Hollywood studio expands network capacity, without upfront costs

Red Studios Hollywood meets and exceeds clients' bandwidth needs

Red Studios Hollywood, a 116,000-square-foot production facility with more than 100 years of experience hosting some of the best-known film and television productions, was feeling its age. Experiencing bandwidth limitations and WiFi dead spots, Red Studios Hollywood saw the opportunity to embark on a digital network overhaul.

Their studios and stages were usually booked to capacity, but the decision-makers at Red Studios Hollywood knew they could offer more. "We just had to do an upgrade," recalls Jasmine Lee, Red Studios Hollywood Director of Studio Operations. "Our switches were twelve years old. We were sharing a very limited amount of bandwidth across the entire studios, which was inadequate given the scale of productions using our space. There were problem areas all over the lot as far as the ability to access WiFi."

She had previous experience partnering with Spectrum Enterprise: "I came from a well-known studio before I chose to make the move here, and we used Spectrum Enterprise there. I always thought Spectrum Enterprise was a great choice, I just didn't know if what they had to offer matched what we were going to be able to do financially."

Lee and other Red Studios Hollywood leaders wondered if Spectrum Enterprise could make an upgrade possible without forcing the studio to absorb a steep upfront cost. It was about more than smoothing out rocky work conditions. It was embracing the opportunity to extend a studio's storied legacy into a digital age.

Red Studios Hollywood's rich history stretches back to 1915 when it was used as a silent film set. Scenes from legendary films and beloved sitcoms have been shot on its stages. More recently, blockbuster movies and popular TV shows have used space and services at Red Studios Hollywood.

"Being able to offer premium IT services is a key selling point for us with our clients," Lee explains. "It's not only a matter of meeting high expectations, it's also critical to our success to offer services they are not only willing but happy to pay for. We are seeing a golden opportunity to transform our feature-rich network into a profit center."

A partnership for unlimited expansion

A critical issue for Red Studios Hollywood was the co-management of the network. They didn't want to relinquish control of their network operations to outside vendors. What they wanted, Lee explains, was a true partnership.

For over 100 years, Red Studios Hollywood has hosted major film shoots. Today, that legacy is enriched by the connectivity and technology partnership of Spectrum Enterprise.

Client profile

Company
Red Studios Hollywood

Industry
Entertainment

Services
Enterprise Network Edge
Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI)
Enterprise Trunking
Managed Network Edge

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Overview

- Red Studios Hollywood saw an opportunity to support their most demanding clients who seek the reliability of fast, secure, fiber technology to meet their growing connectivity needs.

- The studio partnered with Spectrum Enterprise and decided on a co-managed network that can tackle even the toughest demands of today's leading television and feature-film producers.

Outcomes

- The studio's total network capacity increased fourfold, and they gained a full capacity backup, with the installation of Spectrum Enterprise Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI).

- Red Studios Hollywood equipped their network with the ability to expand and satisfy any potential client need, by opting for Enterprise Network Edge and a high-capacity Fortinet firewall offering optimum scalability.

- Spectrum Enterprise unveiled the complete installation of a high-speed fiber circuit in just 30 days, accelerated to accommodate a tight shooting schedule for a live event.

- A total network upgrade was achieved at the 116,000-square-foot facility, backed by co-managed support from Spectrum Enterprise.

Why it matters

- Red Studios Hollywood can now monetize its higher-tech capacity and service platform, offering clients first-class connectivity, ultra-high speed data and the services they demand.

- Red Studios Hollywood now has the scalability to comfortably manage the production and bandwidth needs of today's biggest television and cinematic spectaculars.

Spectrum Enterprise gives Red Studios Hollywood a level of control no one else was willing to offer. Where other providers would insist Lee file an official request and await their response whenever she wanted to implement a network change, Spectrum Enterprise gives her the leeway to make those changes immediately.

"We were looking for a solution that helped us co-manage and not 100% depend on a provider's staff because we do have people on staff to support our business," she says. "Another key attraction Spectrum Enterprise offered was that their leasing solutions gave me reasonable numbers I could discuss with our management, knowing I could present a smart fiscal case by explaining we could lease the equipment needed."

Todd Bregman, a Los Angeles-based Enterprise Account Executive at Spectrum Enterprise, consulted with Red Studios Hollywood on how they could dramatically improve their facility without blowing up their budget: "What Red Studios found attractive about Spectrum Enterprise was that there was no upfront cost for equipment, they could lease it all. They also were adamant about not relinquishing control to outside vendors. They wanted to forge a true partnership."

> "Before, we lacked a lot of provider support and a lot of the latest and greatest technology, and that's where I felt our studio could take advantage of a partnership with Spectrum Enterprise. And the team at Spectrum Enterprise does make my life easier in general."
>
> **– Jasmine Lee, Director of Studio Operations, Red Studios Hollywood**

Once these conditions were established, Bregman and his team went to work creating a package that would raise Red Studios Hollywood's network connectivity to the next level — and beyond.

Raising the curtain on a brave new future

Red Studios Hollywood knew they needed to start the renovation by scaling their bandwidth capacity to a level that exceeded the needs of any production using their space, including live television shows and streaming video productions. After consulting with Bregman and his team, they decided on installing a high-speed, low-latency Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI) circuit with a second backup circuit.

Bregman had the second circuit set up independently of the first, giving Red Studios Hollywood the benefit of fiber diversity.

"Many vendors do not provide a completely diverse second circuit as an offering, one that follows a separate path," Bregman explains. "But say both fiber lines are on the same pole, and a car takes out the pole. The client loses both connections. Fiber diversity is something that Spectrum Enterprise does that others do not."

Possibly even more critical for Red Studios Hollywood's future was the need to scale up and serve those clients who might demand more bandwidth and data capacity. Total network security was needed, combined with the ability to raise their network's bandwidth many times. To that end, Spectrum Enterprise installed Enterprise Network Edge (ENE), with a Fortinet firewall that improves security and allows Red Studios Hollywood to manage internet access and raise their network's performance to suit

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A typical Red Studios Hollywood film set requires enormous bandwidth for equipment and crew. "We're renting the space, we want to provide the services," says Director of Studio Operations Jasmine Lee.

client needs without having to change system hardware.

"Not only do we now have stronger customer service and greater bandwidth because of Spectrum Enterprise, but we are fully equipped to compete with any other studio," Lee says.

This means more bandwidth to monetize, creating a steadily growing secondary income stream. Enterprise Network Edge also enables the creation of multiple virtual local area networks (VLANs) so each client can enjoy the use of their own private network at the studio. This is especially important when Red Studios Hollywood books rival network productions at the same time.

Leveraging the fiber network to allow reliable voice communications, Spectrum Enterprise installed Enterprise Trunking at the studio. For greater network flexibility and nimbleness able to meet the highest expectations of Red Studios Hollywood's clientele, Spectrum Enterprise introduced a Managed Network Edge platform of switches and access points.

"We have four stages that we rent out to clients," Lee notes. "For the last few months, we have been completely full. Having a reliable network from Spectrum Enterprise gives us the peace of mind to focus on building on our success."

Meeting an ultra-tight deadline
Once the contract was signed, the window for executing a complete network overhaul was narrow. A popular streaming series was being shot on multiple Red Studios Hollywood stages, while a major live television event was scheduled to take over the entire complex by the end of the following month.

"It was a heavy lift, especially when you are overhauling a large and antiquated network," Bregman explains. "Our sales engineer, Christopher Flores, worked overtime making sure everything was supported, programmed and routed properly."

The entire Spectrum Enterprise project team made sure the Red Studios Hollywood network install kept pace with an aggressive timeline.

"We were able to get everything they needed installed in the first 30 days, which meant they had that first fiber circuit up and running in time for the live event," Bregman notes. "Then we were able to do the rest, including the second fiber circuit and the remaining access points."

Lee agrees it was a big ask, but necessary if Red Studios Hollywood was to maintain the satisfaction of their roster of major clients. Show business is about making reality of the stuff of dreams. That can be as true behind the scenes as in front of the cameras.

Spectrum Enterprise technicians and supervisors ensured the installation met their normal standard for thoroughness without any need for costly work slowdowns. In less than 50 days, Red Studios Hollywood was ready to roll.

Reimagining what's possible with an infusion of bandwidth
Red Studios Hollywood is more than sound stages. It also comprises a variety of business offices, editing suites, security operations, secluded bungalows and a screening room designed to meet the expectations of some of Hollywood's most successful artists and executives. Being able to satisfy everyone all

"I must give a big shout-out to Todd Bregman at Spectrum Enterprise because Todd is a rockstar and he did everything he could to make it as seamless as possible. He really stepped in and did everything he could to make this a success."

– Jasmine Lee, Director of Studio Operations, Red Studios Hollywood

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at the same time is a challenge, but one they are now equipped to handle.

"It's possible to have many hundreds of people on the same network, whereas before we could only have maybe 250 devices, tops," says Lee.

Just as important is service quality. One critical evolution for Red Studios Hollywood is being able to fulfill the specific needs of streaming productions. "We're moving from the older multi-mode fiber to the newer single-mode fiber which is ideal for streaming productions," she adds. "We needed a network that not only works with the latest technologies but allows us to be flexible in the face of continuing innovation. Thanks to Spectrum Enterprise, we now have that."

Lee explains the new network not only manages the high-end technological requirements of digital shooting but permits competing productions to work on adjacent stages with total security.

"Now with Managed Network Edge, we're able to put the network on wireless and plugged in through Ethernet cables so everything works simultaneously," she notes.

She adds that there is a larger mission being served: "We can now offer our clients the best IT customer service, better than what they get elsewhere. It's about delivering on the overall experience. Being able to compete with other studios that way makes a major difference."

Setting the stage for an unlimited future

Lee is not waiting on the rest of the industry when it comes to planning future steps. In partnership with Spectrum Enterprise, she restlessly seeks ways to expand on Red Studios Hollywood's already-massive capabilities.

"As technology keeps evolving, we can evolve along with it," Lee notes. "When the time comes, Spectrum Enterprise can swap out our network equipment for the latest gear. That is very appealing because we can stay current."

Red Studios Hollywood executives can't foresee a time when they need more network capacity than they currently have. Yet if that time does come, Lee says she knows who to call:

"It is reassuring to know that when something comes up with our network or our connectivity that we need help resolving, I can reach out to Spectrum Enterprise and someone will be on it, building a solution designed to work for me."

"The project required an incredible amount of work from everyone on my team. But the result was worth it, because we were able to deliver a great deal of value to the client."

– Todd Bregman, Enterprise Account Executive, Spectrum Enterprise

Red Studios Hollywood's four stages accommodate anything from a live television event to a film shoot. Their largest stage is 25,500 square feet.

Red Studios Hollywood sees Spectrum Enterprise as a technology partner to both augment and co-manage their digital infrastructure.

About Spectrum Enterprise
Spectrum Enterprise, a part of Charter Communications, Inc., is a national provider of scalable, fiber technology solutions serving many of 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. The Spectrum Enterprise team of experts works closely with clients to achieve greater business success by providing solutions designed to meet their evolving needs. For more information, visit enterprise.spectrum.com.

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