Vending Trucks, Inc. Stays Connected On the Go

Cradlepoint Enables In-Vehicle Network with Cloud-Delivered Configuration, Monitoring & Management

SUMMARY

The wide variety of companies that use vehicles from Vending Trucks, Inc. share a common need: to maintain reliable Internet connectivity as the trucks move from place to place. When these vehicles began losing network connectivity too frequently, Vending Trucks went looking for a better solution. They soon discovered Cradlepoint wireless solutions and the ability, using Cradlepoint's NetCloud Manager, to manage their networks from a central location. Vending Trucks clients can now reliably connect an array of wireless devices for Point-of-Sale, social media marketing, and more.

SOLUTION:

COR SERIES
NETCLOUD MANAGER

APPLICATION:

IN-VEHICLE

MARKET:

RETAIL
FOOD & BEVERAGE
HOSPITALITY

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Vending Trucks, Inc. of East Brunswick, NJ, designs and builds a wide range of colorful, durable, state-of-the-art vehicles designed to do everything from promoting Hollywood films or conducting retail sales to selling freshly made tacos. Some of the company's clients purchase vehicles that Vending Trucks custom builds from the ground up. Others have the company add signage and customer features to existing trucks and rent them for everything from one-day events to multi-state tours.

BUSINESS NEEDS

One of Vending Trucks' most pressing needs was to provide cellular networks while in transit so clients could send out live Twitter feeds, run large-screen TVs on the exterior of the trucks, operate digital menus, manage the POS systems, and stream audio and video. Technology Director Justin Lesbirel said one client, as part of its promotional activities, was streaming live video from a truck as it drove around New York City, but because the cellular provider it was using was overloaded in one particular area of the city, the video feed soon slowed to a crawl.

Vending Trucks also wanted to be able to configure, monitor, and manage its mobile network from company headquarters. Additionally, the company wanted to monitor ongoing data usage,

conduct load balancing, and configure routers in real time to take advantage of available wireless networks.

SOLUTION

To address its various networking needs, Vending Trucks selected Cradlepoint routers, along with Cradlepoint NetCloud Manager for central network control. Cradlepoint's COR Series features a fully integrated router/bridge, integrated 4G modem, a ruggedized metal housing certified for shock and vibration, external 3G/4G and WiFi antennas, and support for LAN/LAN and WAN/LAN.

NetCloud Manager, Cradlepoint's network management and application platform, enables Vending Trucks to rapidly deploy and dynamically manage its mobile fleet.

BENEFITS

RELIABLE WIRELESS CONNECTIVITY

The combination of Cradlepoint's integrated and USB modems provide clients with effective network connectivity. Should one carrier signal go down, Lesbirel and his staff could quickly reconfigure the device to use a second carrier's signal to maintain network connectivity or provide a second device to ensure mobile coverage by using multiple carriers.

> "That's when we realized that we needed more — that if we could switch from one carrier to another on the fly, we could provide our clients with much better service. That's when we began the research that led us to Cradlepoint."
>
> — *Justin Lesbirel, Technology Director, Vending Trucks*

CENTRALIZED NETWORK CONTROL

NetCloud Manager also affords Lesbirel the ability to manage data usage and to be creative when providing clients with the strongest and most affordable network connectivity.

> "Let's say one of our customers is in a poor wireless network coverage area, but they're next to a building that has WiFi available. With NetCloud Manager, I can remotely sync the truck's setting to use the building's WiFi as a LAN. Then I can take care of all their data usage and monitoring, and send them reports directly from the cloud manager," Lesbirel said.

Central control becomes more important as Vending Trucks continues to grow and have multiple rental trucks traversing many cities and states.

> "Our clients like the fact that they're able to use multiple networks. It gives them a little bit more coverage and helps them worry a little bit less about going offline."
>
> — *Justin Lesbirel, Technology Director, Vending Trucks*

> "Without NetCloud Manager, it would be extremely difficult for us to manage our fleet's wireless connectivity," stated Lesbirel.

WIFI HOT SPOTS

Some companies use these vending trucks in their marketing campaigns, giving in-vehicle employees tablets to use for lead generation.

"They'll use the graphics, audio, and video to attract a crowd, then go out into the audience with tablets to capture people's information," said Lesbirel. *"They also use the tablets to take pictures, which they can post right away on Instagram and other social sites. With social media, it's really important to be immediate — to share things in the moment. Cradlepoint enables our clients to do their marketing in real time."*

SURVEILLANCE

One company utitilized Vending Trucks' always-on wireless connectivity to beef up their security.

"This company wanted to keep an eye on the cash register, and to get a feel for how well the truck was performing. They used the Cradlepoint-enabled wireless network to operate security cameras mounted on the inside and outside of the truck," said Lesbirel.

PARALLEL NETWORKS FOR BETTER SECURITY

Given recent highly publicized data breaches, Lesbirel stated he receives many requests from clients who want to segment their networks to keep Point-of-Sale (POS) information separate from the public WiFi and other wireless applications. Cradlepoint devices have multiple ways to connect to the network, so Lesbirel is able to create Parallel Networks that are "air-gapped" (physically separated) from each other. This prevents hackers from accessing the network through a less secure application and pivoting into POS data.

GPS CAPABILITY

Vending Trucks is looking into the use of GPS to keep track of its rental fleet.

> *"We like the fact that since GPS capability is built into the Cradlepoint devices, it'll be just a matter of us using NetCloud Manager to turn on that capability once we're ready. We'll save money, too, because we won't have to buy additional devices just for GPS."*
>
> — *Justin Lesbirel, Technology Director, Vending Trucks*

FUTURE-PROOFING

With technology changing as fast as it does, Vending Trucks wants to make sure the vendors it works with are able to keep up with, and perhaps even anticipate, those changes.

"Cradlepoint sends out monthly updates, and I get excited just reading about what they're up to," said Lesbirel. *"I think about how we can use their technology more and more, like what we want to do with GPS. I like knowing that Cradlepoint has its ear to the ground and is paying close attention to where mobile technology is headed."*

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