



# CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

SPANLINK AT WIRELESS RONIN



## Wireless Ronin Implements Unified Communication for Seamless Interaction between Colleagues and Customers

### Digital Signage Company Brings Offices Together with 3-Digit Dialing and HD Video

According to an article in the New York Times, researchers estimate that the average person living in city limits is exposed to up to 5,000 advertisements per day-- from the radio commercial to the newspaper ad, and from the billboard on the side of the bus to now, the digital signage in our favorite retail shop.

Digital signage is a relatively new form of advertising that allows companies to use electronic screens to broadcast information, commercials, or anything else of their choosing to large amounts of people. This kind of advertisement is spreading to different venues like wild fire and could someday replace every form of static point-of-purchase advertising. Getting in on this shift is Minneapolis-based, Wireless Ronin Technologies.

Wireless Ronin provides digital signage for advertisers to reach audiences in a new way, using digital billboards and in-store screens. Digital signage can also provide an interactive experience for the user. For example, advertisers are using digital signage to promote products directly where target audiences work, shop and play. Wireless Ronin brings digital signage to a variety of industries including retail, gaming, automotive, quick serve restaurants and financial/banking. Quick serve restaurants, more

#### OVERVIEW

##### Customer Profile:

Minneapolis-based Wireless Ronin Technologies provides digital signage, enabling advertisers to reach audiences in a new way using digital billboards and in-store screens.

##### Challenge:

In two years, Wireless Ronin grew from 37 employees to nearly 160. With the acquisition of another business, Wireless Ronin was looking for a solution that would help them communicate internally across sights, as well as a solution that enabled easy and efficient communications with its growing global client base.

##### Solution:

- Replace disparate phone system with Cisco Unified Contact Center Express
- Implement high definition video in conference rooms across sites

##### Results:

- 3-digit dialing connects offices and teams
- 100 percent uptime - Customer support center connects and services clients without interruption
- Eliminated international long distance charges and more expensive conference call lines
- Reduced travel time and costs

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**Scott Koller**  
EVP of Sales and Project Management  
Wireless Ronin



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**Mike Hopkins**  
VP of Materials & Logistics  
Wireless Ronin

commonly known as fast food, are using digital signage to replace traditional menu boards. The digital screens change during the day to reflect breakfast or lunch menus and seasonal offerings like hot chocolate or cool salads.

At Wireless Ronin, the potential for growth is enormous – if, that is, it can expand its own company fast enough to keep up. Now with two major offices in Minneapolis and Windsor, Ontario, Wireless Ronin discovered that the secret to its success is seamless communication between colleagues and customers – no matter where in the world they reside. By partnering with Spanlink Communications and implementing a Cisco Unified Communications solution, business runs smoothly at Wireless Ronin because employees can as easily connect with colleagues and customers right down the hall or across national borders.

### Challenge

Just as digital signage offers a dynamic way for advertisers to reach audiences – Wireless Ronin wanted a dynamic way of communicating with internal staff and customers.

In just two years, Wireless Ronin grew from 37 employees to nearly 160. The company expanded from its Minneapolis headquarters with the acquisition of another business in Windsor, Canada.

With two offices, company managers were flying between sites on a regular basis, first to merge operations, then to oversee staff. Since managers have direct reports across the hall and across the U.S. /Canadian border, extensive travel back and forth between offices to keep teams connected and to move business forward was needed. Direct flights between Minneapolis and Windsor cost so much that the company had its employees take cheaper flights that went through Chicago, making a one-way trip that could have taken less than 90 minutes last the better part of a day.

It wasn’t long before upper management realized something needed to change. Wireless Ronin executives were concerned about expanding travel budgets and the effects that smaller things – such as dialing internationally to connect with colleagues – would have on the interactive, innovative working environment that made Wireless Ronin the success it is.

In addition to needing communication options for internal communications, Wireless Ronin also needed technology that enabled easy and efficient communications with its growing global client base.

“We’re in a high speed, high volume communications business where telephones and electronic communication is far more important than it used to be,” said Mike Hopkins, vice president of materials and logistics. “We depend on our communications system to be able to communicate with colleagues and businesses around the world.”



"I have extreme confidence in Spanlink and the Cisco solutions that we purchased. Spanlink's ability to come in and assess our needs not only today, but for the future is priceless."

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### Solution

It was clear that Wireless Ronin needed a sophisticated unified and collaborative communications solution that leveraged new technologies to bring people together virtually. Employees needed clear avenues to communicate internally and with customers around the world. The solution also needed to have flexibility and the ability to rapidly expand to keep up with company growth.

To meet the business requirements, Spanlink delivered a fully converged voice and data network for an initial configuration of 80 IP phones. Included were Cisco switches, voice gateways, Wireless Access Points, Cisco Unified Contact Center Express, Cisco Unified Messaging integrated with Microsoft Exchange, Cisco Unified MeetingPlace Express, Cisco Unified Communications Manager and high definition video. The initial phone system deployment took three weeks from order signature to go-live.

When the Windsor office opened, Spanlink worked with Wireless Ronin to get the new phone system up and running quickly, allowing for seamless communication between offices. This new communications system crossed international borders, making the Minneapolis and Windsor offices seem like one. No matter if managers were calling the office next door or the office across the U.S./Canadian border, they just dialed three digits. This easy solution made the offices seem closer together and the teams feel connected to colleagues across offices. Additionally, it saved money by eliminating international long distance charges and more expensive conference call lines.

In addition to three digit dialing, Spanlink provided a new way for colleagues and customers to meet. By installing high definition video conferencing equipment, Spanlink provided the ability for "traditional" face-to-face meetings to take place from anywhere. The TANDBERG high definition cameras produce crisp images, making it easy for users to pick up on all visual cues occurring during meetings.

Today, Wireless Ronin's staff spends at least eight hours a week on videoconference calls, interacting with one another over large-scale, wall-mounted high-definition video screens. Employees in the Windsor office now sit in a conference room just steps from their own offices and look directly at their colleagues in Minneapolis.

The technology is making it easy for staff to have engaging, interactive brainstorming and innovation meetings with colleagues in different offices. The important non-verbal cues often missed in conference calls were clear with the video components and "in-person" meetings were accomplished without the cost and hassle of extra travel.

With Cisco Unified Messaging, which is integrated with Wireless Ronin's Microsoft Exchange server, employees are able to access e-mail, voice,



and fax messages from a single inbox anytime, anywhere, and on any device – be it phone, e-mail client, web client, smart phone or other mobile device. Now, regardless if an associate is on the road, at their desk or in a meeting, they have access to their messages and can respond faster to time-sensitive communications.

The new phone system also needed to provide effective, reliable communication for customers across the globe.

Currently, Wireless Ronin controls 6,500 screens in 34 countries around the world and is adding more all the time. The company needs to communicate with those screens. To support the technology and service the customers, the company provides network support through the network operations center and staffs a 24/7 call center that must always stay up and running. The ability to communicate effectively through the Cisco Unified phone system is key in managing all products and services.

When customers call asking for information or to report a problem with their screens, they are always able to connect with Wireless Ronin's support team. This communication touch point is crucial to the business. Customers need to know that the support team is always available when there is a problem with the software or when screens go down.

"We chose Spanlink because they're the only ones that brought an array of technologies and services we needed to the table," said Scott Koller, executive vice president of sales and project management for Wireless Ronin. "We were able to do one-stop shopping for videoconference, phone and connecting to our other office."



### About Spanlink Communications:

Spanlink Communications is a leading provider of unified communications and customer interaction solutions leveraging Cisco's technology. With 20 years experience and nearly 1,500 sites deployed, Spanlink helps companies exploit the benefits of virtual unified communications networks for business transformation. Spanlink applies expert advising, deployment, integration and managed services to tailor each customer's solution and support plan to its business needs for transformational business improvements in productivity, efficiency and customer satisfaction. Spanlink is a Master certified Cisco partner serving mid-size businesses and large enterprises.

Find news and information at [www.spanlink.com](http://www.spanlink.com).

### Corporate Headquarters:

605 Hwy. 169 North, Suite 900  
Minneapolis, MN 55441  
Tel: 763-971-2000  
[mktg@spanlink.com](mailto:mktg@spanlink.com)

### Results

The Cisco Unified Communications solution that Spanlink deployed has connected the Minneapolis and Windsor offices better than the company could have anticipated. Colleagues report feeling close and connected to their teams despite the geographic distance. Video conference meetings are easy and productive. The ability to meet this way is saving the company a great deal of travel time and costs.

The 24/7 customer support center has been pleased with the Cisco solution. They have been able to connect and service clients without interruption or issue since the deployment. This dependability is important to Wireless Ronin customers and important in seeking out new customers who want to have confidence in the support behind the products.

Spanlink is also able to keep up with the pace of Wireless Ronin's business. "I have extreme confidence in Spanlink and the Cisco solutions that we purchased," said Koller. "Spanlink's ability to come in and assess our needs not only today, but for the future is priceless."