



Strengthening GNC's foundation with a modern network infrastructure

GNC® is the leading global retailer of health and wellness products with over 2,300 stores worldwide, but the company's legacy network technology was beginning to hinder their operational efficiency and growth. So they engaged Windstream Enterprise to modernize their network infrastructure, give them greater visibility and control, and ensure secure, reliable connectivity across all locations.

At a glance



Industry

Retail

Customer

2,300+ stores worldwide

Challenges

Outdated legacy networks

Zero network visibility

No co-management control

End-of-life legacy WAPs

Aging legacy network switches

Inadequate device security

Solutions

SD-WAN

Cellular Broadband

Cloud-Managed Switches

Secure WiFi

Managed Network Security

WE Connect Portal

Results

Robust, reliable network performance

Complete visibility

Co-management capabilities

Secure, reliable WiFi connections

Flexible device security

Significant cost savings

Addressing core deficiencies

GNC's existing network infrastructure was built on legacy T1 networks using Time-Division Multiplexing (TDM), which were both expensive and unreliable. These systems offered zero visibility and lacked co-management control, making them difficult and time-consuming to monitor and troubleshoot. This left GNC entirely dependent on their service provider for support.

In addition, the Wireless Access Points (WAPs) that provided in-store WiFi were outdated and ready for replacement. The lack of visibility into WiFi device performance also posed a significant problem, as did the aging network switches, which lacked visibility and co-management functionalities as well. Managing this legacy infrastructure was becoming a huge burden for GNC's relatively lean IT team.

To further complicate things, GNC also lacked the robust security needed to protect the tablets employees used for business transactions during outside events.

Building a strong foundation

Windstream Enterprise implemented a comprehensive suite of solutions to address GNC's network challenges. First, they transitioned the retailer's legacy network devices to an SD-WAN setup with Windstream-provided broadband access through cable or Cellular Broadband connections. This upgrade ensures reliable network connections while significantly reducing costs compared to the old TDM access lines.

“Windstream Enterprise is a trusted partner helping us modernize our network technology.”

Jason Connor, Senior IT Manager
GNC

The modernization continued with the upgrade of all WAPs to Windstream's Secure WiFi solution, giving GNC full visibility and management capabilities. Windstream Enterprise also transitioned all switches to a new Cloud-Managed Switch solution, delivering high-performance connectivity for all internet-connected devices, including IP phones, WAPs, cameras, registers, and point-of-sale devices.

And finally, to secure the wireless tablets used during outside sales events, GNC implemented Windstream Enterprise's cloud-based Managed Network Security solution for seamless yet flexible protection.

Developing impressive gains

Windstream Enterprise's SD-WAN has provided GNC with a reliable and cost-effective network solution, while the WE Connect Portal gives them the visibility and co-management capabilities they need to proactively identify anomalies and security issues. The portal also automates the trouble ticketing process, saving their lean IT team valuable time.

With the new Secure WiFi devices, which are fully managed by Windstream Enterprise, GNC has gained complete visibility into network performance for enhanced operational efficiency. The Cloud-Managed Switches allow them to connect all critical devices to the SD-WAN, ensuring high performance and seamless connectivity. And with the co-management capabilities provided by

WE Connect, GNC can conduct real-time tests and make adjustments, such as modifying VLANs and troubleshooting cabling connections.

Finally, the Managed Network Security solution gives GNC the flexibility they need to conduct business on wireless tablets outside the store during sidewalk sales and other events—without compromising data security.

Becoming future fit

Windstream Enterprise's solutions have empowered GNC with a modern network infrastructure that's robust, secure, and scalable to accommodate future growth. These comprehensive upgrades have not only improved network reliability and security but also freed up GNC's IT team to focus on business innovations instead of constant routine maintenance.

GNC also revolutionized their voice communications with OfficeSuite UC[®] from Windstream Enterprise. [Read the full UC story.](#)

Thanks to their strategic partnership with Windstream Enterprise, GNC can further solidify their position as a leader in the health and wellness retail space, confident that their strong technical foundation will continue to support their expansive operations.

Our managed connectivity, communications and security solutions are innovative. Your business outcomes are imperative.

“With Windstream managing the network, our IT team spends more time on business innovations and less time on routine maintenance.”

Jason Connor, Senior IT Manager
GNC

For more information on how Windstream Enterprise can support your technology needs, visit [windstreamenterprise.com](https://www.windstreamenterprise.com)