

# Factory runs better after adopting Spectrum Enterprise network and connectivity solutions

## Improved connectivity and security brought together under managed solutions partnership

An equipment manufacturer in the United States, with its ownership group in Germany, needed better remote oversight and control, with expanded connectivity and updated security features. A central problem was addressing repeated workflow stoppages which cost the manufacturer many thousands of dollars in lost productivity each month.

After a series of discussions and site inspections about how the manufacturer could increase their bandwidth onsite and improve service reliability, Spectrum Enterprise installed [Dedicated Fiber Internet \(DFI\)](#). To give the manufacturer's leadership in Germany a clearer insight into its U.S. factory operations, Managed Network Edge was installed with a Cisco Meraki Next Generation Firewall, Unified Threat Management and WiFi.

Another critical need for both overseas leadership and U.S.-based staff is an internet-based communications service that offers seamless, scalable collaboration and a user interface accessible from anywhere via a portal. Spectrum Enterprise addressed this by introducing Unified Communications with Webex.

Bringing together these elements under a single technology partnership gives the manufacturer the power to more proactively manage workflow and supply chain issues, helping leadership better understand critical maintenance, repair and productivity issues and ensure compliance standards are efficiently maintained from an ocean away.

### A need to do more remotely

The manufacturer is involved in the design and construction of equipment and tools used for servicing heavy machinery. Their wide range of American clients includes automobile plants, lumber yards and car washes.

When cybersecurity and supply-chain issues emerged as top-of-mind concerns in 2021, the manufacturer wanted to make sure it had better control over its U.S.-based factory. To help make this happen, Spectrum Enterprise representatives and sales engineers were brought in for advice.

"They had systems that needed to be connected to the internet and tied back to their headquarters so they could service them remotely," recalls Nels Solberg, Account Executive, Spectrum Enterprise. "For example, because of standardization laws in Germany, they had to meet certain specifications. They needed security that could not only be managed locally



A manufacturer needed to reduce lost-time incidents and improve the oversight capabilities of its overseas owner. Spectrum Enterprise network and connectivity solutions helped it realize both these goals.

### Client profile

**Company**  
Manufacturer

**Industry**  
Manufacturing

**Services**  
Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI)  
Managed Network Edge  
Unified Communications with Webex

## Overview

- A manufacturer needed a major connectivity upgrade to resolve workflow issues and improve coordination with its overseas headquarters.
- The manufacturer also wanted to consolidate its premises-based systems with a single technology partner who understood what they needed and could deliver the best solutions in one package.

## Outcomes

- To provide reliable and scalable connectivity that minimizes costly latency fluctuations while maximizing bandwidth, Spectrum Enterprise installed a Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI).
- To give the manufacturer centralized oversight and better control, a co-managed networking platform, Managed Network Edge with firewall and WiFi, was set up. Now operations at the factory can be observed and accessed remotely via portal with Spectrum Enterprise support.
- To leverage the new fiber connectivity for improved communications at the factory location and elsewhere, Unified Communications with Webex was installed, with ease-of-use features and 24/7/365 support.

## Why it matters

- The manufacturer is now able to manage potential workflow issues with portal-based monitoring and tools to facilitate broader and deeper coordination.
- The scalability of Managed Network Edge allows the realization of growth and expansion plans vital to the manufacturer's future needs.
- With the new network in place, the manufacturer has put an end to connectivity problems that can cost several thousands of dollars per instance.



The manufacturer produces heavy machinery and precision parts for clients like lumber yards and car factories. They needed a network solution which gave its leaders better control, including WiFi and firewall protection.

but could also be remotely accessed by their overseas headquarters to ensure they stayed up-to-date with European compliance standards.”

Even more pressing were bandwidth problems at the factory. “They were having issues in terms of stability and dependability, with too many high-latency fluctuations,” Solberg notes. “This was triggering temporary work stoppages at the factory which cost the manufacturer lost productivity each time it happened.”

“Having our stringent SLAs (service-level agreements) are a big selling point, but in the end people buy from people. I think we did a good job of showing them that Spectrum Enterprise cares about our clients, that we are capable and ready to hear them out about their specific needs.”

- Account Executive, Spectrum Enterprise

Instead of bringing on a technology partner for their U.S.-based operations, the manufacturer relied on an IT vendor, who in turn made do with aging infrastructure and an out-of-date firewall. Solberg explained how they would benefit by switching to a co-managed services platform with Spectrum Enterprise.

“They needed secure access to everything that was offsite so they could run their business and not be shut down,” Solberg says. “And they needed to make sure they had something that was easy to manage, easy to use, and also something their headquarters in Europe would have complete visibility into. So we broached the subject of what we could do.”

### Putting the best tools to work

Solberg and his team set to work examining how Spectrum Enterprise could transform the manufacturer's issues into opportunities by developing solutions around uninterrupted high-speed internet capacity and then leveraging that to create further improvements.



Staying connected with workers at various locations is critical to ensuring operations at the manufacturer can proceed smoothly and safely. Managed Network Edge features like WiFi and a centralized portal help keep everyone on the same page as workflows rise.

The problems with downtime needed to be corrected; so did a problem that arose whenever too many bandwidth users were active at the factory location. Solberg realized a switch to fiber connectivity was needed.

“I told them this is going to prevent potential opportunity losses,” he recalls. “When everyone on a node is using various amounts of bandwidth, it gets congested and that impacts everybody else on a circuit. Our fiber can make that go away. By setting up a Dedicated Fiber Internet circuit right at the factory, the manufacturer taps into a scalable, low-latency way to send and receive data more quickly over the internet.”

After that, it was time to address other concerns. These included the need to improve security protocols, establish greater operational oversight and an acute WiFi issue that dragged down factory efficiency. Solberg explained how a single platform, [Managed Network Edge](#), could help address all these concerns.

Powered by Cisco Talos, Managed Network Edge’s security provides the factory with network protection directly where it meets the internet.

It includes advanced layer-7 firewall protection, Cisco Advanced Malware Protection (AMP), an intrusion detection engine and security updated directly from the cloud. All this is connected to a dashboard designed around optimized visibility and control.

Supported by a multitude of access points that enable factory-wide control from a single dashboard, Managed Network Edge also offers critical visibility and a level of control over what goes on at the factory. WiFi was added to this platform after the manufacturer realized that was a big need, too.

“They needed to stay on top of some very strict cybersecurity laws in their home country. To do that, they needed technology that was both serious and flexible, which they got from the Meraki firewall with Managed Network Edge.”

– Account Executive, Spectrum Enterprise

“They’ve got laptops that need to be out there, as well as scanners that access the warehouse and the production area which they use for critical inventorying and supply-chain management,” Solberg explains. “They also have people welding and fabricating on the factory floor who need to be connected to their mobile devices and to their managers if there are issues that require quick answers.”

### A partnership built for growth

The manufacturer was impressed by Solberg and other Spectrum Enterprise sales representatives who regularly visited the site with their teams of engineers and technicians to discuss service options.

“They tell us we’re open, transparent and fair,” Solberg says. “They especially appreciate the fact we have resources to bear instead of being one person trying to juggle every aspect of it. I tell them my job is to figure out where you are today versus where you want to be, figure out if there’s a way to bridge that gap and then bring in the right resources to make it a reality.”

Such an issue arose a few months into the partnership when the manufacturer realized they needed to upgrade their voice communications. An internet-based solution was needed, an all-in-one service which brought together voice and video communication, messaging, meetings and other collaboration uses that was more reliable and easier to use. Solberg suggested [Unified Communications with Webex](#).

That installation went as smoothly as the others had, with Spectrum Enterprise support personnel making sure all questions got answered and all issues were addressed.

“We own any heartache with equipment, warranties, ports, licensing and other concerns,”



Solberg explains. “Others think about these kind of major services and equipment overhauls as being capital expenses, and it can seem overwhelming. But at Spectrum Enterprise, our technology partnerships are built around more manageable monthly billing cycles which clients can treat as operating expenses. Equipment, installation, maintenance; it all gets put in one monthly bill. That keeps the client’s focus where it needs to be: on their roadmap, and not on our contract.”

### Taking on the future one step at a time

The manufacturer sees other opportunities for their new partnership as they bring their U.S. systems into closer alignment with the rest of their global operations and improve their operational capacity.

Solberg notes that since the initial implementation the manufacturer has augmented their Managed Network Edge platform with additional access points at the factory location. There have also been discussions about adding more fiber circuits and perhaps even sensors to take fuller advantage of what the platform allows them to do:

“They want the ability to make some changes, then come back to add more later. That is possible with Managed Network Edge because it is in essence a modular system you can add on to as much as you want.”

That level of engaged control, with the option to get the support they need when they want it, makes for a satisfied client. So does the understanding that with Spectrum Enterprise, the manufacturer has a technology partner which Solberg says “can do a little bit of everything and actually help impact all aspects of what they are trying to do.”



A critical benefit of a technology partnership with Spectrum Enterprise is managing cost. The manufacturer pays just one monthly bill for the full range of solutions being used. New services can be then added as needed.

“What they needed in terms of their connectivity and communications was reliability. They can manage it and do what they want with it, and if something happens they don’t have to scramble or pay a ton of money to replace it. Just call us instead.”

– Account Executive, Spectrum Enterprise

Solberg adds it also helps to have all that expertise in one place.

“With us, they have someone, not a vendor but a partner, who actually listens to their needs and understands where they need to be. More than that, we figure out how we can help them get there within budget and also meet all the criteria as far as giving them the right support.”

### 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](https://enterprise.spectrum.com).

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