

Case Study: Cox Communications

Reliable application access drives field-service productivity gains. The third-largest cable provider in the U.S., Cox Communications serves approximately six million residential and commercial customers across 22 states with voice, video and data services. Every year, its 3,500 field-service technicians handle more than six million work orders. To improve efficiency, Cox moved from a text-only, private radio system which provided little more than an address and task list to a mobile VPN running over cellular data networks. The more robust system delivered more complete information, and reduced the need for follow-up calls from the customer sites. To make the entire solution work securely, allow seamless roaming across coverage gaps and deliver reliable application access, Cox deployed the Mobility XE™ mobile VPN from NetMotion Wireless.

About the Deployment

By harnessing NetMotion Mobility XE in conjunction with an EV-DO mobile broadband solution from Sprint, Cox was able to safely and securely extend its LAN-based applications to its mobile workers. With higher connection speeds and the seamless connectivity maintained by Mobility XE, representatives have access to the entire backend work order management system which reduces the number of voice and text interactions with the back office. In addition, Sybase iAnywhere's Afaia product complements the management capabilities of Mobility XE, allowing Cox to deploy and update software on the mobile devices remotely.

Greater Productivity & Cost Savings

On top of the broad efficiency gains in handling work orders, Cox noted an extra 10 percent bump in productivity in some cases. This was due to the faster connectivity, as well as access to a broader set of applications including customer service, testing, standard email, HR systems and training.

Mobility XE simplified management of the deployment by delivering a real-time, system-wide view of device activity, including application use, device connections and battery life. The Mobility XE Policy Management Module implemented customized policies that let IT administrators better manage application and network access, quarantine lost or stolen devices, and prioritize bandwidth for critical transmissions and applications. Being able to deploy and update software remotely also resulted in huge IT savings, estimated at a half million dollars a year, thanks to fewer people touching the mobile units for support and maintenance.

"At Cox, we recognize that our field personnel should be focused on our customers and not on the challenges typically experienced using wireless devices and networks," concluded Al Briggs, director mobile solution services for Cox Communications. "NetMotion Wireless software helps us overcome everyday wireless coverage gaps and interruptions. Their solution is helping to make our field service operation more efficient, ultimately helping us to deliver better service to our customers."

Organization

Cox Communications

Industry

Cable television and broadband services

Objectives

- Improve field service communications to improve productivity and reduce costs

Solution

- Mobility XE mobile VPN
- Panasonic Toughbooks, Dell Latitude laptops and Itronix GoBook notebooks
- Sprint EV-DO network
- Novatel Merlin S620 PC cards
- Sybase iAnywhere Afaia remote-management system

Results

- Productivity gain of 10 percent noted in some cases, due to greater application access
- Reduced repair times
- Savings estimated at \$500,000 annually in IT costs through remote deployment/update capability

NetMotion Wireless

701 N 34th Street, Suite 250
Seattle, WA 98103 USA

TEL 206.691.5555

FAX 206.691.5501

www.netmotionwireless.com

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