



# Sweetening a candy retailer’s network infrastructure with modern solutions

National candy retailer Lolli & Pops has 60 locations across the country, each offering a unique selection of international candies and confections sourced from around the world. But their outdated network and voice solutions and unreliable provider fell far short of their needs. With plans to continue expanding, Lolli & Pops needed a robust infrastructure and a supportive provider that could keep pace with their growth. So, they turned to Windstream Enterprise to help modernize their network, security and voice solutions.

## At a glance



### Industry

Retail

### Customer

60 locations

### Challenges

Unreliable service provider

No visibility or co-management

Multiple end-of-life devices

Frequent network outages

Outdated voice solutions

Non-PCI-compliant network security

### Solutions

SASE

- + SD-WAN
- + Firewall as a Service
- + Secure Web Gateway
- + Intrusion Protection
- + Anti-Malware

OfficeSuite UC®

Secure WiFi

Cellular Broadband

WE Connect portal

### Results

Maximized uptime and performance

Robust, PCI-compliant security

Reliable, high-level support

Co-management capabilities

Complete network visibility

Modern, streamlined communications

## Legacy systems create a sour situation

Lolli & Pops faced several major challenges with their previous service provider. To start, their network connections were unreliable, with frequent outages that slowed performance and impacted the customer experience. In addition, the company’s existing SD-WAN, WiFi and switch devices were all reaching end-of-life, creating further inefficiencies.

Another major concern was that the previous network and security solutions were not PCI compliant, which posed significant risks since the majority of their transactions are via credit card, both in-store and online.

Their voice system was also outdated and difficult to manage, and the lack of co-management capabilities for both the network and voice solutions left Lolli & Pops entirely dependent on their service provider for any changes or issues. And, unfortunately, their provider was slow to respond to problems and often unable to find a resolution.

## Crafting the perfect recipe

Windstream Enterprise started off the transformation by deploying a comprehensive SASE solution that included SD-WAN, Secure Web Gateway (SWG), Firewall as a Service (FWaaS), Intrusion Protection Service (IPS) and Anti-Malware security features. This fully replaced Lolli & Pops’ previous SD-WAN setup and significantly bolstered the company’s security posture.

**“Windstream Enterprise provides a white-glove service that is the best I’ve experienced.”**

**Norman Paulsen, VP of IT & Digital**  
Lolli & Pops

To improve network resiliency and bandwidth, Windstream Enterprise implemented dual Cellular Broadband connections in an active/active configuration, ensuring maximum uptime across all locations. The WiFi and switches were also modernized with Windstream’s Secure WiFi and Cloud-Managed Switches, providing greater control and performance.

On the security front, Windstream Enterprise's SASE solution ensures that Lolli & Pops meets PCI compliance requirements by segmenting credit card transactions on a private channel across the SD-WAN network. This addressed one of the company's most critical concerns, providing peace of mind for both the retailer and their customers.

Finally, Windstream Enterprise implemented OfficeSuite UC® for voice services, replacing the clunky, outdated system with modern handsets that offer advanced features and are easy to use.

## Delivering sweet success

Windstream Enterprise's solutions have been transformational for Lolli & Pops. The company now has a single service provider who offers the high level of support they need, allowing them to confidently move forward with their growth plans.

The reliability of the new network and voice services has improved operations across all locations, while the WE Connect portal provides co-management capabilities, along with complete visibility into bandwidth usage and performance metrics.

Lolli & Pops' IT team can now make policy changes, add new devices and open new stores on their own—with no more bottlenecks or delays caused by an unreliable service provider. This has removed a huge burden from their lean IT team, giving them more time to focus on strategic projects that improve business operations.

Windstream Enterprise's proactive approach to managing network security and performance has also been a game-changer. Lolli & Pops now enjoys the dedicated support of a highly responsive, knowledgeable technical service manager who has been instrumental in building reports that help the IT team monitor daily bandwidth usage, ensuring that all locations run smoothly.

As the retailer's VP of IT and digital, Norman Paulsen, put it, "We went from the worst service provider experience to the best service provider experience with Windstream. It's a night and day difference."

## The cherry on top

With Windstream Enterprise managing all network, security, voice and LAN services, Lolli & Pops no longer wastes precious time battling network issues or chasing down an unreliable service provider. Now, they are moving forward with their expansion plans, confident that their technology infrastructure is reliable, secure and scalable. Their partnership with Windstream Enterprise has not only improved day-to-day operations but has also positioned the company to satisfy more sweet teeth than ever before.

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

***"Windstream Enterprise delivers creative solutions to help us resolve issues. They are highly responsive to our needs and proactively alert us to any network issues."***

**Norman Paulsen, VP of IT & Digital**  
Lolli & Pops

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