MPI Label Systems is one of the top 10 label companies in the nation; they have nine manufacturing facilities, 35 sales locations and more than 400 employees. The company specializes in producing digitally printed labels, roll-fed wrap labels, shrink sleeves, and RFID labels for large and small brands.

MPI Label Cuts Costs and Improves Network Performance with IT Services and Support from CTG

Corporate Technologies Group (CTG) delivers WAN support, network monitoring and more– cutting $3000 a month in data, network and phone expenses

CHALLENGE After acquiring three manufacturing facilities over the past several years, the MPI executive team determined it was time to upgrade its analog phone system to a VoIP system. They were also looking for Internet/private network support and network monitoring expertise.

SOLUTION MPI hired Corporate Technologies Group (CTG) to provide: WAN management, data lines/bandwidth, email integration, network monitoring and analytics and VoIP.

A few of the benefits

Transition

Transitioned analog phones to VoIP in eight plants, including 300 extensions- added features at a lower cost

Upgrade

WAN upgrade and support to connect eight MPI facilities

Support

Proactive support- consolidated local phone service, removed unused lines, changed providers- saving $3000/month

Negotiation

Internet/private network contract negotiations- CTG negotiates pricing and data contracts for optimal bandwidth at the lowest cost

Monitoring

Installed network monitoring solution to identify network slowdowns and abusive user applications

THE DAWN OF A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

MPI Label Systems offers a variety of narrow-web flexographic printing and label services to small and mid-size companies and nationwide brands.

In addition, the company also sells service label equipment and offers RFID technology for encoding and tracking products. MPI has a strong history dating back 49 years. The company has grown from one small warehouse in Sebring, Ohio, to now nine printing facilities and offices around the country.

Almost 15 years ago, MPI's CIO Jeff Holbrook, reached out to CTG for support negotiating and managing long-distance telephone contracts for MPI offices. From there, the business relationship grew.

"We started working with Brett Harney, the co-owner of CTG, first on the long-distance contracts and from there he helped us consolidate our networks onto a WAN to connect six of our plants," said Holbrook.

> **"Before that we had each plant running its own server, meaning the network was slow at times and managing it was a headache. Now we have boosted data throughput and faster network response which means a lot for us."**
>
> **JEFF HOLBROOK**

IMPROVED DATA NETWORK AT A LOWER COST

Over the years, CTG has become a true partner of MPI, often serving as an extension of the company's internal IT team.

Today CTG provides: WAN management, data lines/ bandwidth, email integration, network monitoring and analytics and VoIP support.

"Brett knows our business and he's proactive about finding ways to improve service and save money," said Holbrook.

"He noticed he could upgrade our bandwidth from 10Mbps to 20, and now we're at 50Mbps and we're still saving money. He also consolidated our local phone service and changed providers saving us about $3000 a month right there. He's a partner that's looking out for us."

FEATURE-RICH VOIP

When it came time to upgrade the company's analog phones to a VoIP system, Holbrook again consulted with CTG. CTG started by upgrading a newly acquired MPI plant to all VoIP phones.

Over the next three years- moving at a sustainable pace for MPI- the CTG team converted the eight remaining plants to the VoIP system.

CTG ran network network diagnostics, established data lines and installed approximately 300 extensions for employees.

The VoIP phones include advanced call features which give MPI clients direct dial access to managers and customer support. Other features include call forwarding to backup support extensions, plus visual voicemail and call recording.

Not only is MPI able to reduce phone expenses with the VoIP system, Holbrook believes these added features help his team better serve customers.

NETWORK MONITORING TO IDENTIFY AND FIX SLOWDOWNS

Recently, CTG also worked with MPI to install a network monitoring and analytics solution. This solution allows MPI to monitor bandwidth usage and identify potential bottlenecks at remote offices.

"Now our IT team receives an alert if there's a network issue and we can drill down to see the problem," said Holbrook. "This helps us keep our network running at an optimal level so we can be as productive as possible, with this same network bandwidth."

With greater visibility into the network, MPI can review network slowdowns and prioritize large file downloads. The company's pre-press department often sends and receives label proofs, which are extremely large files. They can now schedule those file downloads at off peak times as needed.

Holbrook likes that the entire CTG team is proactive about making recommendations for IT improvements and they are highly responsive when issues do arise. This 15-year relationship with CTG has allowed MPI to keep its internal IT staff relatively small, to three people, even though the company has grown significantly and acquired several new plants.

"Our relationship with CTG is one of the best vendor relationships I've ever had," said Holbrook. "Brett's team works hard to get us the best solutions at the best possible cost. We have peace of mind knowing CTG has our back and that helps us stay competitive and keep coming up with innovative ways to serve our customers."