

Midco

Midco Accelerates Delivery of Internet Services Across Rural Communities

Cisco Service Provider Network Agreement enables Midwest service provider to rethink its commercial model and simplify planning.



Executive Summary

Customer name

Midco

Industry

Cable, internet, and telephone service provider

Location

Sioux Falls, SD, US

Number of employees

1,600



Challenges

- Cost-effectively extend high-speed internet to rural customers
- Increase flexibility to scale services and meet growing customer demand
- Reduce upfront costs to scaling services



Solutions

- Signs a new Cisco Service Provider Network Agreement
- Expands cable network access with Cisco Remote PHY



Results

- Differentiate with reliable high-speed internet services to support telehealth, education, small business, agribusiness, and work-from-home needs across the rural Midwest
- Tie licensing and investment in additional spectrum to usage
- Accelerate service delivery and scaling with simplified CapEx and OpEx planning

Taking the power of the internet to communities across rural America

The plains of the Midwest. Millions of people stretched across thousands of miles of farmland and small towns. A rural and peaceful ideal, but one that has its own challenges. Connectivity has always been an issue. Today, connectivity means reliable, high-speed broadband.

“Our goal is to bring high-quality internet to small town USA,” says Jonathan Pederson, Chief Technology Officer, Midco. “The experience in rural America should be the equal of that in the big cities.” This is critical. Digital connectivity has the potential to transform rural communities, powering everything from telehealth and small business, to agribusiness and remote education. It impacts individuals and communities.

Midco supplies voice, data, and TV services across the Midwest, but it is digital that drives the business. “Our strategy is to expand bandwidth and build out fiber to our customers. People are consuming internet at ever-increasing rates,” Pederson explains. “We want to deliver a gigabit service to customers.”

The challenge for Midco is to build out connectivity in a way that is timely and affordable. The company needs a solid business case before committing and investing resources.

Not only does Midco overcome the geographical scale of the Midwest, it needs to plan for harsh winters. “Communities are spread out, our guys are spread out,” says Pederson. “Getting fiber out to remote communities is never simple.”

The goal, Pederson continues, is to rethink the company’s commercial model. By switching to a predictable spending approach, Midco can reduce its corporate risk and increase its pipeline of viable projects.

“With Cisco Remote PHY, we can take the internet to wherever it’s needed. It allows us to deliver a quality service in excess of 100 kilometers. Before, that would simply be impossible.”

Jonathan Pederson
Chief Technology Officer
Midco



“The Cisco Service Provider Network Agreement creates a new licensing model tied directly to revenues. It means we can turn up thousands of spectrum channels as demand requires.”

Jonathan Pederson
Chief Technology Officer, Midco

Rethinking the commercial model to accelerate infrastructure builds

Midco has long worked with Cisco and has a history of pushing innovation and adopting the newest technology. Midco was the first in North America to deploy Cisco’s cBR-8 cable access solution and the first in the world to deploy DOCSIS 3.1 technology.

A new Cisco Service Provider Network Agreement enables the business to reimagine the way internet services are built.

“In the past we’d have to pay for snippets of the spectrum regardless of how it was being used. The Cisco network agreement creates a new licensing model tied directly to revenues,” Pederson explains. “It means we can turn up thousands of spectrum channels as demand requires.”

In addition, Cisco Remote PHY provides a more economical solution to expand Midco’s cable access network. By adopting Remote PHY, Midco was able to reduce the need for extensive rack space, power, and cooling traditionally required by a Cable Modem Termination System (CMTS).

Instead of costly, centralized real estate, Midco can more cost-effectively distribute network access functionality closer to the communities it serves.

“When I first heard of Cisco Remote PHY, my ears perked up. I could see immediately how it could allow us to avoid installing a smaller CMTS, while still delivering a gigabit level service,” says Pederson. “It hits a real sweet spot.”

Boosting the power and raising the ambition

With business model and technology innovation from Cisco, Midco can be more ambitious in its roll-out plans. Projects become more economically viable and the business can install smaller, less power-draining network equipment without sacrificing functionality. The result: more high-speed and reliable internet across the Midwest.

“With Cisco Remote PHY, we can take the internet to wherever it’s needed. It allows us to deliver a quality service with a reach in excess of 100 kilometers. Before, that would simply be impossible,” says Pederson. Midco aims to connect 18,000 new homes to the internet every year.

The Cisco agreement could not have been better timed. COVID-19 has impacted many workplaces and required tens of thousands of people to work from home. Video conferencing, file sharing, and online connectivity have placed an unprecedented demand on networks. Midco says upstream usage rates are up 75 percent year over year.

“Working from home has placed additional strain on the network, but we were able to quickly activate new channels on the spectrum and build in new capacity. We don’t need to be conservative in our service ambitions,” Pederson explains.

It is hard to overstate the importance of a digital connection. The internet can deliver world-class telehealth into rural homes, it can inspire the next generation of smart agribusiness – backed by IoT and artificial intelligence, and it can revive local communities. It can attract sophisticated customers that want to live in a rural setting.

“It levels the playing field,” says Pederson. “Internet access helps strengthen health, education, work, and play. It adds to the great resources we already have in place in the Midwest – the space, the nature, the people. Our engagement with Cisco is solving the needs of today while keeping an eye on the future.”

Learn More

Please visit <https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/service-provider/rural-broadband.html>

Product List

Midco

- [Cisco Service Provider Network Agreement](#)
- [Cisco Remote PHY](#)