



Why a Stable Network is So Important: A Case Study

How Island Home Center & Lumber Has Benefitted from a Partnership with Fuse Networks

Fuse Networks has been serving the Pacific Northwest since 2009, providing IT Managed Services and Consulting to small and medium-sized businesses. Striving to eliminate IT issues before they cause expensive downtime, Fuse Networks provides proactive enterprise-level IT solutions and best practices to the small business sector, all at a price geared toward small business offering peace of mind.

Meet Island Home Center & Lumber:

While everyone knows the big-box stores that offer building materials and supplies, there's just something about working with a locally-owned retailer. That's likely why Island Home Center & Lumber has been in operation for 97 years, owned for the last 35 by Earl VanBuskirk, who also sits as president of the company.

Similar to some of the big-box full home centers, Island Home Center & Lumber expands upon what these larger providers do, not only selling lumber and building materials and renting the equipment needed for such projects, but also offering apparel, housewares, as well as liquor, wine, and beer, seven days a week. With 35 people in a team of 50 utilizing technology in some way or another, IT is a critical part of Island Home Center & Lumber's operations, with over 150 devices relying on the network for a wide assortment of needs and software.

Running the Home Center Requires a Lot of Technology... Which the Home Center Needed Help Managing

As one might imagine, Island Home Center & Lumber now operates a lot differently than it did when VanBuskirk first purchased it. Originally, VanBuskirk took on the IT aspect of the business, bringing on an IT person as operations expanded. Nowadays, the entire store relies on technology in some way, from point of sales to ticket generation, with around 35 members of their team needing a computer for every piece of their workday.

However, the IT resource VanBuskirk hired, Rob Hord, was still learning, on top of being responsible for other tasks within the company. In addition to this, the home center's network stability was a critical need with their line of business application, and ongoing network issues led to this team member constantly racing to keep up as individual computers would drop.



Therefore, Island Home Center & Lumber turned to an external managed service provider a few years back... but not Fuse Networks. Their experience with this other provider was decidedly not what they expected, with long response times when the home center really couldn't afford the downtime...and when we say long response times, we mean weeks to months, for simple needs.

As a result, the home center quickly sought out alternatives—and after some of their other initial contacts didn't provide the information they needed to make a decision in a timely manner, the decision was made to bring on Fuse Networks. In fact, the first call they made to Fuse Networks was welcoming and escalated up to the CEO for a meeting within 20 minutes.

Fuse Networks Quickly Proved their Worth

Seeing as network stability was the predominant concern for Island Home Center & Lumber, with their email, supply chain, and point of sale processes all reliant on it, Fuse Networks quickly tackled the problem.

The issue quickly became apparent: everything was operating on the same network, creating IP address collisions and downtime, and the home center's previous MSP had done nothing to fix it. It took Fuse Networks a short period of time to develop a plan to break up the network into subnets, which completely solved the problem—a “night and day difference.” This helped free up Island Lumber's internal team member so he could focus on larger tech projects, as Fuse Networks continued with their onboarding processes while providing “white glove” support.

On top of all this, Fuse Networks made it simple for the team at Island Lumber to get in touch with them whenever they were needed for support, with a transparent, convenient, and communicative service portal available that the home center's team finds reassuring.

Island Home Center & Lumber's Leadership Especially Appreciates the Engineer that Worked With Them

Island Lumber's leadership are also quick to praise the team at Fuse Networks, in particular Matt Goetz, the onboarding and implementation engineer who assisted them. According to VanBuskirk, Goetz took everyone's IT concerns into consideration and went above and beyond them—not just fixing the problem, but actively working to find ways to adapt the system to make everyone's job easier and more efficient. Goetz was able to customize their network to ensure that the needs of the home center were met through adapting the system.

Island Home Center & Lumber Would Absolutely Recommend Fuse Networks...

...exclusively because of the ability to leverage their entire team of subject matter experts that have one goal in mind: crafting solutions that solve unique problems! Fuse Networks gets two thumbs up from them, and the home center's team would obviously send others their way. If you're interested in obtaining the kind of IT services that you almost don't want to share, reach out to Fuse Networks today! Call 855-438-3873, or visit fusenetworks.com to learn more.