



Windstream takes a pharmacy's network from high maintenance to high performance

Polaris Pharmacy Services is a non-retail pharmacy specializing in long-term and post-acute care. The company provides medication services to nursing homes throughout the U.S. After numerous mergers and acquisitions, Polaris expanded to 25 locations, but each one operated on its own legacy network. Recognizing the need for a centralized solution, they turned to Windstream to support their digital transformation.

At a glance



Industry

Healthcare

Customer

25 locations across the U.S.

2,100 employees

Challenges

No automated failover

Limited bandwidth

Expensive legacy MPLS circuits

Overburdened IT team

Solutions

SD-WAN

Virtual SD-WAN and Cloud Connect

Dual fiber connections

WE Connect

Results

Enhanced uptime and performance

Significant cost savings

Improved business continuity

Optimized IT management

A patchwork legacy infrastructure

Polaris Pharmacy Services was at a pivotal point. The company, which provides medication services to nursing homes, was operating their 25 locations on disjointed, outdated network infrastructures. They knew that a digital overhaul was essential to improve service delivery, as well as client and employee experiences.

Polaris faced a series of interconnected challenges that limited their operational efficiency and continued growth.

First, their existing network relied on legacy MPLS (multiprotocol label switching) circuits. These circuits were not only expensive to maintain but also provided limited bandwidth that was insufficient for their growing needs. In addition, while the company had backup systems in place, the failover mechanisms were not automated, leading to complications during outages.

Second, all of Polaris's business-critical applications were hosted on servers located at a single pharmacy in southern Florida—right in the path of severe hurricanes. This setup posed a significant

risk to business continuity, as any disruption at this location could impact the entire network.

Finally, managing the complex, outdated MPLS network was a time-consuming burden for Polaris's IT team. Their resources were stretched thin, and constant issues with the network monopolized IT's time, taking them away from more strategic initiatives that could drive business growth and innovation.

“The Windstream support team is always available and works diligently to resolve my issues.”

Ruben Soto, CIO
Polaris Pharmacy Services

All in all, Polaris needed a trusted partner who could implement a comprehensive, centralized solution to support their entire organization and unburden their IT team. They needed Windstream.

Addressing critical pain points

Windstream implemented SD-WAN (software-defined wide area network) technology across all of Polaris's locations. They set up dual fiber connections in an active/active configuration, meaning both connections are always on and working together provide maximum uptime. The new setup not only improved bandwidth but also provided automated failover to minimize downtime.

To tackle the issue of vulnerable server locations with a single point of failure, Polaris is moving its business-critical applications from on-premises servers to two geographically diverse Azure data centers. Windstream is providing the virtual SD-WAN and Cloud Connect services to seamlessly connect all locations to these cloud-based applications. This migration will help ensure business continuity and reduce the risks associated with storing all critical data in a single location.

With Windstream's WE Connect portal, Polaris's IT team now enjoys a single-pane-of-glass solution for complete network visibility and control. This portal allows the team to monitor and manage the network from a central point, significantly reducing the amount of time and manual effort they spend on network management. Now, IT can focus on big-picture projects and innovations, rather than getting bogged down by maintenance requirements.

From legacy systems to cutting-edge solutions

Together with Windstream, Polaris has transformed their network infrastructure and operational capabilities.

The new SD-WAN setup unified all Polaris locations into a single platform with automated failover, ensuring continuous uptime and reducing the burden on their in-house IT staff. In addition, the dual fiber connections provide the bandwidth needed to run cloud-based apps at high performance levels.

This alone generated significant cost savings for Polaris, as they no longer have to budget for expensive MPLS maintenance. By migrating to Azure data centers, the company also avoided the expense of purchasing new servers, and thanks to virtual SD-WAN and Cloud Connect from Windstream, they now have a robust solution for business continuity.

The WE Connect portal has become an essential tool for Polaris's IT team, delivering comprehensive visibility and network control. The portal freed up resources and time that the team can now devote to core-business initiatives.

A future-ready network infrastructure

With the support of Windstream, Polaris Pharmacy Services successfully navigated their digital transformation journey. They now have a modern network infrastructure that is light-years ahead of solutions used by the top ten leaders in their industry.

Ready to take the first step on your own digital transformation journey? Learn how Windstream can help — visit windstreamenterprise.com.

"I value the relationship that I have with Windstream, and they are a trusted partner."

Ruben Soto, CIO
Polaris Pharmacy Services

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

For more information on how Windstream Enterprise can support your technology needs, visit windstreamenterprise.com