Koch Trucking

Over the road trucking company uses SD-WAN to manage new sites over the network

Koch Trucking, Inc. is the core business in Koch (pronounced "cook") Companies, a family-owned business based in Minnesota. From humble beginnings, the company now serves customers in most of the U.S., transporting their goods along America's highways. The company offers long-haul and regional services as well as specialized transportation services, such as shipping recreational boats across the country.

"The Kochs started by selling rope and chain in the 1950s," said Brandon Gammon, senior telecommunications and network analyst for the firm. "We actually still sell rope and chain (in other divisions), but that little business in the 50s grew into this big operation today."

Koch Trucking has embraced technology as part of its operations and brand. It provides a variety of tracking and imaging capabilities so customers can stay up to date on how their cargo is traveling.

"Koch Trucking is always interested in new technologies," Gammon said. "That's one of the growth drivers in the business over the years."

Industry
- Trucking

Challenge
- Manage network performance and security from headquarters to multiple sites at low cost

Solution
- Managed hybrid SD-WAN creates consistent business rules, capabilities

"Technology is one of the growth drivers in the business over the years."

- Brandon Gammon, Senior IT Infrastructure & Telecom Manager

CenturyLink®

Challenge
Many sites, one network

Koch Trucking owns sites in over 30 states are, ranging from urban or suburban to rural settings. A given site's location often impacts the options for networking. Because of that, they operate a hybrid network with a mix of MPLS, T1 and broadband. The inability to integrate the hybrid network creates management issues, especially as Koch Trucking attempts to leverage headquarters services, such as VoIP, across all its sites to lower costs and decrease the need for local support in these locations.

"The network is absolutely key to the business. We route everything from the branches back to our firewall for security purposes," Gammon said. "We cannot afford downtime anywhere. So, redundancy in any device's ability to access the network is incredibly important. We wanted a little bit more control of the network and all the devices from headquarters. That led Koch Trucking to upgrade the network with SD-WAN as an overlay.

"We cannot afford downtime anywhere. So, redundancy in any device's ability to access the network is incredibly important."

- Brandon Gammon, Senior IT Infrastructure & Telecom Manager

Solution
CenturyLink Managed Hybrid SD-WAN provides control, performance and reliability

Koch Trucking quickly settled on CenturyLink® Managed Hybrid SD-WAN as their overlay network. Since Koch wanted more than one connection per device to ensure uptime, CenturyLink's service seamlessly created an integrated hybrid network incorporating the MPLS and broadband transport for greater efficiency and performance, while providing centralized security, control and visibility for all locations.

While Koch looked at other providers, choosing CenturyLink was an easy decision. CenturyLink personnel not only implemented SD-WAN capability of common security policies at every location, but also helped streamline Koch Trucking's routing of traffic through its headquarters firewall.

"We always thought CenturyLink had the best network," Gammon said. "And their people definitely make a big difference. That kind of trust is especially important in a managed service."

- Brandon Gammon, Senior IT Infrastructure & Telecom Manager

CenturyLink®

Results
Upgraded phones everywhere and higher efficiency at small branches

With SD-WAN, Koch Trucking was able to share their VoIP phone system across sites, replacing 20-year-old phones at smaller locations. SD-WAN allowed broadband connectivity to be used at some sites.

"With a three-person office, you just can't spend lots of money to do upgrades," Gammon said. "We were able to upgrade their phone systems at little to no added cost."

SD-WAN also makes evaluating potential expansions in the business easier. Koch now essentially has one platform that can expand with whatever connectivity options are available at a new site.

"No one consults IT on merger and acquisition activity," Gammon said. "Usually we're going in and picking up the pieces. With SD-WAN and CenturyLink support, we can increase productivity at a new site immediately."

"With SD-WAN and CenturyLink support, we can increase productivity at a new site immediately."

- Brandon Gammon, Senior Telecommunications and Network Analyst

Future
International SD-WAN

Expansion is in the future for Koch Trucking as they look to establish a new site in Mexico. That will be the company's first international location. But, the Koch IT team is not worried.

"With SD-WAN, I can manage it from Minnesota," Gammon said.