

the many cases for
**Wireless
Broadband**

—| *Supporting* REMOTE, NEW, *and* TEMPORARY LOCATIONS, |—
ensuring fully redundant BROADBAND

AN INDEPENDENT REPORT ON

**Enabling 100%
Network Coverage**

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- ▶ How does wireless broadband facilitate growth by enabling new locations?
- ▶ Why is wireless the go-to connectivity choice when T1, DSL, and cable aren't options?
- ▶ How does wireless deliver more-than-sufficient WAN bandwidth for mission-critical retail applications?
- ▶ What's the advantage of a single connectivity solutions provider?

Wireless broadband is a fairly new WAN technology that provides high-speed wireless Internet and data network access over a wide area. Wireless broadband uses the cellular phone technology infrastructure and features speeds up to 1.5 Mbit/s. This enables instantaneous bandwidth greater than around 1MHz, roughly equivalent to wired broadband access such as ADSL (asymmetric digital subscriber line) or cable.

Five years ago, most retailers were dependent on dial-up connections to communicate with the home office. Indeed, many still are. But the proliferation of broadband technology has shone a spotlight on the inefficiency of dial-up, to the point that retail locations operating on the periphery of hardwired WANs have sought alternative means to getting broadband. Satellite was an early choice; wireless broadband is fast becoming a new standard for last-mile WAN connectivity in retail. A recent Retail Systems Research (RSR) survey on tech-enabled customer service delved into the connectivity issue. Noted retail technology authority and managing partner at RSR Paula Rosenblum authored the report. Her findings indicate that persistent connectivity, namely broadband, is no longer a luxury but indeed a necessity, even in the relatively laggard world of retail business connectivity. A solid 86% of retailers have achieved persistent connectivity to the home office, with 46% of them claiming real-time or near real-

Case Study: Church's Chicken

Church's Chicken is a \$1 billion, 1,600-store QSR (quick service restaurant) chain serving southern-style chicken throughout the United States and 16 other countries. With that many franchised locations (and with plans to hit 2,500 by the year 2010), it's important for the chain to maintain a communications infrastructure that continuously facilitates both customer transaction volume and corporate-to-store and store-to-store correspondence. Church's Chicken is a MegaPath VPN (virtual private network) customer, and most of its stores are connected via broadband terrestrial lines. But the chain's predominantly southern, rural geographic footprint creates a challenge for MegaPath and its aggregate network providers in their attempt to get broadband wires to every store. That's one problem that MegaPath's wireless broadband offering helps the retailer solve.



SUPPORT MISSION-CRITICAL APPS WITH WIRELESS BROADBAND

Church's Chicken is using MegaPath's managed services offering to support its Lawson ERP (enterprise resource planning) and Radiant POS applications. MegaPath has increased the reliability and availability of these applications, enabling remote users to access and share critical information with applications based at headquarters. Specifically, MegaPath's managed services offering enables users at corporate headquarters to retrieve inventory, labor, sales, and marketing data from each store, so that the company can quickly conduct daily sales and inventory polling of all locations after each store closes for the night. In terms of ERP, MegaPath has virtually eliminated slow load speeds and errors due to interrupted transmissions. "MegaPath delivers flexible solutions that enable companies like Church's Chicken to implement a single, centrally managed solution to communicate with all of its stores and remote workers," says Beth Tyebjee, SVP of marketing at MegaPath, Inc. "Our fully managed services simplify Church's Chicken's management and connectivity challenges, while providing complete visibility into all aspects of their infrastructure, so that they are always aware of how the network is performing."

Alan Stukalsky, CIO at Church's Chicken, says wireless broadband gets his stores online quickly. "There's typically up to a 30-day lag time for new DSL service," he says. "Wireless routers can be configured and installed in our stores in a matter of a day and a half. This gets our new stores open much sooner." Stukalsky says his stores are dependent on this access to the corporate VPN for mission-critical inventory and labor management applications. "Wireless broadband routers can also be deployed rapidly for backup purposes if terrestrial networks are broken, and store managers can install the routers themselves," he says.

Church's Chicken is using MegaPath's online provisioning and management system to monitor the entire network and simplify remote IT support for all of its remote users and locations. The MegaPath advanced Customer Portal enables Church's Chicken to easily view pertinent information about their

time ability to update home office databases and back office systems. While 14% of retailers still claimed dial-up as their defacto means of connectivity, that number has shrunk rapidly as the cost of persistent connectivity has come down and the ubiquity of broadband technologies has increased. That shrinking cost includes wireless

broadband, which retailers are increasingly using for primary connectivity where terrestrial lines aren't available, backup connectivity for business continuity, and as a stop gap to bring stores online while landlines and terrestrial circuits are being ordered, established, and configured. To that end, store-level setup time for wireless broad-

entire multi-carrier network that in the past would have required compiling information from numerous vendors. It simplifies network management by automating the provisioning, monitoring, and billing for all sites, regardless of access technology or last mile provider.

Wireless broadband is an emerging technology for remote sites to access the Internet and VPNs (virtual private networks). Use of wireless broadband enables customer locations that previously would require costly T1s or VSAT (very small aperture terminal) connectivity to be serviced with a more cost-effective high-speed solution. MegaPath Wireless Broadband Service delivers 100% high-speed broadband connectivity for remote locations that are unable to receive terrestrial broadband connectivity, or where satellite doesn't meet performance requirements.



Common cell sites, or "towers," like this one carry the signals that enable MegaPath's wireless broadband offering.

MEGAPATH WIRELESS BROADBAND SERVICE ALLOWS YOU TO:

- Deliver 100% coverage for remote locations
- Provide fully managed and monitored service to all locations
- Eliminate expensive T1 and VSAT fill-in options to meet your business requirements
- Supply sufficient bandwidth to support your business application needs
- Provide ubiquitous access to your corporate resources via a single provider
- Focus on your core competencies, while MegaPath manages your network

The MegaPath Wireless Broadband Service is a business-class broadband connection packed with business productivity and enhancing features that support multiple users, Web sites, and enterprise applications. Those features include:

- Nationwide coverage - available everywhere you can see the southern sky
- Ubiquitous Internet access for locations that cannot get DSL or cable services
- Service for teleworker and remote business locations or branch offices
- Always-on access
- Ability to connect single or multiple users per site
- MPLS (multiprotocol label switching) Private Network over Wireless
- Routable static IP addressing

band is a mere fraction of that of traditional connections, with none of the disruptions common with cable routing. Because of this ease of setup, many retailers find wireless broadband useful for one-time promotions, festivals, and events, when getting a cable or DSL connection for one day or a few would be cost prohibitive.

PCI DSS ADVANCES, SPECIALIZED APPS

PCI (payment card industry) compliance concerns have caused some retailers concern about wireless technologies, but compliance with the PCI's DSS (data security standard) has been central to MegaPath in its development of its wireless broadband offering. So secure

is the service that many retailers are using their wireless broadband connections for dedicated applications that serve data sensitive operations. Some retailers use wireless connectivity to facilitate their gateways to credit card processors such as First Data. Dedicated broadband transmission vehicles for this kind of data are more efficient to monitor, and safer because they protect the data from other, potentially harmful network traffic.

Because wireless broadband performance rivals that of many of its terrestrial counterparts, some retailers are using it for bandwidth-intensive applications that could otherwise hamper mission-critical applications (i.e. POS, inventory control) on the primary network. Such applications include loss prevention surveillance and video recording.

BACKUP, REDUNDANCY

For retailers that are currently running DSL, cable, or T1 WANs, wireless broadband is a capable choice to back up potential disruptions to existing services. Wireless broadband does not use the same last-mile local loop facilities as terrestrial broadband access services, so business continuity is protected by complete redundancy. And unlike the common dial back-up scenario found in many retail environments today, switching over to wireless broadband affords employees access to network-dependent systems at virtually the same broadband speed they're used to.



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About Retail Systems Research

Retail Systems Research (RSR) is the only research company run by retailers for the retail industry. RSR provides insight into business and technology challenges facing the retail industry ecosystem, and thought leadership and advice on navigating these challenges for specific companies and the industry at large.

www.retailsystemsresearch.com



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More than a managed network provider, MegaPath completes any network project by including a full suite of store-based integration services that connect critical C-store/petroleum applications. ensures that customer and corporate data is delivered securely to your key vendors and headquarters over our state-of-the-art IP network.

MegaPath's managed service offering for retail includes:

- *Network Design – Customer-centric design ensures the right bandwidth, at the right cost, maximizing functionality while reducing monthly operating costs.*
- *24/7 Monitoring and Help Desk Support – MegaPath understands the critical nature of merchant services transactions. Connections are monitored from store location all the way to the processor in order to minimize downtime and ensure rapid problem resolution.*
- *Flexible High Speed Options – MegaPath identifies the right connection type and technology to meet the customer's business needs and budget requirements for 100% of your locations. Whether it's DSL, Cable, VSAT (very small aperture terminal), or T1/DS3s, you can rest assured that your network matches your application requirements now and in the future.*
- *Merchant Service Integration – MegaPath works with 25 different processors for credit/debit, ATM, checks, money orders, and prepaid phone and fleet cards. MegaPath adds value by showing each customer the most efficient and cost-effective way to move these services from dial to a high-speed access solution.*
- *Dial-up to IP Conversion – Many merchant service applications still use dial or serial devices for authorization and settlement. MegaPath uses state-of-the-art protocol gateways, which enable all of your devices and applications to take advantage of high-speed broadband access.*
- *PCI Compliance and Security – As credit card fraud and identity theft increase, pressure on the store operators and major brands grows exponentially. MegaPath is a National Payments Gateway and has met the stringent security requirements of MasterCard, Visa, Amex, and the other card issuers to be PCI/CISP compliant since 2004.*
- *On-Site Installation – MegaPath provides on-site installations with service professionals throughout the United States and Canada.*
- *Customer Portal – Stay in control with our suite of Web-based tools that reduce administrative burden and give you real-time visibility into the deployment status and ongoing availability of your network.*
- *SLA – MegaPath's service is backed by a comprehensive set of SLAs that guarantee the end-to-end performance and availability of your IP VPN (virtual private network). In addition, dial failover can be added to ensure 100% uptime and performance.*

**For more information, call
(877) 634-2728**

**or visit the Web site at
www.megapath.com**