

General Nutrition Centers

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Don Fogal : Director of IT
GNC

GNC is the leading specialty retailer of nutritional products. Last year GNC was searching for a network that could support geographic distribution for their stores. Their plan was to roll out a network and new register system to 2500 corporate stores in just over a year. With support from EarthLink Business they did it.

GNC now has nearly 2800 store locations – both corporate and franchise – connected over a private MPLS network from EarthLink Business. GNC operates stores in Alaska, Hawaii, Canada, Puerto Rico and throughout the U.S. crossing many time zones. The network is used virtually 24/7/365 for store activities and EarthLink Business support has been available every step of the way.

“GNC has lowered payment card processing fees, saves over \$300,000 annually by eliminating phone lines, and now supports critical retail applications with their [EarthLink Business] MPLS network,” explains Don Fogal, Director of IT, GNC.

It was important for GNC to find an infrastructure that could support web-based store applications that could be managed from their corporate headquarters. They also wanted a system that would deliver high-performance equipment and scalable bandwidth at the best price point. EarthLink Business was able to offer diverse products to cover each of GNC’s stores needs – at competitive prices.

GNC benefits include:

- GNC implemented a new feature called GNC Delivers that allows customers to order items in a store and have them shipped directly to their house. GNC Delivers is now worth over \$1 million yearly.
- GNC now saves over \$300,000 annually by eliminating phone lines.
- GNC lowered debit/credit card processing fees due to the dedicated connection vs. dialup.
- GNC added a lookup capability for stores to find the lowest price for an item when items are returned without a receipt for additional savings.
- GNC was able to eliminate the use of an outside agency for Gold Card application data entry. This process is now done internally online.
- GNC employees can now look up Gold Card expiration dates, allowing stores to discontinue giving automatic discounts.

By implementing an MPLS network from EarthLink Business, GNC has maintained a reliable and efficient network of communication between their headquarters and stores. This has resulted in happier customers and a highly favorable return on investment.



GNC LiveWell™

► Challenges

GNC needed a network that could support geographic expansion and the rollout of a new register system to 2500 corporate stores in just over a year. The retailer also needed an infrastructure that could support web-based store applications from their corporate headquarters.

► Solution

GNC implemented a private MPLS network from EarthLink Business across its 2800 store locations. The network is now used 24/7/365 for store activities. The system delivers high-performance equipment and scalable bandwidth at a favorable price point.

► Results

GNC has lowered payment card processing fees and saved over \$300,000 annually by eliminating phone lines. GNC’s infrastructure now supports web-based store applications managed from their corporate headquarters. The specialty retailer was also able to implement a new direct shipping system as well as eliminate the expense of an outside agency for managing their loyalty card program.

