



IMPROVING STAFF COLLABORATION

HOW GREATER BANDWIDTH TRANSFORMED COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN OFFICES



The Cooperativa Esercenti Farmacia Scrl di Brescia (CEF) is a pharmaceutical co-operative that was established in 1934 to streamline the procurement and delivery of medical supplies. Today, the organisation serves some 900 pharmacies across Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia Romagna and Friuli-Venezie Giulia. In addition to its 4000 daily deliveries, CEF offers point of sale, personnel management, accounting and payroll solutions.

To improve communications and logistics between the corporate headquarters in Brescia and its distribution centre 43 kilometres away in Cremona, CEF chose a point-to-point wireless broadband network running on Motorola's PTP 600 Series Ethernet bridges. Deployed by local partner LAIS, the network has a secondary back-up link using the PTP 500 series operating in a different frequency band.

The network supports high-speed data transfer, email, web browsing, Voice over IP and video surveillance, providing a reliable, cost-effective solution for CEF's 200 office and logistics personnel.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Company
Cooperativa Esercenti Farmacia Scrl, Brescia, Italia (CEF)

Technology Partner
LAIS S.r.l.

Industry
Healthcare

Product Name

- PTP 600 Series
- PTP 500 Series
- LINKPlanner

Solution Features

- Long distance connectivity
- High availability
- Real-time data, VoIP, video
- Optimised use of frequency spectrum

Benefits Features

- Multiple applications shared between sites
- Information on demand
- Greater collaboration
- Reliable and robust

CASE STUDY

Cooperativa Esercenti Farmacia

The decision to deploy a high-speed point-to-point network has resulted in improved collaboration between staff at our branch in Cremona and our head office in Brescia. We now have the reassurance that we have 99.999% network availability which is vital to an organisation such as CEF where our customers depend on us to deliver critical services.

Giuseppe Capretti, Director General.



THE CHALLENGE

Slow, Costly and Unreliable VPN Slows Productivity

Prior to installing a point-to-point wireless network, CEF's head office and distribution centre were connected via a cable-based VPN. In addition to being costly, the network only offered 4 Mbps throughput, which made it impossible to use thin client computing and resulted in long delays when using VoIP. The VPN was also unreliable, with telco and cable failures resulting in the connection frequently being lost.

Due to the distance between the sites, a high speed wireless network seemed the obvious choice. However, mountainous terrain and adverse weather conditions presented new challenges.

Using Motorola's LINKPlanner software to simulate network configuration and performance, LAIS ascertained that direct line of sight connectivity between Brescia and Cremona would be hindered by hills in the surrounding area of Capriano. Heavy snow and strong storms, which are common to the region, could further impact on the network's performance.

THE SOLUTION

Intelligent, Robust Bridges Optimise Availability and Deliver Exceptional Performance

A solution was found by installing a PTP 600 wireless link between CEF's headquarters and Maddalena Mountain, which overlooks Brescia. A second PTP 600 wireless bridge was deployed between Maddalena Mountain and the distribution centre in Cremona, providing sufficient height to overcome any obstructions and enable line of sight connectivity. Each site also has a redundant PTP 500 series secondary link, ensuring high availability. The ability to plan the network and test different scenarios before deployment enabled LAIS to implement the system within one week.

The PTP 600 Series is a low cost, high-performance solution that delivers up to 300 Mbps. Capable of supporting multimedia applications and VoIP, creating a reliable, robust network that maximises use of the frequency spectrum. Intelligent Dynamic Frequency Selection enables the PTP 600 to scan the band 500 times a second and automatically switch to the clearest channel, ensuring optimum availability.

The PTP 500 Series, which is being used to provide redundant links, supports data rates up to 105 Mbps and is ideal for long-range line-of-sight paths. Capable of withstanding extreme weather conditions and highly tolerant to interference, and it benefits from the same intelligent technology as the PTP 600 Series

THE BENEFITS

Instant Access to Information Improves Stock Control and Inter-company Communications

With CEF's new wireless broadband network, staff are able to communicate between branches using VoIP and real-time data transfer. Personnel in Cremona use thin client computing to access software applications from the server at head office, send and receive email via the network and browse the internet. Logistics users are able to upload data instantly from their wireless barcode readers, improving stock control and increasing the efficiency of deliveries.

The network is also connected to an IP video surveillance system for on-site security, which streams images to the security control room in Brescia. This provides centralised control of the company's facilities and enables security staff to co-ordinate responses if an incident occurs.

KEY FACTS

- Motorola improves communications and logistics between the corporate headquarters in Brescia and its distribution centre 43 kilometres.
- PTP 600 Series Ethernet bridges deployed with a secondary back-up link using the PTP 500 series.
- Network supports high-speed data transfer, email, web browsing, Voice over IP and video surveillance, providing a reliable, cost-effective solution.

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