

Case Study

CASE STUDY

Virginia-Based Tableware Company Looks to Nortec to Resolve Projects Both Large and Small

The Background



Fortessa, Inc. is a leading designer, developer and marketer of quality tableware for the high-end commercial foodservice and luxury consumer markets. Since its founding in 1993 as The Great American Trading Company, Inc., the company has grown from just two employees to more than 170 employees and associates worldwide. Fortessa's products appear in the finest venues in more than 20 countries, as well as in the finest retailers.

The company's US operations include its headquarters and direct-to-consumer outlet in Sterling, Virginia, a foreign trade zone warehouse in Winchester, Virginia, a regional headquarters in Las Vegas, Nevada, and showrooms in key markets throughout the country. Fortessa's international operations include Fortessa of Canada, serving the Canadian market, Fortessa of Europe, based in Germany, Fortessa (Asia) Ltd, based in Hong Kong, and a partnership in Mexico to serve the Latin American market.

The Challenge

Fortessa's IT department was at a crossroads. With a mandate to control fixed costs and a full plate for his in-house IT staff, CIO Chris Stettler had a growing "laundry list" of network infrastructure projects. Stettler's list included a few dozen projects ranging from a fixing a broken monitor to setting up a WLAN. Some problems had crept up over time, whereas others resulted from systems that had never been optimized from the start. "We mostly needed network administration support. However, we did have quite a few back-burner things that we hadn't had an opportunity to take care of with our in-house staff."

The Solution

Stettler decided to contract with Nortec for IT support rather than increase headcount by filling the full-time position. "I had used Nortec while at another firm," Stettler says.

"We mostly needed network administration support. However, we did have quite a few back-burner things that we hadn't had an opportunity to take care of with our in-house staff."

SECURITY
SOLUTIONS

ADVANCED
INFRASTRUCTURE
SOLUTIONS

NETWORKING
INFRASTRUCTURE
SOLUTIONS

Microsoft®
GOLD CERTIFIED
Partner



NORTEC COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
WWW.NORTEC.COM
TEL: 866-531-1990
FAX: 703-448-0752

7531 LEESBURG PIKE
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22043-2102
9401 COURTHOUSE ROAD, STE #205
CHESTERFIELD, VA 238326

102 BROADWAY STREET, STE #400
CARNEGIE, PA 15106
2201 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, STE #701
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19130

Case Study

Nortec engineer Greg Edwards started off with a one-week intensive period during which he and the Nortec team evaluated current systems and problems. That same week, Nortec went to work on the critical priorities Stettler had outlined.

One key project Nortec implemented was to set up an MPLS link between Fortessa's headquarters in Sterling, VA and its Winchester, VA warehouse. Nortec programmed routers, configured switches, and set up the VoIP system. "We were able to shift some of our processes that we previously hadn't been able to do," says Stettler. "The system really changed the game for us - it has been a huge benefit."

Another main objective was to implement redundant bandwidth, as some of Fortessa's ERP systems are completely dependent on the internet. Nortec recommended and implemented a second circuit - a microwave circuit - so that the company's access to the internet is very stable.

Nortec also established a Microsoft Windows Server Update Service (WSUS) so that Fortessa could monitor all of its workstations, ensure all critical patches are applied, and alert them to any critical vulnerabilities.

Another priority was optimizing the company's back-up system. In late 2007 Fortessa had purchased a tape library, but had never gotten the most of out this investment. "Nortec came in and reconfigured it to ensure that our back-ups are rock solid," Stettler says.

In addition, Nortec also resolved the company's troublesome firewall. "We could not configure the system to the needs of our business," Stettler says. Nortec recommended replacing the firewall, and added an email security device to handle SPAM. "Now I have email alerts so that I can jump on things quickly," Stettler says.

Benefits

Today, Fortessa's IT infrastructure is enhanced and the list of back-burner projects is complete. Having completed the company's most critical projects, as well as some more minor tasks, Nortec has made Fortessa's IT systems secure, more efficient, and ready to handle the next phase of growth.

*For more information on Nortec, please contact us at
georgeh@nortec.com.*

*"We were able to shift
some of our processes
that we previously
hadn't been able to do.
The system really
changed the game for
us - it has been a huge
benefit."*

SECURITY
SOLUTIONS

ADVANCED
INFRASTRUCTURE
SOLUTIONS

NETWORKING
INFRASTRUCTURE
SOLUTIONS

Microsoft®
GOLD CERTIFIED
Partner



NORTEC COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
WWW.NORTEC.COM
TEL: 866-531-1990
FAX: 703-448-0752

7531 LEESBURG PIKE
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22043-2102
9401 COURTHOUSE ROAD, STE #205
CHESTERFIELD, VA 238326

102 BROADWAY STREET, STE #400
CARNEGIE, PA 15106
2201 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, STE #701
PHILDELPHIA, PA 19130