

Unlocking cost-effective efficiency: How managed services propel the CAPEX to OPEX transformation

Tapping into the expertise of firms with a deep bench of network and security specialists offers a compelling solution to the growing shortage of technical knowledge at the state and local levels.

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State and local agencies depend heavily on robust and reliable networks to deliver essential services to their employees and residents. However, effectively managing complex network infrastructures is growing more complicated as agencies rely increasingly on shared and third-party networks. At the same time, it is also getting more challenging for agencies to find the technical expertise required to upgrade, secure and optimize their networks to meet users' needs.

In this age of digital connectivity, investing in managed services presents a compelling solution for state and local agencies to not only bolster their network performance but leverage the knowledge and proficiency of

firms equipped with a skilled team of network and security specialists.

Agency leaders need help managing their network infrastructure due to the constraints they face working within annual capital investment and budget cycles. Limited resources and funding can hinder investments in network upgrades, maintenance, and security measures, leading to outdated infrastructure and increased vulnerability to cyberthreats.

The need for qualified network engineers and administrators surpasses the current talent pool, leaving agencies with insufficient technical expertise. Consequently, this scarcity hampers proactive network monitoring, timely troubleshooting, and crucial maintenance,

resulting in extended downtime, decreased productivity, and delayed network upgrades.

With the shortage of dedicated staff members with specialized knowledge in network management, agencies are increasingly finding it challenging to address routine maintenance and security tasks effectively. This situation also poses long-term risks as they need help to ensure their networks can resiliently meet future demands.

Managed services streamline IT operations for enhanced efficiency and innovation

Many state IT organization leaders find themselves competing with the technology companies operating in their own backyard, according to Miles Tew, a key account lead for state and local government and education (SLED) at Spectrum Enterprise®. He cited one east coast state with a high-tech corridor that has made competition for talent fierce. Despite the presence of renowned universities and community college programs that produce talented individuals, the private sector's attractive opportunities have led to an intense talent war, leaving state IT departments struggling to attract skilled professionals.

"They're having a hard time getting the expertise to develop, deploy and manage the next evolution of technology for the state," says Tew. "Centralized state IT departments have witnessed a decline in their usage due to negative experiences reported by some agencies."

However, this situation has allowed external network service providers to establish themselves as trusted partners. These providers offer innovative solutions and strive to enhance the overall experience for state agencies by



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simplifying the IT process and delivering notable efficiencies, particularly in cost management. Through their managed services, these providers offer tailored solutions that can be implemented across multiple locations, eliminating the need for extensive replication and streamlining the process through a portal environment.

"The flexibility of our managed solutions allows us to tailor a solution to meet any agency's needs, as we recently did for an agency with over 100 locations that was looking to modernize. Because of our **Managed Network Edge** service, we can tailor a solution specific to an agency's requirements," says Bobby Suggs, key account manager for SLED at Spectrum Enterprise.

Spectrum Enterprise Managed Network Edge, powered by Cisco Meraki, is a comprehensive cloud-based solution that simplifies network management and security. It addresses

persistent IT challenges, including network security, complexity, and future scalability. It enhances end-to-end protection with features such as automated updates, an advanced firewall, and unified threat management. By working with an experienced Spectrum Enterprise team to handle network and security needs, agencies can shift their focus to other priorities.

Unleashing the benefits: network performance, robust security and seamless collaboration

Outsourcing network management to a trusted provider, such as Spectrum Enterprise, brings many advantages beyond reducing capital expenditures (capex). By entrusting network management to an experienced provider, agencies can overcome budget constraints, lack of skilled IT resources, and the complexities of managing network security and infrastructure.

From flexible network connectivity to services that help route and secure network traffic and those that help communicate and collaborate, working with a single trusted partner provides access to:

- Improved application performance on a network using SD-WAN technology that enhances the end-user experience.
- Simplified deployment and management of an organization's network with its modular, all-in-one solution—Managed Network Edge offers security and routing, SD-WAN, WiFi, switching and cameras.
- Comprehensive security and connectivity solutions with secure service edge (SSE) and secure access service edge (SASE) capabilities for distributed organizations,



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combining networking and security functions in a unified platform.

- Enhanced protection against malicious attacks designed to overload networks and prevent access to applications, systems and information with world-class distributed denial of service (DDoS) threat identification and mitigation.
- Better employee communication and collaboration with a cloud-based unified communications (UC) solution. UC includes voice or video calling, availability status, instant messaging and desktop sharing available on any device from anywhere.

Additionally, collaborating with a trusted provider reduces downtime and improves business continuity. Spectrum Enterprise offers planning, design, installation and proactive

maintenance to minimize disruptions and promptly restore services if outages or emergencies occur. Their reliable infrastructure and comprehensive support guarantee minimal downtime, allowing state agencies to keep seamless operations and deliver uninterrupted services to their constituents.

Unlocking state agencies' technological potential

The priorities outlined by the National Association of State CIOs (NASCIO) resonate strongly with the capabilities of managed networks and edge solutions offered by trusted partners like Spectrum Enterprise. These solutions align with NASCIO's priorities list, reinforcing the need for robust technology infrastructure, enhanced cybersecurity measures, improved user experiences, and efficient access management. By implementing these capabilities, state agencies can achieve their technology goals without the burden of using their capital.

"Those **solutions** are full ecosystems, and they offer a variety of capabilities. It is a technology infrastructure that we provide you, and you don't have to use your capital," says Les Wood, director of product marketing at Spectrum Enterprise.

"We empower you with comprehensive visibility into your entire LAN and WAN network, and we stand ready to provide support to you and your IT team in effectively managing, optimizing, and configuring your network in real time," adds Wood.

Discover essential strategies for preparing agencies for the unexpected.



Our managed solutions are full ecosystems that offer a wide variety of capabilities. We provide a technology infrastructure that allows agencies to avoid using capital to modernize their networks.

– **Les Wood**, director of product marketing, Spectrum Enterprise

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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.