

A casual dining restaurant chain partners to modernize its network and enable a comprehensive set of communications solutions

Driving customer service improvements, increasing efficiency and adding security

One of the world's largest full-service dining companies — and franchisors of two iconic restaurant brands — recognized that improved digital experiences both in and outside of its restaurants will help drive sales. The company began major investments in retail technology and the necessary network and communications infrastructure to support it in 2021, and has continued that push in 2022. The investments, intended to help efficiency and improve the guest experience, include digital waitlists, mobile payment, handheld server tablets and car-side pickup.

The company explained that the largest element in its digital experience initiative was to replace the technology surrounding and including their 20-year-old point-of-sale (POS) systems. They needed a modern POS, which would address security concerns that presented an inherent business risk while also greatly improving the guest experience. To address the needs of the business, they first needed to modernize their network infrastructure to accommodate the solution.

The company decided to focus on the locations that it directly operated, before introducing the new solutions and the underlying network modernization out to the entire franchisee network.

Realizing that the new POS significantly raised the bar on connectivity issues, they turned to Spectrum Enterprise for help.

Improved connectivity with advanced security

The first step was for the Spectrum Enterprise team to invest time with the company so that they could fully understand the connectivity needs of a modern network infrastructure serving two large restaurant chains. They found that the company needed a reliable, high-performance network that offered enhanced security, scalability and ultra-high speed data transfer to achieve their objectives.

The highest priority for the restaurant chain was to modernize their POS system, and that would place greater demands on the existing network and communications infrastructure.

To ensure the company had dependable Internet access to power the POS and the locations it supports, the Spectrum Enterprise team suggested Fiber Internet Access (FIA) at all the restaurants the company operates. The team had developed a tailored solution that met their specific needs and suggested FIA — a dedicated, high-performance fiber network designed for mission-critical data and cloud applications, with a 99.99 percent service availability



A modern point of sale (POS) system addresses security concerns, while also increasing server efficiency.

Client profile

Client

Casual Dining Chain Restaurant

Industry

Restaurant

Services

Fiber Internet Access
Managed Network Edge
Managed Network Switch
Managed Network WiFi
UC Connect
Wireless Internet Backup

Overview

- A casual dining chain restaurant's corporate management will be migrating all of its franchisees onto a cloud-based POS system.
- The existing network lacked the scalability to support future growth, security, and the reliability that the modern POS required.
- Spectrum Enterprise was chosen for its ability to enable the growth and transformation that the restaurant chain required, and to provide all the solutions the company needed, as well as its nationwide reach, reliable services, and strong customer support.

Outcomes

- Elimination of outages and downtime thanks to secure, reliable connectivity — all on a single network.
- Streamlined phone services and systems with a solution provided by a single technology partner.
- The IT team is extended with managed services and supported by enterprise-level equipment and expertise.

Why it matters

- The cloud-based POS provides secure, contactless payments, increasing guest satisfaction and expediting table turnover.
- To improve cybersecurity, the company now has fully managed and maintained firewalls and an integrated security solution.
- Managed services, a modernized network, and improved phone service all free up staff to focus on delivering an improved customer experience.



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backed by a service level agreement (SLA). The team also installed a Wireless Internet Backup to ensure connectivity in the unlikely event that the FIA is down. Wireless Internet Backup integrates with the FIA service to support business continuity strategies with cost-effective redundancy.

“The cloud-based POS is a project they have been working on for over two years,” explains Alan Green, major account manager, Spectrum Enterprise. “Once the project is fully implemented at the company-owned restaurants, all franchises will eventually be required to use the same POS. When you go off-premise with a POS, the stakes become significantly higher regarding the reliability and security of the connection. Just like with any other cloud-based critical application for anybody, you’ve got to shore up your infrastructure first.”

Recognizing the resources it could take to support their network, the company took the recommendation of the Spectrum Enterprise team and incorporated a suite of managed services. These included Managed Network Edge, Managed Network

Switch, and Managed Network WiFi. These managed services are key, as the parent company does not have help desk support for the entire franchise network that will eventually be required to operate on the same POS system.

“When you go off-premise with a POS and also need to protect the trending higher volume of online ordering (OLO) the stakes become significantly higher regarding, the reliability and security of the connection.”

—Alan Green, Major Account Manager, Spectrum Enterprise

“What the company is doing is laying the groundwork and having the requirements, minimum specifications, and inherent Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance and security baked in, before they push the POS out to the franchisees,” explains Myrna Campbell, sales engineer, national accounts, for Spectrum Enterprise.



The parent company was concerned about cybersecurity for the new POS, and Spectrum Enterprise was able to help on that front as well.

“They also wanted to ensure the chain had exactly the right technology — and partner — to operate the POS efficiently, support future expansion and handle any unexpected issue that might crop up. And they’re using themselves as proof of concept, doing all the research, and then they’re going to roll out what’s standard.”

Benefits of a new POS system delivered over a secure, modernized network

With a modern network as their foundation, the company was able to confidently select and implement a cloud-based POS system. It included hand-held devices for servers in 500 restaurants — spread between the two brands — to speed table turns, with new kitchen displays to increase accuracy, and a POS system that reduced labor costs, improved order accuracy and integrated the flow of digital and dine-in orders to better support the car-side and to-go business.

With a cloud-based restaurant POS, the company’s servers save time and energy running back and forth to a POS station, which is especially helpful for large restaurants and outdoor spaces. The order goes straight back to the kitchen, without the lag time involved in the server

responding to requests from other tables. The combination of their modern network and a cloud-based POS provides an elevated, simplified and secure guest experience with contactless payments, minimizing the exchange between servers and guests. The elimination of time spent waiting for the credit card to return to the table increases guest satisfaction, boosting a restaurant’s reputation and also speeds up table turnover, boosting a restaurant’s revenue.

A prior POS system, installed by a franchise company that operated over 160 of the brand’s restaurants in the US, had been breached. The franchise holding company found malware on the POS system designed to capture payment card information, expiration dates and card verification codes. This was far from the first POS malware incident of its kind; at least four other large US restaurant chains have suffered similar attacks.

POS systems can also be hacked via network attacks, and these can occur when a POS connects to the main business network. The parent company, whose POS was not breached, was concerned about cyber security for the new POS, and Spectrum Enterprise was able to help on that front as well.

To reduce cybersecurity concerns, the team suggested Managed Network Edge, which delivers a fully managed and maintained firewall that helps protect against threats and secures site-to-site and remote connections with an integrated security solution. The company can now also securely share data with applications on AWS, Microsoft Azure, IBM Cloud and Google Cloud Platform environments, with Spectrum Enterprise Cloud Connect.

A true enterprise network and communications partner

Prior to engaging with Spectrum Enterprise, the company was forced to use multiple vendors for their network as well as various phone systems and services. “They needed reliable internet access for their POS system, bundled with a security solution, and they wanted one consistent and reliable phone system, supplied by one vendor,” says Green.

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“One of the things that made us such a good partner for this customer was that we were able to design, develop and present solutions to do everything they needed.”

The parent company, in the 69 restaurants they manage, had a bewildering array of separate phone systems. “They told us that their largest day-to-day pain they had was



Spectrum Enterprise UC ensures them the highest level of voice quality, with only one phone number, one dial plan, and a unified set of services.

a multi-vendor environment providing analog phone service from whoever the incumbent provider was,” Green explains. “Whenever a restaurant opened they had two or three lines, an alarm system, and it was just copper POTS (plain old telephone service) lines. And they may have had a one company’s system here, another there, and another one over here. It was just a big mess.”

“They needed a reliable Internet connection, and the fact that we were able to bundle the security solution, which met their requirements, and then exceeded their requirements on the phones, is what really made it such a great partnership for us and them.”

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As a result, the company had to pay individual invoices for the phone services and systems, contact individual companies for patches, software updates and services, and they were also facing end of life on some of their phone systems.

The Spectrum Enterprise team was able to offer the company a fully managed phone service that is delivered and supported from end to end, with an SLA that covers everything from the network to the IP phones on their hostess stations and in their call centers. The Spectrum Enterprise UC ensures them the highest level of voice quality with only one phone number, one dial plan and a unified set of features.

The parent company is happy with the whole Spectrum Enterprise solution and is hoping to be able to push the POS to all of its franchisees before 2023. “They needed a reliable Internet connection, and the fact that we were able to bundle the security solution, which met their requirements, and then exceeded their requirements on the phones, is what really made it

such a great partnership for us and them. We were able to give them the one vendor partnership they sought,” explains Green. “And we’re always up for a challenge.”

[See how we can help modernize and simplify your network with one platform and one partner.](#)

About Spectrum Enterprise

Spectrum Enterprise, a part of Charter Communications, Inc., is a national provider of scalable, fiber technology solutions serving America’s largest businesses and communications service providers. The broad Spectrum Enterprise portfolio includes networking and managed services solutions: Internet access, Ethernet access and networks, Voice and TV solutions. Spectrum Enterprise’s industry-leading team of experts works closely with clients to achieve greater business success by providing solutions designed to meet their evolving needs. More information about Spectrum Enterprise can be found at enterprise.spectrum.com.

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