



Partner Name

PROSLINK 

ProsLink Inc.

Bloomington, Indiana, United States

Challenge

- Tracking multiple Cisco SMARTnet Service agreements across a growing customer base
- Regaining time spent managing support contracts for more strategic projects
- Maintaining and improving customer satisfaction

Solution

- Service agreement that provides network technical support, monitoring, and proactive maintenance

Results

- Reduces support contract management time by days and weeks
- Proactively monitors customers' networks to help prevent, instead of reacting to, issues
- Improves support affordability for customers

Cisco Select Certified Partner Delivers Peace of Mind to Customers

Cisco Smart Care Service simplifies service delivery and enhances customer loyalty for ProsLink Inc.'s services team.

Challenge

ProsLink began in 1987 as a company that provided software for a small number of prosecuting attorneys in Indiana. It quickly expanded to more than 85 counties in the state and now receives, retains, and disseminates over 95 percent of the state's criminal history information. In addition, ProsLink has expanded its business focus to provide information technology services to private-sector customers. Since 2005, Craig Hickman, vice president of sales for ProsLink, has helped grow the company's customer base from six clients to more than 150. Today, ProsLink offers IT support services for small- and medium-sized businesses across a wide range of industries, including healthcare, financial services, automotive, real estate, retail, and others.

"I have sold Cisco solutions from the beginning, because when you sell quality solutions, you rarely have problems with the equipment, which keeps customers happy," says Hickman. "Because our focus is delivering superior support services, I also have always sold Cisco SMARTnet Service. Its four-hour or next-day response time has helped us respond rapidly to any equipment problems, plus the operating system software patches and updates were all included."

With almost all of its customers' Cisco® equipment covered by SMARTnet® Service, ProsLink spent large amounts of time tracking Cisco SMARTnet agreement renewals. Customers rarely tracked the agreements themselves, instead relying on ProsLink to notify them when their contracts required renewing. Customers regularly added and removed equipment from their networks, which

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—Craig Hickman, Vice President,
Sales, ProsLink Inc.

often resulted in multiple agreements with different renewal dates which further complicated tracking. ProsLink created a master spreadsheet to track customers' SMARTnet contracts, term dates, equipment covered, renewal dates, and other related data. Each month Hickman received a list of customers and devices that needed renewal from which he would create a quote, visit the customer to sell the renewal, and then purchase the Cisco SMARTnet Service.

"I can't tell you how much time that takes," says Hickman. "If I had several customers to renew, it could take a week to sort out their network devices. Once I got that worked out, I still had to originate a quote and then go sell the customer. In addition, I often had to sell the same customer more than once, because contracts could not be easily combined."

Solution

Hickman first learned about Cisco Smart Care Service in November 2008. The service combines the complementary strengths of Cisco and Cisco Certified Partners to deliver network-wide technical support, proactive network monitoring, and preventive maintenance for customers. This comprehensive yet cost-effective approach provides customers and partners with greater vision into the health and security of the customer's network, improves network reliability and performance, enables potential problems to be identified before they affect business, and reduces the time and effort necessary to maintain the network.

"The ability to combine many devices into one contract is attractive," says Hickman. "We also can monitor every Cisco device on the customer's network to identify potential issues before they affect the customer's business. It is simpler for everyone involved when we can offer one agreement for one year instead of having to continuously renew multiple contracts."

Results

Support simplification is a tremendous benefit for customers and ProsLink. Devices now covered under Cisco SMARTnet Service can be transitioned into a comprehensive Smart Care Service agreement as they are renewed. Customers also like the ability to spread the cost over 12 months instead of having to pay a large sum once a year. If new devices are added to the agreement, the monthly price adjusts automatically. A predictable monthly cost makes it easier for customers to purchase and budget for IT support, which also makes it easier for ProsLink to sell services.

Customers with multiple locations and devices also find Smart Care Service easier to use. One customer had Cisco networking equipment installed in six locations, and as equipment had been added and multiple software versions and



features had been installed, the company really did not know what it had. When ProsLink recommended Smart Care, the ProsLink team was able to discover all of the Cisco devices and record serial numbers, operating system versions, and other data. For the first time, the customer gained a comprehensive view of its network and could cover all of the equipment under a single Smart Care Service contract.

“The Smart Care Service saves us days and weeks of time that were spent tracking Cisco SMARTnet Service contracts and keeping customers informed,” says Hickman. “The Smart Care Service continues to deliver its benefits without us having to constantly remind customers to renew. It will be much easier going forward.”

In addition to convenience, the Smart Care Service enables ProsLink to become highly proactive in caring for customers’ networks. Continuous monitoring capabilities alert ProsLink to an issue and notify the team when OS patches or updates are available. Instead of reacting to problems that can disrupt customers’ businesses, ProsLink can proactively apply a patch or update after hours to minimize the amount of time that a device is down. Smart Care Service also enables ProsLink’s technicians to address issues through a web interface instead of having to physically check each customer device. With hundreds of devices installed, that would be almost physically impossible. Now, technicians are better prepared when confronting an issue and can respond quickly, often before the customer would know that an issue existed.

“That peace of mind is critical,” says Brian Kleber, Chief Executive Officer of Predictive Physiology and Medicine, a ProsLink customer. “I don’t have to think about it. Having Smart Care Service and a partner like ProsLink gives us a sense of security by knowing that we are being watched over.”

Next Steps

Saving time and simplifying support frees ProsLink to pursue new customers and opportunities for expanding its business. The company is currently working toward Cisco certification for voice solutions so that it can add Cisco voice and Unified Communication solutions to its offerings.

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For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Smart Care Services, visit:
www.cisco.com/go/smartcareservice

To learn more about ProsLink, visit:
www.proslink.com/

This customer story is based on information provided by ProsLink Inc., and describes how that particular organization benefits from the deployment of Cisco products. Many factors may have contributed to the results and benefits described; Cisco does not guarantee comparable results elsewhere.

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