R2 UNIFIED
TECHNOLOGIES

Case Study

SAGE DENTAL

60 sites
2 states
4 months

Something to smile about

Sage Dental offers comprehensive general and specialty care throughout Georgia and Florida with an acute focus on patient satisfaction. Founded in 1997, Sage's footprint has expanded to more than 60 locations as a result of several successful acquisitions. While its physical network was expanding, its legacy IT network struggled to keep up.

Objective

To improve network performance and redundancy across Sage Dental's 60 office locations within a 4-month timeline.

When new VP of IT Dan Mirsky came on board, he was inundated with frequent outage reports across Sage's various locations, logging up to 60 hours of downtime over a three-month span. A paperless practice, each Sage location relied on electronic applications. A loss of connectivity meant doctors couldn't work, patients were turned away, and offices closed their doors for the day. According to Dan, "The impact of a single outage affecting a practice was in the tens of thousands—and it was happening daily."

With each office operating in a siloed fashion, there wasn't any standardization between sites and devices. The Sage team continued to see lagging network speed. Frustrations grew with not enough bandwidth to support their core web applications like Dental Intelligence—a cloud-based practice management tool needed to run the business.

Without full visibility into the network, it was impossible to identify where the root issues resided—in the LAN, on the server, or with the provider. Dan proposed a network refresh that would clean up cabling, replace aging switches and access points, and create redundancy and failover from site to site. That's when Sage and R2 Unified Technologies (R2) were connected. Dan brought R2, an IT partner he had worked with in the past, into the project, recommending Cisco Meraki's SD-WAN solution.

The challenge

Logging up to 60 hours of downtime over a three-month span.

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The solution

Cisco Meraki's SD-WAN solution combines advanced security, switching, and wireless with centralized management and full network visibility. The Cisco Meraki SD-WAN solution is ideal for companies with multiple locations that need to connect back to a headquarters or data center. SD-WAN costs less than traditional network services like MPLS. Instead of having to deploy configurations on each device or at each site, IT policies can be created or updated centrally in minutes. IT administrators can determine preferred links, failover criteria, and define acceptable performance threshold requirements at the application level. Through a proper network design and implementation plan, R2 successfully configured SD-WAN into a plug-and-play solution for Sage.

The process

Because Sage was moving from outsourced IT to an insourced model, the need to standardize its physical infrastructure and PCs across all 60 locations was critical. "We thought all of our offices were cookiecutter, but they weren't," says Dan. This standardization would make the network investment easier to maintain going forward, which was a crucial part of Sage's cost justification for the project.

In order to meet the aggressive implementation timeline, R2 executed the project geographically, starting in Atlanta and working south. The team averaged one site per day until the deployment was complete.

"SD-WAN across 60 locations is a big project. It's a scary project, and I can't imagine doing it with anybody else. R2 has helped us put the right processes and efficiencies in place, and we can trust that what they're proposing is the best solution for us."

Dan credits the time R2 spent understanding Sage's infrastructure and operational challenges to the overall success of the project. "The project management and the execution were amazing," he says, "just seamless."

"R2 has helped us put the right processes and efficiencies in place, and we can trust that what they're proposing is the best solution for us."

Dan Mirsky
VP of IT, Sage Dental

The benefits

Long-term network cost savings	Centralized and simplified network management	Up to 60 hours of tracked downtime over three months reduced to zero
More efficient use of internal IT resources	**Standardization of technology across multiple sites and devices**	**Better in-office experience for patients and staff members**

The results

No downtime

In the three months since the project has been complete, Sage Dental has experienced no downtime, a stark difference from the daily outages it had been enduring prior to the SD-WAN deployment. Dan says it has been an "invaluable" improvement to the business. When asked how Sage staff members have reacted, Dan laughs. "They haven't. When you are used to hearing constant complaints, hearing nothing is a testament to the project and the implementation of it."

Notably, when a wide-scale Internet outage hampered the South Florida region where 18 Sage Dental offices reside, not one of them experienced any impact whatsoever. "We never missed a beat or lost a packet," says Dan.

A faster network

With the network running faster, Sage employees are now able to use tools on a daily basis that they couldn't rely on before. Network resiliency is at an all-time high, and the in-house IT team is easily able to manage the Cisco Meraki platform through a centralized console. Likewise, Sage's secure guest Wi-Fi network is a value-add to patients while making the firm more HIPAA compliant.

Built for the future

Ultimately, SD-WAN served as a prerequisite to Sage's future initiatives, providing the needed core architecture to build on additional layers. It doesn't come as a surprise that Sage Dental chose a moniker that symbolizes wisdom through reflection and experience. A SD-WAN investment has proven to be a wise move indeed.

"R2 went above and beyond my expectations of what this particular project was going to deliver," says Dan. "When I was just looking for better connectivity and throughput, I ended up getting a guest Wi-Fi experience that I can now capture marketing information from in order to deliver more personalized services and interactive content to patients."

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In IT, you're always evaluating who's the best person for the project at hand. With my past experience working with R2, they have always been able to deliver, honestly and with integrity. It's not overselling a solution, it's just getting us to the right place we need to be, and that's what I love about our relationship.

Dan Mirsky
VP of IT, Sage Dental

About Sage Dental

Sage Dental is a leading provider of dental health services in Florida and Georgia offering cosmetic, preventive, general reconstruction and specialty dentistry.

mysagedental.com

About R2

Headquartered in Boca Raton, Florida, R2 Unified Technologies is the team organizations turn to when they demand better. We will do right by you. With every integration, with every interaction, always. Because with R2, your experience is Simply Better.

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