



## CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

# NATIONWIDE SELECTS A SERVICE PROVIDER MANAGED SERVICE USING CISCO OPTICAL SOLUTION

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nationwide is one of the largest insurance and financial services companies in the world with a history of bringing innovation in products and services to better meet the needs of its clients. As part of this ongoing customer focus, Nationwide has deployed highly redundant information services and systems to provide resilient application and data access to more than 5000 agent, branch, and regional offices. To assure network availability and business continuance, Nationwide selected a highly available, scalable, and flexible managed optical service from Southwestern Bell Corporation.

#### CUSTOMER NAME

Nationwide

#### INDUSTRY

Financial Services

#### BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- To create a strong business continuity program providing ongoing application and data access to agent, branch, and regional offices

#### TECHNICAL CHALLENGE

- Create a highly redundant network assuring continuous connectivity between primary and secondary data center to support business continuity programs
- Provide a scalable network infrastructure to support the demanding bandwidth requirements of evolving applications
- Provide a flexible network infrastructure supporting multiple service types including voice, video, data, and storage applications

#### NETWORK SOLUTION

- A highly redundant, scalable, and flexible managed optical service from SBC using the Cisco ONS 15454 MSTP

#### BUSINESS VALUE

- 75 percent cost reduction
- Ability to quickly launch new services
- Highly available and redundant data and systems to assure the continuous delivery of client services

### Nationwide: An insurance and financial services company with real network needs.

Nationwide's portfolio of products and services helps its customers to own homes, drive cars, start businesses, protect families, and build for the future. Nationwide is one of the largest insurance and financial services companies in the world, with more than US\$148 billion in statutory assets and operations in all 50 United States, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. This success has been built on a strong history of product innovation and dedication to customer service.

Nationwide's history of innovation began in 1936 when it pioneered the modern insurance practice of multiple-line selling, offering fire, casualty, and life insurance from one company. In the mid-1950s Nationwide again led the insurance market by expanding into the securities market, offering mutual funds and the convenience of one-stop shopping to its growing customer base. Today, Nationwide provides a full range of products and financial services that include auto, fire, life, health, and commercial insurance; administrative services; annuities; mutual funds; and retirement plans.

### BUSINESS CHALLENGE

#### Staying One Step Ahead

Nationwide's international headquarters is located in One Nationwide Plaza, a 40-story landmark in downtown Columbus, Ohio. Its Columbus-based, home-office complex provides a total of more than 2.6 million square feet of space for this rapidly growing company. Within this complex and the greater Columbus area, Nationwide maintains two fully redundant data centers that serve as the informational "heart" of the company. To help ensure the continuous delivery of service to clients, the secondary data center stands ready to provide ongoing application and data access to corporate, agent, branch, and regional offices in real time.

Until recently, Nationwide was using Gigabit Ethernet services, TDM, and SONET private-line services to connect its Columbus-area facilities. Randy Holt, who provides network engineering, operations, and support for Nationwide Services Corp, a services division for Nationwide, could clearly see that the company's connectivity requirements were growing. "We are an insurance company. In times of a disaster, our clients turn to us for assistance. Our systems and services need to be readily available," he explains. "To assure this continued we needed significant bandwidth and availability to support evolving storage replication, business continuance, and mainframe failover applications. Beyond those specific needs, we also required an overall network



Nationwide World Headquarters,  
Columbus, Ohio

Holt's first concern regarding the company's current strategy was its lack of scalability. "With the growth in our core business, and expanding business opportunities, the existing network could not keep up," he says. "Provisioning times go hand in hand with those scalability needs. You can have all the bandwidth you need, but if it takes three months to get it, that is not what I consider scalable. To support data center connectivity, we also needed high availability and the ability to transport different storage and mainframe protocols. After evaluating a number of options, it became clear an optical networking solution was our best choice."

Nationwide began to look for an optical solution that would meet not only its networking requirements but its operational requirements as well. "We needed a solution that would not require additional IT resources," Holt continued. "We did not want to go out and find the fiber, design and install the gear, and be responsible for management and monitoring." Instead, Nationwide chose to partner with a service provider for its optical network. "We get the benefit of its optical expertise and extensive monitoring and diagnostic capabilities, and we get to stay focused on our business-critical projects. As I shopped around for the right managed optical service, it was critical to me that it fit within my existing network environment. Using a Cisco/SBC solution would allow us to take full advantage of our strategic vendor partnerships and our existing infrastructure."

Another operational requirement was that the solution had to conform to the Nationwide culture of aggressively managing costs. As Holt began to evaluate his options he realized a multiservice solution supporting voice, data, storage, and mainframe traffic could greatly reduce the complexity and costs of the network. "We had numerous services in place to support our networking needs: T1s, DS-3s, and traditional SONET services. None of these legacy technologies could natively support our storage and mainframe transport requirements. We were stuck using expensive channel extenders which negatively affected throughput and limited the type of applications we could deploy. By moving to a multiservice network transparently supporting voice, storage, and mainframe protocols, we could eliminate overlay networks and expensive third-party solutions."

## NETWORK SOLUTION

### **SBC Managed Optical Services Offering Uses the Cisco ONS 15454 MSTP**

To provide the needed high throughput, high availability, and multiprotocol support, Nationwide deployed a fully redundant, dense wavelength-division multiplexing (DWDM) network between its two data centers using a managed optical service (Multiservice Optical Network [MON]) from SBC, the service provider for Nationwide's Columbus campus. Southwestern Bell is now offering the MON service using Cisco optical platforms as part of its managed services portfolio, with Nationwide being the first production environment.

## BUSINESS VALUE

### **Timely Scalability, High Availability, and Significant Cost Reductions**

The SBC managed service solution has more than met Nationwide's networking and operational requirements. By supporting multiple protocols including voice, video, data, and storage, the Cisco ONS 15454 multiservice transport platform (MSTP) enables the efficient transition from multiple overlay networks to a single, multiservice infrastructure. The elimination of the costs and complexities associated with the overlay networks has resulted in a 75 percent cost reduction for new network services. This enables Nationwide Services to cost-effectively meet the rapidly growing needs of its parent company.

Using the Cisco ONS 15454 MSTP, Nationwide also increased the ability of its data center network to accommodate growing traffic demands in a timely fashion. Today Nationwide's data center network solution has a system capacity of 320 Gbps (36 channels, each at 10 Gbps) with room to grow. In addition provisioning cycles have been reduced from 90 days to less than 14 days—which more than meets Nationwide's requirements for timely scalability.

Nationwide's data center network also offers the needed high availability to support critical data center applications using both redundant hardware and diverse fiber paths to route around failures, assuring recovery times of less than 50 milliseconds.

By using an SBC managed optical service, Nationwide has gained numerous advantages. "SBC had the network up and running quickly," says Holt. "Now we just tell SBC what we need and it is delivered. My staff can remain focused on our internal network and not have to worry about monitoring the optical network."

Nationwide will immediately take advantage of the bandwidth and availability upgrades to support enhanced core network transport and improved storage networking for business continuance and disaster recovery initiatives.

## NEXT STEPS

Nationwide sees its data centers continuing to evolve and grow in scope. "As traditionally nondata applications such as voice become more data-centric, they will migrate to the data center," continues Holt. "More and more applications will be consolidated into the data centers providing better management, better availability, and a streamlining of operations. The scalability of the SBC managed service will enable us to gracefully accommodate these transitions today and in the foreseeable future."

## Cisco ONS 15454 MSTP

When Cisco Systems® introduced the multiservice provisioning platform (MSPP) for the metropolitan market in 1999, it defined the “next-generation” optical platform. Providing a significant leap in functionality and ease of use, the Cisco MSPP supported multiple service types, offered in-service scalability, used less space and power, and was managed using a simple point-and-click interface. With such a leap in capabilities, the Cisco ONS 15454 MSPP quickly established itself as the market leader.

The emergence of higher-bandwidth metropolitan-area-network (metro) services, such as Gigabit Ethernet, and the extension of storage-area networks (SANs) have driven the increased utilization of bandwidth in metro networks. This metro “bottleneck” has created the need for a new highly scalable metro-optimized platform. Continuing with its tradition of innovation and leadership in metro optical networking, Cisco has introduced the multiservice transport platform (MSTP) offering DWDM to meet the growing multiservice transportation demands of metro and regional networks.

The Cisco ONS 15454 MSTP addresses the increasing demand for multiple services, greater transport capacity, extended distances, and operational/management simplicity in a single platform.

### Intelligent DWDM—Operations and Management Simplicity

With innovative technology, the metro-optimized Cisco ONS 15454 MSTP introduces “next-generation” intelligence to metro DWDM transmission to simplify operations and management. These innovations include:

- Automated network topology discovery
- Automated setup and wavelength additions
- Easy A-Z (any location-to-any location) point-and-click provisioning
- These capabilities lead to an overall reduction in communication support costs and ongoing network administration costs and complexity. This means service providers and enterprises can deploy and upgrade services faster than ever before and at a lower cost.

### Scalability and Multiservice Support

The Cisco ONS 15454 MSTP supports a wide range of services on a highly scalable platform. These services include voice (SONET/SDH, TDM), data (Gigabit Ethernet, 10 Gigabit Ethernet LAN, 10 Gigabit Ethernet WAN), SAN (Fibre Channel, Fiber Connectivity [FICON], Enterprise Systems Connection [ESCON]), and video wavelength services. This wide range of services support and the scalability provided by 32 channels of 2.5-Gbps or 10-Gbps wavelengths for transport creates an enormously flexible and scalable platform.

### Greater Distances

The Cisco ONS 15454 offers support for distances of up to 600 kilometers, supporting both metro and regional networking requirements. The intelligent Cisco DWDM capabilities include G.709 digital wrapper technology for enhanced wavelength management, as well as extended optical reach with forward error correction (FEC). This enables the Cisco ONS 15454 to support the distances enterprises require to meet new regulations and good business practices for the protection and redundancy of critical business data.

The choice of multiservice support, scalability, and support for greater distances, combined with integrated, intelligent DWDM capabilities on a single platform enables enterprise networks to cost-effectively support any mix of services over both metro and regional distances.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about Cisco optical platforms, call your Cisco account manager or visit: <http://www.cisco.com/go/optical>.



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