



Case Study

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Managed IT Services **Cloud Suite & Cloud WAN**



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HOW FIVE BRANCHES OF THE SAME BANK FOUND THEMSELVES IN THE SAME CLOUD—AND WHY THEY LOVE IT.

FIRST STATE BANK

Known in northwestern Iowa as a bank that's "big enough to serve but small enough to care," First State Bank provides its customers in Ida Grove, Battle Creek, Danbury, Mapleton, and Odebolt a full slate of services, including personal banking, auto and home loans, business and ag lending, retirement planning, and more. Attentive personal service is what makes this bank different, and Aureon Technology fits right into their service goals.

CLIENT CHALLENGE

"First State Bank's problem is one we've seen time and time again," says Rob Griffith, a sales executive for Aureon Technology. "They had banking software that existed to help employees and customers alike, but the bandwidth limitations meant that not everyone could take advantage of it."

The five towns served by First State Bank locations are laid out on a curving stretch of Iowa Highway 175, with 35 miles separating the two endpoints of Mapleton and Odebolt. The bank's service area and customer base have grown considerably in the last five years. While the growth hasn't interfered with First State Bank's commitment to helping people in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere, there was another issue that kept getting in the way of a perfect customer experience: bandwidth limitations and information technology concerns.

"We needed the flexibility to access applications from any branch, however all of our locations were hindered by a lack of bandwidth," says Kathy Weiss,

Senior Vice President and Compliance Officer.

"This created challenges that really hampered our ability to serve customers. We needed faster, more reliable access to our software systems because too often we were losing connectivity in the middle of a transaction."

Bank employees remained patient and customers remained gracious during such glitches, but the situation was far from ideal. Fortunately, the group handling the bank's IT needs was purchased by Aureon around this time, and Aureon stepped in to meet the challenge.

THE AUREON SOLUTION

Griffith and his team knew that First State Bank would benefit from a new network design and Aureon's Cloud Suite solution. With this service, First State Bank's critical banking applications—everything from check processing to EFT origination to new account documents to HR and payroll and more—would be hosted, managed, and protected in the Aureon Cloud.

"The benefits were immediate," says Weiss. "If we had tried to buy and manage all the software and hardware, it would have required a major investment in capital and human resources. But why reinvent that wheel? This is Aureon's area of expertise. They had the IT infrastructure in place already and the Aureon Cloud Suite was the perfect, custom solution."

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The Cloud Suite turned out to be only part of the solution. As Griffith notes, Aureon Technology went another step or two further to help. “From what bank personnel told us, they’re all part of a big team. If one location lost service, historically others would chip in and help. Now, that’s commendable in any organization. But it showed us the need for our Cloud WAN (SD-WAN) service.”

SD-WAN (software-defined wide area network) from Aureon offered First State Bank a more resilient network. The entire network—voice and data—is combined into one that connects each site more efficiently and economically.

“SD-WAN essentially eliminates the problem of single points of failure common in older networks and improves data security,” says Griffith. “In addition, the bank is going to see improved speed, fewer connectivity problems, and easier access to all applications and systems.”

“Cloud Suite and Cloud WAN were the perfect package for us,” says Weiss. “Occasionally our loan officers have to work at one of the other branches. In the past, accessing the information they needed was a lengthy and sometimes complicated and inefficient process. But thanks to Aureon, now our loan officers in Danbury can access their desktop and applications in Mapleton—or, for that matter, anywhere.”

First State Bank is also taking advantage of Aureon’s Managed Firewall Security—essential in an industry dependent on so much sensitive personal information—and Aureon’s Proactive Care package, which offers unlimited network monitoring and maintenance, patching, data backup, and unlimited support.

The implementation of this suite of solutions went off without a hitch. **“It’s been an ideal solution for us,” says Weiss. “With Aureon, I don’t ever worry about network and data security. Their services make it possible for us to provide fast and reliable customer service.”**

“I’ll put it this way,” she concludes. “In rural Iowa, it can be challenging for businesses to secure the amount of bandwidth they need and to find knowledgeable IT professionals to join their team. Aureon solves both issues for First State Bank. They have the network we need, and they are our IT professionals. We are grateful to have their team of experts supporting us.”



Learn more about Aureon Technology at AureonTechnology.com.

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