

Case Study



OTTcommunications™

Customer Profile

U.S. Region: New England

Industry: Telecommunications

Founded: 1994

Number of CLEC Customers: 5,355

Number of ILEC Customers: 15,888

Number of Employees: 180

Web Address: ottcommunications.com/



Background:

“A proud past. A bright future.” Is more than just a slogan for Otelco. The company based in Alabama is a full service telecommunications provider, offering a wide array of communication services including telephone, long distance, Internet, broadband services, and television to businesses and consumers in North Central Alabama, Maine, Western Massachusetts, Central Missouri, and Southern West Virginia. With an advanced network dedicated to delivering the advanced services, the company never loses sight of the local communities that it has worked within since the early 1900’s.

Otelco’s operations in Maine and New Hampshire date back more than 115 years. This division, known as OTT Communications, was created from a merger between Mid-Maine Communications and Pine Tree

Networks, bringing together a rich heritage of telecommunications with an innovative new fiber optic network that reaches across Maine. OTT Communications now provides more than 29,000 voice and data access lines to thousands of business customers.

OTT Communications united major telecommunication providers in Maine and New Hampshire, forming a premier competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) in the region. Its heritage of investing in technology to build the best service available with a local touch meant that OTT embraced the power of virtualization to reduce costs and streamline operations.



The Opportunity:

OTT Communications has grown steadily over the past ten years. Today, the company now provides telecommunication services to businesses and consumers including hosted PBX, high-speed Internet, collocation, and residential bundles. The company's growth also led to the necessary growth in its IT infrastructure and increased complexity in its operating environment. Additionally, as the rapid changes in telecommunications meant that new products and services were being steadily delivered to the company's subscribers.



By 2007, OTT Communications was operating hundreds of physical servers, some with direct-attached storage and others with network storage. As the company's steady growth was across multiple geographic regions in Maine, it wasn't utilizing all the available processing and memory resources, but was spending significant

resources on electricity and facilities.

In order to avoid a painful experience, OTT Communications implemented a virtual environment throughout its datacenters in Maine with Mosaic Technology – without involving the solution partners.

“OTT Communications has been working with Mosaic since 2007, and when our server environment went down on a winter day, they were my first call. Our positive experiences with Mosaic proved the high quality, reliability, and their depth of technology insight,” said Melanie Leighton, Client Technologies Supervisor at OTT Communications. “It was imperative to our business that our network environment be restored immediately. Mosaic responded immediately by sending one of their most senior network engineers to our data center. He was able to bring the storage environment back online and we initiated a program to migrate to a virtualized architecture within weeks.”

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To improve server utilization and make more efficient use of its storage resources, OTT Communications embarked on a datacenter consolidation and virtualization project.

After reviewing its options with Mosaic Technology, OTT Communications elected to deploy VMware's Enterprise Plus, VMware site recovery manager, Dell Equallogic, VEEAM, and PanoLogic. This total solution was architected and installed by the team at Mosaic.

The first and most complex part of the project covered the virtualization of the Bangor and Portland Maine regions. The results and experiences from this phase of the project was the model for the solutions in other regions. The company has since expanded the project to its Alabama region.

The production applications running in the virtualized infrastructure include Solomon, Broadsoft, Blackberry BES, Mail Attender, Symantec 2010, LCS, Whatsup, Ipcontrol and Veeam, as well as numerous small application servers, domain controllers and terminal servers. Users have reported the same response times in their new virtual environment as on the physical infrastructure. OTT was also able to easily scale their new infrastructure, which dynamically balanced the resources across all the virtual machines.

The project has enabled OTT Communications to significantly reduce its real estate costs and capital expenditures. In 2009, the IT department

was able to reduce its server requirements for Bangor and Portland Maine from 120 servers to 15. The time required to manage and deploy new servers has also been significantly reduced. The IT department is now able to focus on the demands of the growing business. As a result, the company is able to respond quickly to requests from customers for new services.

"Mosaic Technology worked with us closely to ensure our team had the latest information on all the products and technologies from all vendors being used in our new architecture. It helped to simplify the communications process, avoid bureaucracy and simplify the project," said Leighton. "After the system was operational, Mosaic stayed in close contact and provided constant monitoring of the new system."



OTT Communications also implemented VMware vCenter Site Recovery Manager. Downtime isn't an option for OTT, as its customers depend on it for 24x7 availability and connectivity. The new business continuity solution ensures that should one of the sites experience an outage, the network will automatically ensure critical operations continue.

The new foundation that OTT Communications established with Mosaic Technology will help ensure that OTT continues to look forward to a bright future with technological excellence.

“Partnering with Mosaic Technology was the most natural choice for us to take because of our excellence experience with them historically,” Leighton said. “They have helped through the ups and downs of bringing together Pine Tree Networks and Mid-Maine Communications to form OTT Communications. We know that Mosaic is committed to our long-term success.”
– Melanie Leighton, Client Technologies Supervisor, OTT Communications.

For more information or to contact OTT Communications visit ottcommunications.com or call 1.877.643.6246.

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Mosaic Partners Deployed:

- VMware
- Dell
- Pano Logic
- VEEAM

Mosaic Partner Products Deployed:

- VMWare Enterprise Plus with VCenter Server Standard
- VMWare Site Recovery Manager
- Pano Logic Desktop Virtualization
- Dell EqualLogic
- Dell Rack Servers R610's and R710's
- VEEAM Backup