

Richloom Fabrics expands network to support its national growth strategy

Textile firm gets critical connectivity and security by leveraging Spectrum Business partnership

Richloom Fabrics, a textiles supplier founded in 1957 in New York City, needed high-speed IT infrastructure to keep pace with its rapidly growing business. They sought to better accommodate an increasingly off-site workforce and do so in a way that made the enterprise more flexible without increasing their exposure to cyberattack.

Working with technology partner Spectrum Business, they upgraded connectivity at three major locations with the installation of four Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI) circuits. To better manage that bandwidth, and guard against cybercriminal infiltration, Richloom Fabrics opted to bolster their fiber connectivity with Enterprise Network Edge.

"We have worked with Spectrum Business before," says Kenny Hanks, IT Manager, Richloom Fabrics. "We knew adding their network platform would offer comprehensive, centralized control as we redesigned our infrastructure to better service our rapid growth. Having the additional speed and reliability of those fiber circuits allows us to do so much more. It also means less headaches for our IT team keeping everyone connected."

Richloom Fabrics saw a more flexible and reliable network as a means of

being more proactive in the ways they manage their business. Hanks wanted a hands-on perspective on what is happening at other locations, one that reduced his need to travel to work sites and sharpened his perspective of how Richloom Fabrics used data.

Connectivity designed for fast growth

Founded in 1957, Richloom Fabrics is a major textiles supplier to residential retail, hospitality, upholsters and other businesses. They produce products domestically as well as import products from manufacturing partners. Their business is headquartered on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, which also hosts a large showroom.

As their enterprise is spread out across many hundreds of miles, Richloom Fabrics needed faster, more reliable connections to stay nimble and meet the demands of their global industry. They sought the reliability of fiber circuits which can be scaled up to deliver more capacity as demand grew.

All this was realized with the installation of four separate [Dedicated Fiber Internet](#) circuits. One is located in Manhattan; one is in their main distribution center in Laurens, South Carolina; and two are at the main manufacturing center in High Point, North Carolina.



Richloom Fabrics offers a vast array of products, including upholstery, embroidery and outdoor fabrics imported from around the world. Keeping track of business requires a flexible and transparent network.

Client profile

RICHLoom

Company

Richloom Fabrics

Industry

Manufacturing

Services

Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI)
Enterprise Network Edge

Overview

- National textile manufacturer Richloom Fabrics needed fast, reliable connectivity to enable smoother collaboration across their multi-state network.
- Their business-critical needs included enhanced network performance with improved firewall protection.
- To better manage and facilitate workflow from their hybrid workforce, Richloom Fabrics sought centralized, more flexible control over their virtual private network (VPN) service.

Outcomes

- To boost bandwidth and improve network speed at all locations, Spectrum Business installed four Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI) circuits.
- To improve control at the network hub, Richloom Fabrics opted for Enterprise Network Edge.
- Deeper cybersecurity oversight has been realized with Enterprise Network Edge firewall protection.

Why it matters

- Richloom Fabrics has significantly reduced its internal IT workload with Spectrum Business co-management of critical security and connectivity needs.
- The enterprise can accomplish more with its network without spending tens of thousands of dollars on additional equipment.
- The move to a strong VPN-enabled workforce allows Richloom Fabrics to keep employees instantly and securely connected from wherever they work.



Keeping looms like this working at full capacity requires more than one kind of fiber. Dedicated Fiber Internet (DFI) offers Richloom Fabrics connectivity to keep supply chains running smooth and steady.

“In addition to our New York headquarters and our sites in North and South Carolina, we also need to manage our office and team in China, as well as work directly with our manufacturing partners there,” Hanks notes. “Having the capacity of Dedicated Fiber Internet from Spectrum Business means that when we need to download something that’s larger than normal, it doesn’t take an hour. And our circuits are backed by a 100% uptime SLA (service level agreement) guarantee, so we know our connectivity is there.”

At Richloom Fabrics, areas of high data demand include the sharing of images for design and staging purposes and the tracking of invoices and shipping information. Their fiber network provides its offices with the ability to collaborate more effectively across great distances.

Improved network access via a dynamic portal

Allowing people to communicate and collaborate from dispersed work locations is critical to the success of Richloom Fabrics. So is the need to guard against cyberattack. Joshua Richards,

Account Manager, Spectrum Business, noted the growth of the enterprise in recent years added urgency to both missions.

“They weren’t able to have full visibility and control with the network platform they had back then,” Richards notes. “They wanted to do things like merge sites through VPNs (virtual private networks), see who was coming into their network and what they were doing once inside.”

Richards and his associate, Sales Engineer Luis Cortes, recommended Richloom Fabrics migrate to a platform that would offer better

“Having a very reliable platform that gives us a greater capacity to make the changes we need to make, quickly and transparently, is a clear advantage for having Enterprise Network Edge.”

– Kenny Hanks, Information Technology Manager, Richloom Fabrics



In the textile business, there are many stages in the journey to the customer. Enterprise Network Edge provides Richloom Fabrics with more visibility into each of these stages, as well as greater control over outcomes.

control, equipped with a firewall and mobile portal that offers them full managed-services protection and total visibility: [Enterprise Network Edge](#).

Cortes notes the unique configuration of Enterprise Network Edge is ideal for an enterprise as geographically spread out as Richloom Fabrics. In addition to featuring the co-managed security control of a Fortinet FortiGate firewall, it includes the Fortinet FortiCloud tool. This enhances security while allowing a user to manage network access, assets and services through an intuitive single-pane dashboard. “Enterprise Network Edge gives them the best of both worlds,” Cortes explains.

Since its installation, Hanks has been impressed by how much Enterprise Network Edge has expanded his reach: “Instead of having to travel to one of our North Carolina locations if an issue comes up, I can check out a router or switch just using my mobile device. I can manage the whole network from

one location. On top of that, it’s also been very stable.”

Reducing IT costs while gaining capacity

With the modernization of their network supported by Spectrum Business, Richloom Fabrics was able to realize many operational efficiencies. For example, a longstanding issue involving a problematic server was speedily resolved utilizing Enterprise Network Edge.

“We had been looking at fixing the issue by buying a new server, so having Enterprise Network Edge saved us money that way,” Hanks reports. “We also get a broader view of our business’s data use with Enterprise Network Edge, which helps us capture cost efficiencies across the organization. I haven’t had any issues with people going places they shouldn’t on our network, but if they were, I would know about it.”

Fiber connectivity creates another kind of efficiency, that of a robust signal that is ready to facilitate



Richloom Fabrics has been a family-owned business since it opened in New York City in 1957. They have overseen much growth both in operations and manufacturing techniques.

“The higher bandwidth and speed we gain from using our Dedicated Fiber Internet circuits will serve us very well as Richloom Fabrics continues on its growth path.”

– Kenny Hanks, Information Technology Manager, Richloom Fabrics

workflow from any part of the world 24/7/365.

“In the past, before our switch to Spectrum Business, our connections were often down,” Hanks recalls. “Our team in New York needs to be able to get on at any time. When they couldn’t, we got an email about it right away. Since the Spectrum Business solutions were put in place, I can’t recall the last time that has happened.”

Dedicated Fiber Internet also supports WiFi use at the Manhattan, High Point and Clinton locations, helping them to operate more productively.



Over the years, Richloom Fabrics has launched several different lines of upholstery. They include high performance fabrics for indoor, outdoor, and marine use; fine weaving and print designs; and fabrics where the focus is on sustainability.

Exploring new ways of improving business

Richloom Fabrics has offices in many locations, including Shanghai, China; New York, New York; High Point, North Carolina; Elkhart, Indiana; Greenville, South Carolina; and Laurens, South Carolina. It serves businesses that stretch across a broad spectrum of use cases, from shipping products to the nation's top retailers to outfitting recreational vehicles to producing furniture upholstery. Having a flexible, scalable network is critical as they continue to expand their operations.

"We have a lot of remote workers, which is a big reason we need to have such robust VPNs," Hanks says. "Having this network gives us opportunities for deeper collaboration with our partners and consultants."

Before taking up Enterprise Network Edge, Hanks was pondering designing homemade VPN-based solutions to give Richloom Fabrics leaders the means of viewing their entire network from either New York or the Carolinas. Discovering that ability was built

into Enterprise Network Edge made adding it to the Spectrum Business package a "no brainer" for him.

As their managed services partner, Spectrum Business provides full maintenance and upgrades, as well as the expertise to better streamline installations and upkeep. All service and equipment costs are covered under a regular monthly fee.

The technology partnership with Spectrum Business is useful also in considering future possibilities for growing their business. "I can talk with Joshua and Luis any time and get clear insights from people who understand the business I'm in," he notes.

"Having Spectrum Business technicians always on call to help me address critical IT needs has obvious practical value for my company, and also gives me peace of mind."

— Kenny Hanks, Information Technology Manager, Richloom Fabrics

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