

National Accounts Case Study:



RadioShack

CASE STUDY

The challenge

Known for its expertise in electronics and consumer telecommunications services and its “Do Stuff” slogan, retail technology icon RadioShack definitely knows what it needs when it comes to a dependable high-speed data connection to power each of its 4,500 retail stores and 800 kiosk locations nationwide. The broadband connection is a vital sales tool for RadioShack associates, who use it to provision new cell phones via carrier websites, process credit card transactions, generate daily sales reports, look up sale pricing information, and download corporate training videos.

While RadioShack has many service providers from which to choose, it is increasingly turning to Charter Business® for stores that are in the Charter footprint.

The solution

As a systems analyst for the retail electronics and technology giant RadioShack, Stephen Kornegay’s job is to set up or upgrade broadband data service for RadioShack’s retail outlets. Charter Business had worked with Kornegay since 2004 to supply broadband service for a handful of stores, but that relationship was strengthened in August 2007 when the electronics retailer signed a “Master Service Agreement” with Charter. Under that agreement, Charter’s high-speed internet cable modem service became a standard service option for RadioShack retail stores. Not only does that give RadioShack one bill for all of the stores Charter Business serves, but it also gives Kornegay and his team a single contact and resource to call when adding service for new stores.

“Service is good,” he said of that process. RadioShack has a dedicated Charter Business national accounts manager to coordinate new projects, “and he’s doing a good job.”

“When you talk to someone at Charter’s help desk, you are going to talk to someone who knows what they are talking about.”

DAN WEBER, RADIOSHACK HELP DESK AGENT



That streamlined process is key for Kornegay, because his goal is to find cheaper, faster connectivity — and in some 91 stores so far, Charter Business cable modem service has fit the bill. Another eight or nine stores are under contract and due to come online soon, he said.

Those stores might have had older telco-delivered broadband services, “but if Charter can come in and do it cheaper and faster, then we go with Charter,” Kornegay said. He added that Charter often can beat older services such as symmetric DSL, dedicated DSL and T-1 services on pricing alone.

Faster, more reliable service

Charter often is faster — and not just when it comes to broadband throughput. Once the order is approved, it takes Charter less than 10 days to install and provision the cable modem service for a store. By comparison, it often takes upwards of 30 days to provision a T-1 line from a local telco provider — and that is significant, given the volume of store upgrades Kornegay must manage.

RadioShack’s internal help desk technicians also see benefits in working with Charter’s broadband service as compared to telco DSL alternatives. For one thing, cable modem service tends to produce a steadier connection, thereby making it a more reliable resource for store sales associates and allowing them to serve their own customers more efficiently.

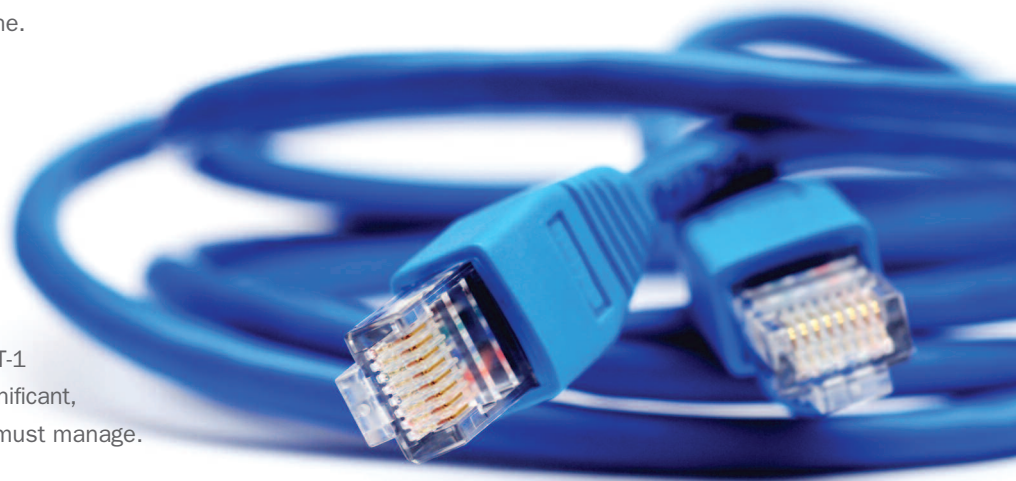
“Definitely, whenever you deal with the DSL line it is going through the phone line and it will tend to fluctuate,” said RadioShack help desk agent Dan Weber. Not so with cable modem service, which, “as far as the throughput goes, we generally don’t have a problem. I’d say cable is definitely very good.”

Fast, knowledgeable response

Charter Business also scores points in backing up its service. Weber noted that when there is a service issue with any of the retail store connections, calls to Charter’s help desk go directly to a live technician. That is notable because Weber and his fellow techs are manning RadioShack’s help desk, too — so they know a thing or two about customer response issues.

“Once the order is approved, it takes Charter less than 10 days to install and provision the cable modem service for a store. By comparison, it often takes upwards of 30 days to provision a T-1 line from a local telco provider.”

STEPHEN KORNEGAY, RADIOSHACK SYSTEMS ANALYST



“When you talk to someone at Charter’s help desk, you are going to talk to someone who knows what they are talking about,” Weber said. In contrast to some telephone company help desks, when calling about a service issue: “I don’t hear Charter’s support center say, ‘You have a virus on your computer — that’s the problem,’ or ‘It’s an outage.’”

“Since Charter is able to help us fairly quickly,” Weber added, “we are not spending a lot of time on their help desk, and that’s important for RadioShack. We’re on a help desk, too, and we don’t have a lot of time to waste.”

With that efficiency, RadioShack can take a cue from its own slogan and “do stuff” when it comes to its retail sales and overall business strategy. And with a good pipeline of retail store broadband service upgrades in the works, the electronics giant will also be doing more “stuff” with Charter Business going forward.