



SUCCESS STORY



Midwest Wireless

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Challenge

Provide cutting-edge digital wireless services to a growing Midwestern customer base while keeping costs low and providing first-rate customer service

Solution

A suite of VeriSign services, including ANSI-41 roaming support; access to the American Roaming Network (for pre-paid roaming services); Metcalf Inter-carrier messaging (for SMS interoperability); SmartPay (for pre-paid billing services); and speedSUITE (a bundle that provides general billing support). VeriSign assisted in the buildout of Midwest Wireless' 3G network capabilities.

+ Partnering with VeriSign to Meet the Wireless Needs of the Midwest

Long before cell phones became ubiquitous throughout metropolitan areas across the globe, Midwest Wireless was bringing wireless service to the Midwestern United States. The company was founded in 1990, and scarcely a year later, Midwest Wireless had brought the first wireless service—an analog network—to select areas within rural Minnesota. Since then, the company has taken the Midwest by storm, providing digital wireless services to over 340,000 customers in 68 counties throughout Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin. Part of the company's success can be attributed to its focus on the Midwestern market. "We know our customers very well," says Mark Allen, CIO of Midwest Wireless. "We focus on real communities, and that has been instrumental to our success." Equally important, says Allen, is providing Midwest Wireless customers with cutting-edge, robust tools that are normally offered only in the major metropolitan areas. To do this, Midwest Wireless needed a partner that was able to support the full spectrum of infrastructure processes. For that reason, in 1996, Midwest Wireless turned to VeriSign, Inc. VeriSign operates Intelligent Communications, Commerce, and Content services that enable carriers to rapidly provision new revenue-generating services while mitigating today's cost, complexity, and security challenges.

+ A One-Stop Shop

VeriSign® Communication Services provides carriers with access to the largest independent Signaling System 7 (SS7) network in the world, protected by military-grade security and offering unmatched visibility through state-of-the-art monitoring technology. VeriSign offers carriers a wide assortment of services at a fraction of the cost of building the necessary



Where it all comes together.™



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Results

- VeriSign helped Midwest Wireless to build out its 3G network, and implement its billing systems, in a much shorter time than originally anticipated.
- VeriSign's speedSUITE bundle saved Midwest Wireless from purchasing and implementing proprietary systems that would have cost over \$200,000.
- Midwest Wireless is able to offer its customers a wide range of cutting-edge products and services at a fraction of the cost of building and implementing its own services.

infrastructure from the ground up. However, VeriSign consultants also have the expertise to assist carriers in network buildout or in the enhancement of existing network capabilities. When Midwest Wireless built out its 3G network, using the 1xRTT protocol, Allen says that VeriSign was instrumental in ensuring that the project was completed on time and in adherence to the strictest standards. "Rolling out our 1xRTT network was one of our most crucial initiatives," Allen explains. "With VeriSign overseeing the acquisition of new property, the network went into deployment very rapidly and fairly flawlessly."

Having assisted in the development of a wireless network that would allow mobile customers to download packets of data at speeds of up to 144kbps, VeriSign also developed a custom care solution, built on VeriSign's speedSUITESM software, that allowed Midwest Wireless to easily bill clients for data transfer. VeriSign's speedSUITE is a collection of tools that provide an end-to-end voice and data billing and customer relationship management (CRM) solution. In addition, Midwest Wireless implemented VeriSign's SmartPaySM, a solution specifically geared towards pre-paid customers. Allen says that VeriSign's billing initiatives have provided a "significant boost" to the success of Midwest Wireless.

VeriSign also provided Midwest Wireless with advanced roaming services, such as ANSI-41 support, and access to the American Roaming Network (ARN), which offers pre-paid customers the same calling plans and features that post-paid customers enjoy. In addition, VeriSign provided Midwest Wireless with Metcalf Inter-Carrier Messaging, a service that allows subscribers to send and receive Short Message Service (SMS) messages with any other SMS subscriber, regardless of carrier. Finally, Midwest Wireless is leveraging VeriSign's considerable expertise in the Internet security arena by protecting its assets with VeriSign SSL Certificates.

+ A Trusted Partner

Allen appreciates VeriSign's product and service offerings. But more importantly, he views VeriSign as an important partner in success. "VeriSign and Midwest Wireless have a partnership in trust," Allen says. "Midwest and VeriSign have been very collaborative from a technical and strategic perspective." For example, VeriSign provided assistance in monitoring and reporting on the true costs of Midwest Wireless' services. Allen also explains that at one time Midwest Wireless was considering implementing a quarter-million-dollar phone-number-inventory-management system. VeriSign helped Allen to realize that this functionality was already built into an existing VeriSign service, and that Midwest Wireless only had to make use of it in order to avoid substantial additional costs.

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