# A retailer gets the modern network it needs for the e-commerce era

## An appliance dealer finds a reliable technology partner committed to ensuring its continued success

In the era of e-commerce, brick-and-mortar retailers rely on modern networks just as much as their digital competitors.

A modern network offers reliable high-speed connectivity with enough capacity to support day-to-day operations — and new digital applications they may need in the future. After all, every critical function — from checking inventory and processing orders to shipping and managing returns — runs on a digital application that relies upon a fast, dependable connection.

Bruce Clarke, IT manager for Florida-based Famous Tate Appliance & Bedding Centers, knew he needed a modern network, but had grown frustrated with the roadblocks he was hitting in his attempts to upgrade the company's legacy network services. The services for the retailer's 11 showrooms and warehouse, provided by an agent, were from multiple vendors, unreliable, unable to scale and needlessly complex.

"I was getting more and more dissatisfied with the lack of proactivity from my agent. Even though I asked them a number of times if there were better options for us out there, they were perfectly happy to keep things the way they were," Clarke says.

And then a new company committed to helping Famous Tate achieve its goals stepped in to provide a reliable, scalable network from a single partner.

### A shared vision emerges

To connect its showrooms and warehouse to its data center, Famous Tate was using a point-to-point, 1.5 Mbps copper-based T1 service.

While the T1 service was generally adequate for providing access to Famous Tate's sales and inventory management system, it could not cost-efficiently scale to support the new initiatives Clarke had in mind. The legacy copper infrastructure also resulted in occasional wiring breakages, which caused service disruptions.

It was time to pursue other options, and Clarke met with Spectrum Enterprise. During his initial meeting with the Spectrum Enterprise account team, Clarke explained how he wanted to add more applications but wasn't able to efficiently or cost-effectively scale up the T1's bandwidth to support them. He also mentioned that the bandwidth limitations slowed down the operation of their sales and inventory management software



Famous Tate turned to Spectrum Enterprise for a modern network that could scale to support new applications and technologies.

### Client profile



**Company**
Famous Tate Appliance & Bedding Centers

**Industry**
Retail

**Services**
Ethernet
Fiber Internet Access
PRI Trunking

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## Overview

- Famous Tate struggled with legacy technology from multiple providers that had inadequate bandwidth and could not cost-efficiently scale to support new initiatives.

- The retailer turned to Spectrum Enterprise to modernize its network with fiber technology services including Ethernet and Fiber Internet Access.

## Outcomes

- Famous Tate can support new applications and technologies with modern, scalable network infrastructure.

- Consolidating all services with one technology partner has simplified solution management.

## Why it matters

- Associates can provide a better customer experience now that operation of the company's sales and inventory management software is not impeded by bandwidth limitations.

- Famous Tate can do business more efficiently, which allows them to compete more effectively against national competitors.



Spectrum Enterprise Ethernet and Fiber Internet Access (FIA) services provide connectivity for 11 showrooms and a warehouse.

when other applications were in use, which prevented sales associates from efficiently serving customers.

> "It was a good opportunity to get all of our stores on a modern network and off the legacy services we'd come to use over the past 20 years."

**—Bruce Clarke, IT manager**

After listening to Clarke's vision, the Spectrum Enterprise account team went all in on his goals. They proposed point-to-multipoint dedicated fiber Ethernet Virtual Private Line (EVPL) service to provide fast, reliable and secure connectivity from all locations to the data center. Internet for the warehouse and showrooms would be provided by dedicated Spectrum Enterprise Fiber Internet Access (FIA) service. Fifty Mbps connectivity for both the Ethernet and FIA services would be provided at the location containing the flagship store and corporate headquarters, while the other locations would have 10 Mbps Ethernet and 25 Mbps FIA

service. Two-hundred Mbps Ethernet connectivity would be provided at the data center.

The scalable services would ensure rapid access to all business applications including the sales and inventory management software — and support any new applications Clarke wanted to add in the future. Clarke liked the proposal. "It was a good opportunity to get all of our stores on a modern network and off the legacy services we'd come to use over the past 20 years," he says.

### A reliable network ready for the future — from a single partner

Today, Clarke is reaping the benefits of his new network. Complaints about slow connectivity have virtually disappeared now that the sales and inventory management system can run smoothly no matter what other applications are being used at the same time. "Before, certain stores that were having connectivity issues would get frustrated and blame the slowness of our software or the network. Now, they just focus on finding inventory," says Jason Horst, director of marketing for Famous Tate.

In addition, sporadic service interruptions due to wiring issues

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### A phone service gets a reliability upgrade

Before working with Spectrum Enterprise, Famous Tate was using PRI trunking phone service from another provider. The wiring for the copper-based T1 internet connection supporting it would occasionally break, causing service disruptions.

While Famous Tate wasn't actively looking at upgrading its service, the Spectrum Enterprise account team saw there was an opportunity for the retailer to improve the reliability of their voice services by running them over the Spectrum Enterprise fiber network.

Today, highly reliable Spectrum Enterprise PRI Trunking service supports every Famous Tate location. To ensure secure and high-quality calling, the service runs over a dedicated fiber connection separate from data traffic.

are a thing of the past now that Famous Tate has upgraded to fiber connectivity. "Our services have been more reliable since we upgraded to fiber," says Clarke.

What's more, with the abundance of scalable, high-speed bandwidth, Clarke can easily support new applications. And when the need arises to add more, his scalable network is ready.

> "[The Spectrum Enterprise network] helps us do business more efficiently and compete against our national competitors."

—Jason Horst, marketing director

For example, Clarke was able to add a bandwidth-heavy videoconferencing application. The application, which is supported by the FIA service, was used to host a virtual version of Famous Tate's annual company meeting. It's also being used to host other meetings that were held in person prior to the pandemic. "Some of our store locations may not have been able to take advantage of

the video calls with our old network," says Horst. "The new network allows us to operate without have to worry about things like whether or not we can support new technology like these video calls for our 240 associates."

While reliability and scalability were key network attributes Clarke needed, he also wanted simplicity. Consolidating from many vendors to one technology partner has been a big benefit of the move to Spectrum Enterprise services. "Overall, it's much easier to work with a single company," says Clarke. "Now if there's an issue, I just have one number to call that handles all of our services, and everybody is focused on getting to the bottom of it in an efficient manner."

While consolidating services with a single partner has provided Clarke with many advantages, at the end of the day, it's the partnership with the people from Spectrum Enterprise that has made the biggest difference. "Our account manager Nick Maurer is a good resource, he's quite proactive and always checking to see if we need something," he says.

### Modernization provides a competitive edge

Modernizing their network has allowed Famous Tate to add new digital solutions quickly and thrive in a competitive environment. "The network gives us that steady backbone to support whatever we need from a technology perspective," says Horst. "It helps us do business more efficiently and compete against our national competitors. It got us where we wanted to be."

### About Spectrum Enterprise

Spectrum Enterprise, a part of Charter Communications, Inc., is a national provider of scalable, fiber technology solutions serving America's largest businesses and communications service providers. The broad Spectrum Enterprise portfolio includes networking and managed services solutions: Internet access, Ethernet access and networks, Voice and TV solutions. Spectrum Enterprise's industry-leading team of experts works closely with clients to achieve greater business success by providing solutions designed to meet their evolving needs. More information about Spectrum Enterprise can be found at enterprise.spectrum.com.

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