

The Advantages of Open Networking

How MetaLINK Leveraged Whitebox to Reach Their Goals in Record Time



MetaLINK Technologies is one of the Top 20 Independent ISPs in North America, operating in Northwest Ohio, Northeast Indiana, and Southern Michigan since 1996 providing High-Speed Internet, Fiber Transport, Co-location, Web Hosting, and Hosted Phone Services and systems to businesses and households.

Overview

The global pandemic has brought to light the importance of reliable, fast broadband access. With people increasingly relying on online services for work, school, and entertainment, businesses have had to undergo a digital transformation, often in record time.

Despite the explosion in demand, governments and Service Providers are struggling to keep up as global supply chains continue to feel the squeeze and budgetary constraints prevail. MetaLINK is one such ISP. Their full service footprint covers a wide area, and their business grew 400% within the first 2 months of lockdown as their customers began working from home, streaming services, and accessing vital services such as education, banking and telemedicine online. In a very short timeframe and during a supply chain crisis, they needed to:

- Get a larger upstream connection to the Internet for their clients
- Find a cost-effective solution that was readily available
- All while ensuring reliable performance and service uptime.

After attempting to secure solutions from legacy vendors and being quoted 12 - 24 month lead times, MetaLINK eventually approached IP ArchiTechs.

IP Architechs

IP ArchiTechs Managed Services is an independent network consulting firm that specializes in Disaggregated Solutions and open networking integration. They work in ISP (wireless and wireline), Data Center and Enterprise environments and leverage cost-effective network vendors and solutions to maximize return on investment for clients without compromising scalability or availability. They do not sell hardware or software, instead focusing on their customers' business objectives and goals and partnering them with best-in-class suppliers. Having worked with EPS Global on customer engagements before, IP ArchiTechs recommended us to MetaLINK. Together we proposed an open networking solution for MetaLINK.

"We understood what services MetaLINK needed to deliver and their tight timeline to get the capacity upgrade. We looked to EPS because they have done a great job to date of delivering solutions to meet our customers' requirements across the globe".

Vince Schuele, Senior Network Architect - IP ArchiTechs

The Solution

Open networking is the process of using whitebox switches with third-party software to power a network. This setup quickly proved to be the solution that MetaLINK was looking for, as open networking solutions are often cheaper and more flexible than those from legacy vendors, and most importantly, they were readily available through EPS Global. In addition, the software that runs on whitebox switches is more capable, easy to configure and support, and can handle complex protocols such as BGP and MPLS.

To increase their transport links between their core sites, MetaLINK and IP ArchiTechs went with an IP Infusion-powered Edgecore AS5916 switch. With this, MetaLINK was able to upgrade their connections to the Internet from 10GbE DWDM circuits to 100G links, and also provide 48x 10G services.

Thanks to the flexibility and scalability of the open networking solution, what would have taken 12-18 months to complete with a legacy vendor was completed in just three months. They were also able to save on costs – with the flexibility of whitebox solutions and the lowered license costs, MetaLINK was able to stay on budget while achieving their goals.

Most importantly, they were able to quickly deliver reliable Internet access to their customers. Not only were they able to do this with record speed, but they were also able to do so with a greater degree of flexibility – with the open networking solution, MetaLINK was able to quickly add new switches and routers to the network, and scale up to 200G or 400G in the future.

“There’s lots of preconceived notions in the industry about “you got to have this if you want to play in this arena”, but for different sized companies, that’s not even a possibility. Have a look at it. At the very least, go out and give it a test. It’s affordable enough for you to pick up a couple switches and go to town.”

Jeff Hummel, Technical Services Supervisor - MetaLINK

Ultimately, by leveraging the advantages of open networking solutions, MetaLINK was able to quickly reach their goals and provide reliable broadband access to their customers. Open networking provides an affordable and reliable solution for businesses that need to rapidly expand their Internet access, but don’t have time – or budget – to wait for solutions from legacy vendors.

“There is an idea that in disaggregated networking there’s no support channels, but that’s just completely false. In fact I’d say it’s exactly the opposite. There’s more support “

Vince Schuele, Senior Network Architect - IP ArchiTechs

The experience that MetaLINK had provides an important lesson for other companies facing similar issues – look into open networking solutions instead of relying on legacy vendors. With the help of partners like IP ArchiTechs and EPS Global, as well as open networking solutions that provide more flexibility and greater support, businesses can quickly achieve their goals and benefit from greater cost savings.

About Us

Open Networking solutions are based on open standard, bare-metal hardware with a choice of open software for Software-Defined Networking, virtualization, and cloud orchestration. It was first adopted by hyperscalers to avail of the centralized network management, CapEx and OpEx savings, but mainstream adoption is accelerating as customer motivations are stronger and the barriers to entry are lower.

EPS Global sits at the center of the open networking ecosystem, bringing together the hardware and open NOS software to provide turnkey solutions for any use case, delivering value and expertise to your business. Our engineers can advise you on the best product set to suit your business needs, offering software configuration and bundling of solutions for hassle-free, consolidated shipments.

We have local language and currency support in each of our 28 locations, and we provide stock availability from our regional distribution hubs worldwide, minimizing lead times.

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