

HALCO INDUSTRIES:

DRIVING PRODUCTIVITY BY EXPANDING CONNECTIVITY

NOVATECH



Two years ago, automotive, commercial and industrial lubricant supplier Halco Industries found a perfect IT support solution with Novatech and Digital Veins, Novatech's proactive, 24/7/365 monitoring, maintenance and support solution. This year, when Halco increased its office and conference space during a remodeling project, the firm called in Novatech for help expanding its wireless network. The result has been increased productivity and satisfaction for on-site employees, outside salesmen and vendors, all at minimal cost.

A GROWING CONCERN

In the two years since Novatech came on board, Halco had grown its operation to 48 employees, and its reliance on the Internet had grown along with it. When the company's lease expired, rather than moving to a larger building, Halco negotiated with the landlord to remodel the warehouse and use part of it for new offices and a second conference room. However, the firm's current wireless network didn't reach to those locations, so a reconfiguration was in order.

According to Halco Accounting Manager JoAnn Carney, the timing couldn't have been better. "The existing wireless network already wasn't getting it for us," says Carney. "We have a lot of people on wireless, and we were always experiencing dropped signals."

Carney called in a Novatech IT Services team to explore the situation, and they recommended adding two SonicPoint wired access points, connecting to the SonicWall firewall device that Novatech had installed earlier. The new access points would create a new network with greater range that would service both Halco employees and guests, with the two streams of traffic segregated to protect Halco's servers.

The new network not only expanded coverage into the new offices and conference space; it also resolved the firm's wireless overload problem. "They put one access point around a corner and another in the conference room. Since they put those in, we haven't been dropping anything," says Carney. "Everybody who works here could now get on the network at once, including the outside salesmen with their iPads, and we wouldn't have any problems. That doesn't happen often, but when it does, we would have a mass uproar if people could not connect."

UNTETHERED AND FREE TO WORK

During the same project, Novatech installed a wireless projector—the Dell 4320—to make it easier for visiting salesmen and vendors to stream presentations from their mobile computers. Suspended from the ceiling, the projector supports both Wi-Fi and cabled connections. It also has a high lumen output, so it resolves an excess ambient light problem in the new conference room.

“We have 10 outside salesmen with iPads or laptops, and they don’t have a proper office,” says Carney. “A few of them come in every day for a couple of hours, getting mail; printing things. They use the conference room as their office, and also to make presentations. Plus, we have vendors who want to make presentations.

“With the new wireless projector and network, it’s easier for our salesmen and vendors to give presentations. Last week, the sales manager had a two-day hurrah, and there were eight people in and out of the office for two days straight, giving presentations. Everything worked perfectly.”

Equally importantly, Carney notes, is the support for mobile devices they have gained with the new wireless network. “We all have smartphones. I am around this building, all over the place, and I love that I now have freedom to move throughout the building. My office is at the end of the hall, and in the old days, the wireless would drop frequently because of the location.

“Now, I get email anywhere I go. I could use the phone’s 3G wireless, but this is so much faster. As soon as I cross the threshold in the morning, I hear a beep-beep reminding me to log in and retrieve my email over the wireless network.”

PROBLEM SOLVED

Carney says they’ve only had one problem with the new network—right after the installation—and Novatech came out to fix it promptly. “The wireless didn’t seem to be any better, but when we’d talk to them, it would be working,” she says. “I told them, ‘trust me, something is wrong with it. You just have to come out.’ They came right away, they spent many hours here figuring out what was wrong and they fixed it.”

Carney says those are two of the things she loves about working with Novatech—they trust her when she says something is wrong, and they work on problems until they’re resolved. “Our last company was notorious – they would close a ticket and say we were fine when we weren’t,” says Carney.

“Novatech is very good,” Carney concludes. “We don’t have an IT person here, and I don’t speak the language. They have to talk to me like I am a 3-year old.” She also praises Novatech’s user-driven support system. “Every employee can contact Novatech from their workstation and open their own ticket. People aren’t calling me and telling me they have a problem. They just open a ticket and the Novatech support folks take care of it.”