLink® MPLS/IP VPN, CenturyLink® Internet Services and CenturyLink® Voice Complete® helped streamline network operations so the Buccaneers could prepare for future growth.

"Being able to count on CenturyLink when I come into work or when I go home in the evening and not having to worry about these facilities being down on game day, that's crucial," explains Rutkowski. "It is a great feeling going into every home game and knowing that the services will be up and that the fans will have the world-class experience they have grown to expect at Raymond James Stadium."

This dependable infrastructure positively affects bottom line results as well. Departments can get their jobs done more quickly and shift focus to bigger, revenue projects.

With an infrastructure designed for growth, the Buccaneers are now poised to exceed expectations — on and off the field.

"We have a lot of day-to-day moving parts, and we would not be able to achieve our goals without CenturyLink."

**Steve Rutkowski, Network Administrator
Tampa Bay Buccaneers**

Overview

Business needs:

- Consolidate infrastructure and WAN to one vendor
- Improve reliability for 70,000 fans on game day
- Gain the flexibility to increase bandwidth on-demand

Services:

- CenturyLink® Internet Services
- CenturyLink® MPLS/IP VPN
- CenturyLink Voice Complete®

Benefits:

- Reliable connectivity to all global Buccaneers sites
- Reduced system downtime
- Increased ROI due to decreased costs and improved services
- Greater visibility into network performance