



CASE STUDY: S&S TIRE

At a Glance

Customer: S&S Tire

Industry: Tire distribution and retail

Location: 18-state footprint with headquarters in Lexington, KY

Business Challenge:

- Free up internal IT staffing resources
- Meet current and future IT requirements associated with growing distribution system
- Increase uptime and performance
- Create disaster recovery plan that includes geographic diversity

US Signal Solution:

- Public Cloud
- Dedicated Internet
- MPLS
- Managed Security
- Professional Services
- Disaster Recovery-as-a-Service

Business Results

- Increased performance and uptime
- Flexibility, support and scalability for future needs
- Internal IT resources reallocated to more strategic endeavors
- Approximately \$75,000 savings over a five-year term thanks to MPLS connectivity across all locations.

Business Challenge

Lexington, Kentucky-based S&S Tire is one of the country's most successful independent tire distributors. The company currently does business in 18 states with a footprint that encompasses three retail tire stores, 20 commercial truck tire centers, three tire retreading plants, and 11 distribution centers. It strives to provide quality products, at competitive prices, with a dedication to excellent customer service, convenience, and value — and relies heavily on its IT systems to help make that happen.

In 2015, however, S&S Tire found that it was becoming a challenge for its small IT team — and its antiquated IT systems — to keep pace with its growing distribution system. The company was interested in exploring cloud services to better meet its IT needs but was told by its current service provider that it would be out of the cloud business by late 2015. It was a good time to seek out a new IT services provider.

At the time, S&S Tire was working with Orion Networks, a Louisville, KY-based value-added reseller that specialized in voice solutions. Although it didn't offer cloud services, Orion Networks had formed a partnership with US Signal, which did. The company brought US Signal to a meeting with S&S Tire to discuss some of the differences between Amazon Web Services, the cloud services S&S Tire was currently trying out, and the cloud services US Signal offered.

The meeting revealed other IT needs as well. Among them: disaster recovery. S&S Tire had been relying on its Virginia data center to house handle both production and backup, which was difficult for its small IT staff to manage from their Lexington, KY headquarters. The company wanted to move both workloads closer, but knew a geographically diverse data center was needed to ensure the availability and security of its applications and data should a disaster occur.

US Signal Solution

US Signal proposed the use of its public cloud to host S&S Tire's distribution site, along with a private internet connection directly connected to the new cloud environment. Cloud-based advanced security was included to provide carrier-grade network protection in a safe, secure cloud networking environment.

In addition, US Signal recommended its Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS) solution to replicate S&S Tire's systems to a geographically diverse Midwest site in the event of a man-made or natural catastrophe. US Signal would manage the daily replication. If failover was required, all S&S Tire had to do is make a single phone call. Unlike many other DRaaS offerings, the US Signal option also included a DR audit and documentation of a complete DR plan through a playbook exercise.

US Signal's total solution would allow S&S Tire to shift much of its IT spend from capital expenses to operational expenses, and free up strained internal IT resources. A demonstration of US Signal's easy-to-use cloud management tool, which monitors and controls various cloud computing components, along with the support that would be available from its Network Operations center, helped clinch the deal.

Pleased with the solution and the level of service that was subsequently provided, S&S Tire was interested in how US Signal could provide further assistance. A well-known service provider had been supplying the company with Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) services. Unfortunately, response times were slow when there was a network failure or poor latency. The problem was further exacerbated by an MPLS network that entailed multiple first and last mile providers that had to be contacted for service if there was a network problem.

At the time, Orion Networks was redesigning S&S Tire's wide area network (WAN) for better performance and redundancy. US Signal recommended an MPLS solution to connect all 30 of S&S Tire's remote sites back to its Lexington headquarters where the company had a 200M MPLS head end and a 100M Internet port. The company also chose to purchase colocation space in one of US Signal's Michigan data centers, another internet port as the secondary head end and internet upstream for their network.

Business Results

The services provided by US Signal are helping S&S Tire to achieve better performance and uptime, while ensuring future flexibility, support and scalability for its IT needs. The company now focuses on aligning its technology strategy with its business goals instead of managing its own data centers. In addition, the company is saving approximately \$75,000 over a five-year term thanks to an MPLS network across all its locations. Working with an IT solution provider that can meet such a broad range of its IT needs is also making life easier for S&S Tire's IT staff.

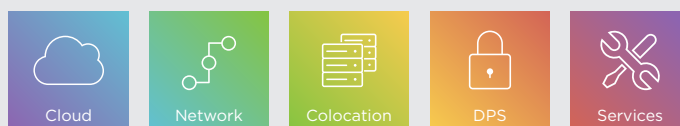
S&S Tire continues to take advantage of US Signal's comprehensive service portfolio. For example, after contracting with US Signal's Professional Services team to handle its migration to the US Signal cloud, S&S Tire requested a full data center discovery audit. During the process, the US Signal team identified areas of improvement in the day-to-day operation of S&S Tire's IT environment. In addition to helping the company perform a successful cloud migration, the US Signal team made recommendations for best practices that will provide greater efficiencies for S&S Tire moving forward.

Dan Clark, director of information systems and technologies for S&S Tire during the initial US Signal engagement, says one of the most important results coming from the US Signal relationship can't be quantified in dollars alone: the peace of mind that comes from unrivaled support and integrity.

"US Signal has always been honest about everything. Tech support is 'Johnny-on-the-spot'. Based on the service and support we've experienced, we feel very comfortable that if we need something, US Signal can and will deliver."

About US Signal

US Signal is a leading IT solutions provider, offering connectivity, cloud hosting, colocation, data protection, and disaster recovery services — all powered by its wholly owned and operated, robust fiber network. US Signal also helps customers optimize their IT resources through the provision of managed and professional services.



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