

Leading Community Bank Deposits Greater Network Reliability and Performance with tw telecom Services



THE COMPANY

The Adirondack Trust Company

INDUSTRY

Finance/Banking

EMPLOYEES

200

BUSINESS RESULTS

- Upgraded infrastructure to enhance competitiveness in mature market and improve customer retention
- Delivered scalable solution supporting manager's growth-through acquisition strategy
- Significantly increased capacity and performance at about the same price as legacy solution
- Enabled the roll out of future VoIP, videoconference and improved DR services

COMMUNICATIONS APPLICATIONS

- Image & data transport
- Centralized access to banking applications
- Voice
- Future business application enabler (videoconferencing & VoIP)



The Challenge

Nestled in the mature market of Saratoga Springs New York, The Adirondack Trust Company is a market share leader. Because the growth of new accounts remained constant, the bank's forward-looking managers opted to make customer retention a top priority. Their goal was simple — to differentiate the bank from its competitors by delivering service that is superior to that offered from nearby Boston and New York institutions.

Quickly, Adirondack strategists recognized that they would need to significantly upgrade their telecommunications infrastructure to provide on-the-spot service to eager customers at the company's 10 branch locations. To do this, they needed sufficient bandwidth to support real-time data transfers among all the branches.

Moreover, managers wanted to leverage the bank's highly successful online banking application, WebWise, to provide the instantaneous access to account information that customers now consider to be the standard. And because the bank operates under strict regulatory government requirements such as Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, Sarbanes-Oxley and the Patriot Act, any solution would need to be highly reliable and seamlessly interoperate with the existing disaster recovery infrastructure. Not only was a highly available solution a cornerstone for delivering continuous service, but it was fundamental to supporting federally-mandated data protection processes.

With these criteria in mind, Adirondack IT managers brought in Daniel Wolk, president of technology infrastructure consulting firm Binara Inc. He recommended **tw telecom** to provide the telecommunications services that met the bank's stringent requirements.

About tw telecom

tw telecom delivers the most advanced telecommunications solutions on the market to a wide spectrum of businesses and organizations across the United States. Since 1993, we have built a legacy of success through exceptional customer care, remarkable products and powerful networks. These strengths enable us to deliver scalable solutions that help customers improve their business metrics. For more information, please visit www.twtelecom.com.

RELATED SOLUTIONS/ TECHNOLOGIES

- Cisco ONS 15327 SONET Multiservice Platform
- Cisco 2621 Multiservice Platform
- Proprietary WebWise Internet Banking application

tw telecom SOLUTIONS

- Ethernet Internet Service (EIS), 4 Mbps
- VersiPak Virtually Routed Service (VRS)
- Integrated Services Digital Network Primary Rate Interface (ISDN PRI) service

The Solution

The **tw telecom** team recommended a bundled communications package to meet Adirondack's business and data protection objectives. They worked with Wolk to design and implement a solution that included security features for the bank's LAN/WAN and Internet facilities.

Best-in-class Internet Connectivity—Ethernet Internet Service (EIS)

To achieve the real-time data recall for mission-critical banking applications, the company installed **tw telecom**'s Ethernet Internet Service (EIS) to deliver 4 Mbps of capacity. This link provided Ethernet Internet Service to employees at the company's headquarters location.

"We're looking forward to EIS breaking a capacity bottleneck for us," said Ned Wait, director of IT for Adirondack Bank. "That will help us move more data faster to better serve our customers."

In addition to supporting banking applications such as credit scores and accessing mortgage systems, employees used EIS for general Web access. EIS also helped facilitate the increased requirement for more Web-based reporting to the Federal Reserve Bank and other correspondent institutions.

Banking Application Data Transport & Data Protection

Adirondack contracted one VersiPak Virtually Routed Service (VRS) pipe for each of the bank's 10 branches to access an online teller system application so that tellers and other employees can promptly access customer information including transaction images.

Additionally, the VersiPak VRS solution supported data protection objectives, other banking applications and ATM transactions. These private LAN extension services allowed Adirondack to transfer private data between multiple locations within its service area and to differentiate that traffic from Internet-based packets. To further boost data protection capabilities, a VersiPak VRS connection provided redundancy between the company's main data center and its disaster recovery site.

Upgraded Inbound Call Management—ISDN PRI

Rounding out the bundled services, Adirondack managers contracted two lines of Integrated Services Digital Network Primary Rate Interface (ISDN PRI) service. The bank's two-way calling number has been migrated from a Centrex-based platform to **tw telecom**'s PRI service.

"The speed and availability of the **tw telecom** services give us a leg up in providing the level of service that differentiates us from our competitors. The services are faster, more reliable and better help us meet our regulatory requirements."

*Ned Wait,
Director of IT,
Adirondack Trust Bank,
Saratoga Springs, New York*



The Value to the Business

Financial Benefits

The solution implementation met Adirondack Bank's budgetary requirements as Wait explained. "We anticipate being able to do a great deal more with the increased bandwidth and reliability of the **tw telecom** communications services for about the same costs as our legacy solution. They have given us tremendous value for our vendor dollar."

Speaking to the bank's retention goal Wait said, "The **tw telecom** services deliver the performance and capacity that improve our services today, while providing the infrastructure necessary to offer future, value-added services. We expect that to translate into a higher client retention rate."

Business Benefits

Wait met the expectations of bank executives for better service by successfully upgrading his communications infrastructure.

"**tw telecom**'s EIS, VersiPak VRS and PRI services are a huge help to an institution like ours because they help differentiate our services in the community. We can respond to customer requests faster than our competitors by moving data more quickly among our branches and through our WebWise online banking application. Together, these things enhance our ability to retain customers."

According to Wait, the key component to the bank's growth strategy was the ease of adding more sites to Adirondack's network. "We recently acquired an insurance agency and will phase in its IT functions to boost our operational efficiencies. Currently, the business processes are paper-oriented. We're anticipating significant productivity gains by migrating those processes over to digital-based applications that make use of **tw telecom**'s VersiPak VRS and EIS."

Another important business driver was the desire to offer future enterprise-wide services to cut costs and improve employee efficiency. "With the capacity and reliability of our new fiber services, we're looking to deploy VoIP and videoconferencing services in the next year or so," explained Wait. "We couldn't have done that over the twisted pairs we relied upon previously."

From a data protection perspective, Wolk will reevaluate the bank's disaster recovery plan in light of the new, more flexible fiber services. "The **tw telecom** network reach gives Adirondack the ability to move its disaster recovery site much further away from their headquarters to guard against any county-wide disruption."

Technology Benefits

In an area prone to communications disruptions as small as light rain storms, the new fiber-based services provided welcome relief as Wait explained. "As our branch locations migrate to the **tw telecom** fiber services, we expect those environmental issues to go away."

Additionally, the redundancy and capacity of the communications disaster recovery-site solution gave Wait the confidence that his applications would either remain online during a disaster or recover more quickly with minimal downtime.

In light of 9/11, the security of financial data has become an even greater priority. "The regulatory requirements and new applications add significantly to file sizes and the speed of the **tw telecom** fiber solutions helps the bank more efficiently collect, store and move around that data," said Wolk. "I don't see the reporting and security



requirements being eased any time soon so it's comforting to know that they can easily scale bandwidth to accommodate future, stricter regulatory standards."

From an operational perspective, contracting a single communications company for multiple solutions sidestepped a potential security headache for the bank. "Dealing with a single vendor considerably streamlines the process to integrate and manage data security for business continuity," explained Wolk.

The tw telecom Experience

Speaking to his experience with **tw telecom**, Wait said, "They were so responsive that they consistently finished project tasks before we were ready to act on them. Since we're dealing with cutting edge services, we've been pleasantly surprised at how well things have gone."

That's in contrast to other vendors. "Our experiences with other phone companies have been less than stellar, particularly with new technology. In fact, the **tw telecom** sales folks were so responsive that they completed the sales process and implemented the circuits faster than other providers could even submit a proposal."

About The Adirondack Trust Company

Named one of the 100 safest banks in America, The Adirondack Trust Company serves the community banking needs of Saratoga Springs and its surrounding areas. As New York State Senator Edward T. Brackett (founding President) wrote in 1916, "the bank is managed not only for the proper purpose of making money for its stockholders, but also for the development of the community where it is located and to be an example of high dealing for all those who come in contact with it." These sentiments remain the guiding force behind the management of The Adirondack Trust Company. To learn more, please visit us at www.adirondacktrust.com.