



Improving Network Performance

With comprehensive monitoring and management of carrier circuits provided by JMARK, Community Choice Financial is able to free up hours of time for the company's IT staff and improve availability and visibility into the WAN.

Community Choice Financial Inc. is a leading provider of consumer financial products and services, including short-term consumer loans, check cashing, money transfers, bill payments, money orders and prepaid debit cards. Headquartered in Dublin, Ohio, the company serves its customers through a network of nearly 500 retail locations across 14 states as well as Internet services to more than 20 states.



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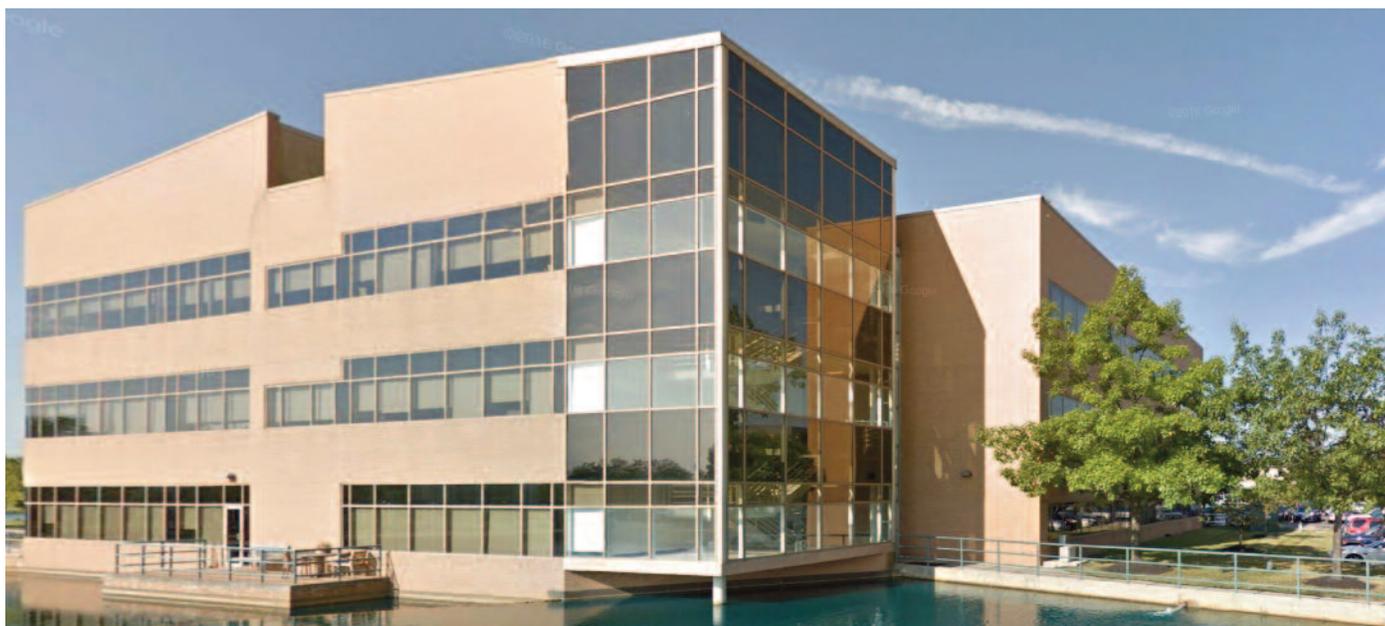
THE CHALLENGE

Community Choice Financial had been utilizing a variety of carrier services for connectivity to its retail locations. The company partnered with CDW to consolidate these services with a single carrier to simplify its operations, streamline accounting and improve the availability of its network. CDW recommended CenturyLink as the best fit, and assisted Community Choice Financial throughout the transition.

CenturyLink’s service includes automated notifications that advise the customer of any issues with the circuits so that the customer can determine the appropriate action to take.

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“They went from essentially no visibility into their carrier circuits to being barraged by notifications,” said Brent Strombom, Voice and Data Specialist, CDW. “They came to CenturyLink and CDW for help, and we began looking for a partner that could provide managed services and NOC support. After investigating a number of providers, we recommended JMARK.”



THE SOLUTION

JMARK took over the monitoring and management of Community Choice's carrier circuits in its state-of-the-art NOC in Springfield, Mo. The fully customized solution includes a graphical display of the status of each location and detailed processes for prioritizing and responding to each alert. JMARK's network management experts determine which issues require attention and work with CenturyLink to resolve those issues.

"If a store has lost its Internet connection or if the telephones are not working, JMARK sees it and responds to it," said Todd Troutman, IT Technical Support Manager, Community Choice Financial. "First we make sure that the site isn't experiencing a power outage or some other circumstance that would cause it to be down. Then JMARK contacts CenturyLink, opens a ticket, monitors the SLA and escalates if necessary. They are acting as our intermediary to ensure that those circuits get back up quickly."

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JMARK does more than determine whether the sites are up or down. The JMARK solution continually monitors the circuits for packet loss, ping latency and ping failure — every 30 seconds, 24x7. This invaluable data enables JMARK to spot potential issues and advise Community Choice Financial of trends.

"JMARK has provided us access to the display board that shows each of our locations," Troutman said. "A green dot means the circuit is up and running and everything is working fine. If there's a latency issue — maybe someone is downloading something they shouldn't be or we're being attacked by malware — the dot turns from green to yellow. If there's a ping failure, it changes from yellow to orange. If it doesn't correct itself, it changes from orange to red, meaning the circuit is down."

"I have been extremely impressed, as a third party, with JMARK's ability to create a solution with this level of accountability and transparency," Strombom said.

SOLUTION SUMMARY

Community Choice Financial

- Carrier circuit notifications and alerts across 500 locations sapped IT staff productivity.
- JMARK took over the monitoring and management of carrier circuits, prioritizing and responding to each alert.
- Continual monitoring enables rapid problem identification and resolution, proactive management, and accountability.
- IT staff are freed from time-consuming tasks while gaining greater visibility into the network.
- Customized solution ensures not only the availability but the performance of Community Choice's mission-critical network.



"Community Choice Financial can drill down into any location and see exactly what actions JMARK is taking with the carrier to resolve any issues."

JMARK served as an advisor in the development of the carrier monitoring and management solution. The JMARK team helped Community Choice Financial establish benchmarks and set thresholds in order to obtain the right amount of data for meaningful reporting.

"They came back with some wonderful recommendations on how to do that and helped us tweak the solution to the point where we are today," said Troutman.

“By partnering with JMARK, we’ve increased our overall knowledge of what’s going on out there in the WAN over time.”



THE RESULTS

The JMARK solution has freed Community Choice’s IT staff from the time-consuming task of monitoring and managing hundreds of carrier circuits. JMARK’s proactive approach also gives the company greater visibility into its network.

“In the past we were very reactive,” Troutman said. “We were responding to CenturyLink’s email notifications for outages — we weren’t monitoring network performance. By partnering with JMARK, we’ve increased our overall knowledge of what’s going on out there in the WAN over time. The statistical data enables us to see trends and take action on sites that are experiencing a lot of issues. JMARK’s team embraced our technology and our situation and came back to us with solid information. It has been a great collaborative effort with them.”

The monitoring data collected by JMARK has improved uptime and quality of service for Community Choice’s stores. And, most importantly, JMARK helps ensure that any circuit problems are addressed as quickly as possible.

“We’re a financial service company. We process a number of financial transactions for customers and it is all very data dependent. When our service is not working we’re not able to help our customers or generate revenue for that particular store. So having someone serve as our advocate with the carriers provides a good return on investment,” said Troutman.

“That’s the benefit that JMARK brings to Community Choice Financial. They’re looking out for our best interests. They understand the importance of quality of service and making sure that every circuit is up and working properly. We’re extremely happy with our relationship with them, the work they’re doing and the service they provide.”

About JMARK

JMARK specializes in helping businesses eliminate technology pain while increasing efficiency and profitability. The JMARK team includes some of the best engineers and technicians in the industry, backed by disciplined processes and a state-of-the-art Network Operations Center (NOC). When you choose JMARK, you gain a technology partner who always keeps your best interests in mind by delivering your description of technology success.



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