

Out with the Old, in with the New: Community Health Network

Like so many companies, Community Health Network continued for years to grow, innovate, and expand, while putting greater and greater demands on its IT department, which adapted until it was completely constrained by the systems it was using. Various short-term fixes were tried, with varying degrees of success.

Chris Cerny, Community Health's Director of Enterprise Networking, explained, "We are constantly trying to keep up with technology. It became increasingly clear that the service we were getting from our incumbent [fiber network] provider was not sufficient. We needed a provider that would be more flexible as far as service delivery."

Fiber wasn't a new technology at Community Health. In fact, it has its own fiber; it leases fiber strands throughout the Indianapolis area, and it leases lit services delivered to us via fiber infrastructure. The combination comprised the Community Health Network Metropolitan Area Network, or MAN. But the Wide Area Network, or WAN, was becoming increasingly difficult to manage efficiently, due in part to a lack of flexibility on the part of a major vendor.

Community had to find a WAN solution that would meet current needs and have the flexibility and capacity to accommodate future system improvements. The WAN had to be reliable and scalable to keep up with the changes in physical locations and bandwidth demands.

Community discovered that IFN was one of the only providers in the areas where Cerny needed service. "The longer we talked with IFN," she said, "the more we realized that IFN had the ability to deliver the bandwidth we needed to the locations we needed, in a manner we needed — at a very competitive price."

DURING TRANSITION, FLEXIBILITY WAS KEY.

Community tested the waters with a small order and was quickly impressed with IFN's responsiveness.

"IFN was always able to listen to our needs and sculpt a solution, both technically and financially, that was suitable," said Cerny.

IFN got the contract, and the real work began.

Timing and meeting deadlines were critical. "IFN had a project manager assigned to this project," Cerny said. "She kept us informed with every step of the builds. She also was able to articulate our priorities to the outside plant team in order to get installs made as quickly as possible."

IFN's flexibility was a huge asset, particularly under shifting timelines and locations. "If there was something I didn't think to ask about, IFN brought it to my attention, so we did not encounter any unknowns. That fact alone made for a very successful project, and an even better framework for a partnership."



"THE SERVICE WE WERE GETTING FROM OUR LAST PROVIDER WASN'T SUFFICIENT."

"IFN was always able to listen to our needs and sculpt a solution, both technically and financially."

Chris Cerny
Director of Enterprise
Networking, Community
Health Network