The Challenge

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS (ISP) ARE STILL PERSEVERING against large cable companies. Some may think that wireless isn’t as fast or reliable as cable; however, that is not true. ISPs are doing something that cable companies cannot: they are bridging the digital divide in rural areas and unconnected communities.

Montana Internet Corporation, one of the first ISPs in Montana, offers high-speed internet to residents and businesses in the Greater Helena, Great Falls and Lewistown areas. The corporation launched dial-up service in 1994 and transitioned to fixed wireless broadband in 1998. Today, they focus on connecting their towers with fiber infrastructure and a wireless distribution Wide Area Network (WAN). They aim to grow their wireless footprint and expand residential and business connectivity.

After experimenting with other manufacturers, Montana Internet Corporation became frustrated with instability, lack of support and poor performance. The ISP needed a reliable technology partner that would provide the bandwidth and capacity to meet expanding needs due to services like Netflix, Skype and gaming. On top of a robust product with consistent performance, Montana Internet Corporation needed access to a dependable support team.

The Solution

TO MEET HEAVY DEMAND FOR RURAL HIGH-SPEED INTERNET, Montana Internet Corporation decided to deploy a Cambium Networks-based solution. After implementation of Cambium Networks’ PMP 450 line of products, the corporation experienced more range and capacity through the deployment of massive multiple-input and multiple-output (Massive MU-MIMO) technology, which is a cornerstone of Cambium Networks’ cnMedusa™ platform.

Since initial deployment, Montana Internet Corporation has deployed PTP 820C licensed microwave backhaul and PMP 450m to expand their bandwidth. The wide area distribution networks, equipped with PMP 450m APs with cnMedusa technology, is a cost-effective solution that enables faster internet connections to more people and places.

“Our decision to choose Cambium Networks boils down to tech innovation, excellent customer support and amazingly low cost of ownership.”

JOSH ROMANDIA, CEO, MONTANA INTERNET CORPORATION
The Results

AS OF 2019, MONTANA INTERNET CORPORATION SUPPORTS approximately four thousand subscribers on their fixed wireless network, and that number continues to grow.

After upgrading major sites with PTP 820C licensed microwave backhaul and PMP 450m APs, Montana Internet Corporation has been able to provide high-speed packages that compete with local cable provider plans. Prior to these upgrades, on average, they were only able to deliver 7 Mbps to a subscriber. Now, they achieve 50 Mbps download speeds even in remote locations. Longtime customers who were previously unable to stream video online can now use applications like Netflix.

Specific benefits include:

- ARPU increased from $40 to $79 for users who were moved to cnMedusa APs
- 100+ customers served on a single PMP 450m
- Decreased churn rate
- Ability to scale as demand increases

Next Steps

MONTANA INTERNET CORPORATION CONTINUES to upgrade their network with PMP 450m Massive MU-MIMO technology, allowing them to meet and exceed the continued demands of their customers and broadband applications. They are deploying more PMP 450m and PTP 820C licensed microwave backhaul units from a fiber backbone infrastructure. By partnering with Cambium Networks, Montana Internet Corporation took advantage of the market opportunity and, as a result, their revenue and subscriber counts continue to grow.

BEST PRACTICES

“Support at Cambium Networks is top-notch. Reach out to them if you need advice.”

Josh Romandia, CEO, Montana Internet Corporation