

CUSTOMER STORY

Customer

Continental Structural Plastics

Industry

Manufacturing

Location

Auburn Hills, Michigan

Business Challenge

- + Manage and/or implement new and disparate IT systems due to company acquisition
- + Comply with J-SOX and GDPR
- + Implement disaster recovery solution for existing business
- + Implement and maintain reliable communications and networking between increasing number of company locations
- + Augment IT staff and resources

US Signal Solution

- + Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS)
- + Backup as a Service
- + Enterprise Cloud (Dedicated and flexible resource pools)
- + Hosted Private Cloud
- + MPLS, Dedicated Internet Access (DIA) and Fastpath connectivity
- + Technology assessments

Business Results

- + Reduced capital expenses
- + Free up IT resources
- + Assistance in meeting J-SOX and GDPR compliance mandates

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

A world leader in lightweight composite technologies, Continental Structural Plastics (CSP) is widely recognized for best-in-class research and development and its comprehensive engineering and design services. Information technology plays a vital role in enabling those capabilities, as well as in connecting the company's numerous facilities throughout the US and around the world.



Business Challenge cont.

As such, there's no time for down time. Regulatory requirements, customer commitments, and other factors require the company's IT and communications systems to be operating 24/7. Any more than 15 minutes of downtime would be disastrous.

Data loss and privacy also are constant concerns for CSP. Beyond potential cyberattacks and insider threats, the company must adhere to regulations such as those outlined in the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act (J-SOX) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) because of its international operations.

Adding to the IT department's challenges is the fact that it operates with an extremely lean IT staff. The acquisition of CSP by Japan-based Teijin, completed in January 2017, places additional pressure on the IT team. With Teijin bringing over many of their businesses to the US, the already stretched-thin IT staff now is dealing with even more disparate IT systems, new capabilities and services that require IT support, and more locations to connect.

THE US SIGNAL SOLUTION

CSP's IT team found relief from some of its resource challenges in 2009 when it started procuring reliable, cost-effective network and colocation services from US Signal. CSP has since added enterprise cloud services (dedicated and flexible resource pools) to handle many of its workloads.

Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS) and Backup as a Service (BaaS) were contracted to take the place of what Kevin Connelly, the director of IT operations, referred to as a "makeshift DR solution." Most recently, the company procured US Signal's hosted private cloud to support the IT needs of parent company Teijin's new carbon fiber manufacturing facility in South Carolina. CSP has also taken advantage of US Signal's technology assessments to help establish a strategic technology roadmap.

According to Connelly, however, the most valuable solution US Signal has delivered has been its partnership with CSP.

"US Signal has established itself as a trusted partner to CSP," he explains. "I've worked with many of the biggest players in the communications and IT services space, and US Signal stands out because of a level of service and support that is second to none.

"If I need recommendations on an IT strategy or how to approach a challenge, I know I can count on US Signal for solutions that will best meet our needs. Their team has taken the time to get to know us, what our needs are—even as they change, what our challenges are, and what parameters we must work within. Without us even having to ask, they'll bring us ideas for optimizing our IT resources and discuss how various product solutions could benefit our business."

The US Signal Solution cont.

Connelly adds that the continuity of US Signal's service and support has strengthened the relationship between the two companies.

"The people we worked with at US Signal at the beginning of the relationship continue to work with us, even if they've moved on to other positions within their organization. They are always ready and willing to take our calls and provide whatever support we need. You don't find that kind of commitment to customers in too many companies.

"We have a lot of good stories that illustrate how 'above and beyond' US Signal's service is and the unwavering commitment of its staff to their customers. For example, we encountered some

problems when we were upgrading connections to a location in Mexico. One of the US Signal's network engineers who was instrumental in designing and rolling out our initial MPLS was now in a different position at the company but jumped on a call anyway. He knew us and our business and cared about ensuring the issue was resolved.

"The service from US Signal's Technical Operations Center is also exemplary. When we place a call to them, we're not going to speak to someone at a desk who's just routing calls to others who will return our call much later. The person who picks up the phone is the person who is going to help us resolve our issue."

B U S I N E S S R E S U L T S

For CSP, the business results emanating from their work with US Signal goes far beyond metrics.

Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) is enabling secure, reliable network traffic flow and management between multiple sites with no fixed or permanent virtual circuits required.

Colocation services are delivering fully redundant network connections and high-level network security, including the latest firewalls and IDS systems, to protect CSP's systems. Colocation is also providing CSP with the features of a large IT department without the capital investment, as well as the ability to expand their infrastructure capacity without undertaking costly construction or facility leasing.

In addition to reduced recovery times, US Signal's SLA-backed DRaaS and BaaS solutions are

providing peace of mind that both downtime and potential data loss will be mitigated should a manmade or natural disaster occur. Because both services are managed by US Signal, they also are freeing up CSP's IT staff to focus on to other company initiatives.

The inherent security in US Signal's cloud services is helping CSP meet J-SOX and GDPR compliance requirements, both essential because of CSPs international operations.

CSP and its parent company, Teijin, are counting on US Signal to continue providing its expertise and high-level service as new locations are added, new capabilities are implemented, and new IT challenges emerge.

