Improving inventory control with a reliable network connection at remote warehouses

Challenges

- Distribution model required accurate inventory information to enable timely delivery of fresh product to retailers
- Drivers were unable to update stock levels during pick-ups and deliveries at hundreds of unmanned, remote small warehouses across the country
- Refrigeration units at these sites required connection to monitor temperature and operate sensor that reported door status
- Sites are widely dispersed across the continental United States — often located in remote areas with limited or no internet access options
- With a national footprint and many locations in areas served by smaller ISPs, identifying, ordering and maintaining an internet access solution was labor-intensive, error-prone and costly
- Although Granite's consolidation of POTS lines had already delivered significant savings and efficiencies over the years, the company was looking to update TDM lines to an IP infrastructure

Solutions

- For each location, Granite recommended the best connectivity option based on cost and availability, with a preference for broadband or DSL; using Granite's pre-qualification tools and leveraging deep carrier relationships, we were able to deliver accurate information about circuit options and pricing
- Remote locations unreachable by broadband were serviced using either a wireless Cradlepoint solution with 20GB data cap, or in rare cases with no cellular or cable access, via DIA
- Granite ordered all circuits and devices, and managed the time-consuming deployment process across remote geographies, including shipping, configuration and installation
- While on site, Granite installed the customer's preferred router for the remote wireless access points to enable drivers to quickly and reliably connect mobile tablets to the corporate network
- In addition, Granite replaced traditional POTS lines used for chiller temperature control and door sensors with cost-effective ATAs
- Granite replaced analog POTS lines with SIP, hosted voice and Granite EPIK, based on the best fit for application and location
- Granite developed a rapid onboarding process for new locations that enables fast assessment of available options with pricing, then end-to-end management of circuit handling, equipment ordering, and installation
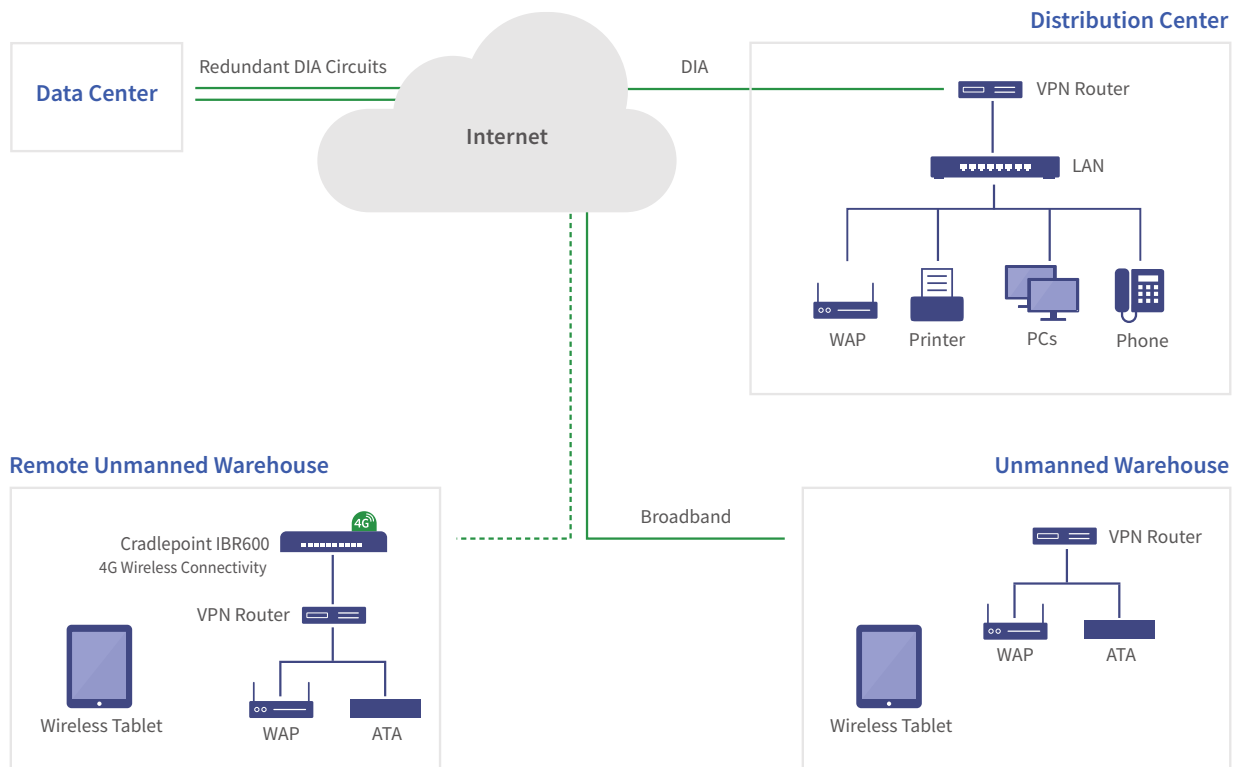
Customer Profile

Industry
Food & Beverage Manufacturing

About
- Leading national food product distributor
- Range of products demanded frequent restocking to maintain freshness at retail
- Supports thousands of distribution routes

Solutions *(continued)*

Data Center

Redundant DIA Circuits

Internet

DIA

Distribution Center

VPN Router

LAN

WAP   Printer   PCs   Phone

Remote Unmanned Warehouse

Cradlepoint IBR600
4G Wireless Connectivity

VPN Router

Wireless Tablet

WAP   ATA

Broadband

Unmanned Warehouse

VPN Router

WAP   ATA

Wireless Tablet

Results

- Internet access was delivered to every site, even those with the most challenging locations, enabling secure inventory updates, cost-effective connections for chiller and door monitoring, and connectivity for driver tablets

- Granite provides a single consolidated bill and point of contact for servicing all locations across dozens of carriers

- Significant IT staff time savings were gained through Granite's end-to-end management of deployment and continue to be realized through ongoing automated monitoring, trouble ticketing and management of site adds, moves and changes

- Replaced TDM services with IP solutions, addressing declining POTS availability and maintenance, delivering cost savings and enabling easier management

- Created streamlined ordering and implementation process to meet critical service activation deadlines enabling the company to achieve product delivery goals

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