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Peter West, CEO and Founder

Company:
West Networks

Industry:
IT

Website:
westnetworks.com

Location:
Gainesville, FL, USA

West Networks: giving business customers simplified connectivity, regardless of location

SUMMARY

West Networks is an example of a network specialist company that truly understands what its business customers need: simplified networks without complex management and expensive overheads. In collaboration with NETGEAR, the company has also achieved a balance between giving businesses ownership of their networks and the assurance that West Networks is monitoring and managing those networks remotely.

From supporting the network needs of a factory to giving home-based workers dependable and high-speed connectivity, West Networks has built a rapidly expanding business that more than exceeds the demands of its diverse range of customers.

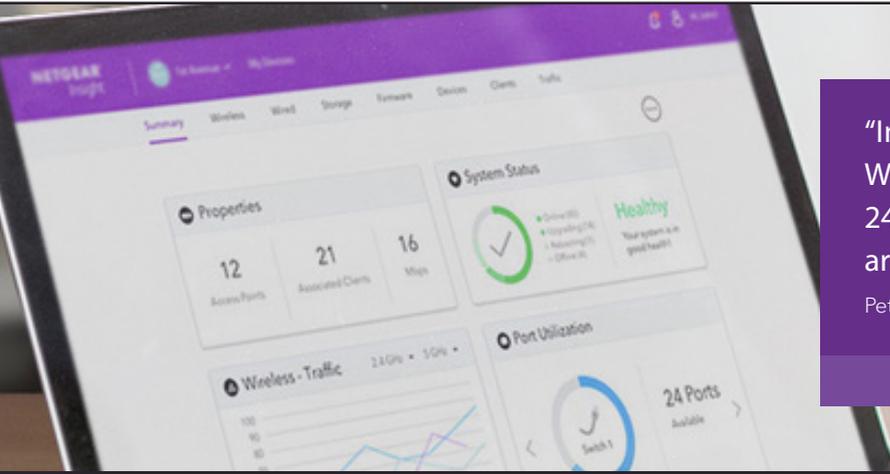
BACKGROUND

Gainesville, Florida-based West Networks has been supporting the critical network needs of its business customers since 2012. Its goal is to help those organizations eliminate downtime and reduce costs while improving productivity, security, and communications. Customers represent various industries, but West Networks has particular experience in mobile health, public safety, and first responders.

While some of the market is still catching up with the current connectivity needs of professional organizations today, West Networks' CEO and Founder Peter West was ahead of the game some years back. "Business IT users don't want complexity. People responsible for IT want simplicity and for their networks to work," Peter explains.

One way the company achieves that is through its own SD-WAN infrastructure, with the addition of NETGEAR switches. The latter are managed by Insight, NETGEAR's cloud-based network management portal. This has proved to be a winning combination for West Networks.





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SOLUTION

The relationship between the two companies goes back to the global financial crisis when a customer tasked West Networks with building a data center able to handle terabytes of traffic per month but within a meager budget. Using NETGEAR’s switching architecture, West Networks was able to achieve that goal. Says Peter, “That experience showed us what NETGEAR could do for business customers. Other switch vendors are not always the best fit: they are more costly, complicated, and have greater overheads.”

That data center was decommissioned a few years ago, but the relationship between West Networks and NETGEAR has continued to expand, with the SD-WAN, switch, and cloud-management combination being deployed in a variety of locations. Recent installation examples include a factory in North Carolina and a distribution center in South Florida, with cloud-based network management playing a pivotal role.

CLOUD ADVANTAGE

Even before NETGEAR launched Insight, Peter West was an advocate of cloud technology to transform network management. “I’m supporting over a hundred thousand users at this point, and that scale would not be achievable without the cloud. Insight has changed the game for West Networks, allowing us to provide 24/7 enterprise support on a network architecture level, wherever we are. For instance, I can check on a customer’s network or sort out issues for them from my phone, in the parking lot, while waiting to visit my next customer. Insight gives our customers peace of mind because they know they can contact West Networks, and we can help because we can see what is happening in their networks,” says Peter.

OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL

“However, West Networks is not in the business of taking away businesses’ ownership and control over their networks.” Continues Peter, “When you combine the NETGEAR switching architecture with our SD-WAN and Insight, I can say to IT guys that they get to own their network now. They don’t have to call a consultant and pay someone hundreds of dollars per hour to rebuild a misconfigured port. There is no sacrifice to reliability or uptime.”

www.netgear.com

WORKING FROM HOME

Not surprisingly, in 2020, West Networks experienced a diversion to usual business, with an influx of people asking for better working-from-home connectivity. In most cases, Peter recommends Orbi Pro, a whole-home WiFi system that NETGEAR Insight can also manage. However, sometimes customers need more. For example, West Networks replaced a network router designed for general consumer use with a NETGEAR Power over Ethernet (PoE) network switch and three WiFi access points for a CEO who required consistently high-quality access to Zoom video-conferencing.

Peter adds, “In 2020, people realized that products designed for general domestic use are not suitable for working-from-home, and so they started replacing them with more business-grade products. At first, that was being driven by users, but then their employers realized that remote-working is here to stay.” Subsequently, employers are now equipping their staff with better home equipment.

LIKE-MINDED

One thing that Peter stresses is the relationship between NETGEAR and West Networks and how that benefits customers: “Myself and my employees are passionate about what we do, and I’ve experienced that same passion with NETGEAR. We don’t want to work with bureaucratic companies who have lost that: we want to work with vendors who care about what they are doing, which should be giving customers better connectivity combined with a great service.”

CONCLUSION

Through its approach, West Networks experienced exponential growth recently, so much so that it has moved to larger premises. Given its focus on service excellence and demonstrable understanding of what the market requires, West Networks certainly deserves to continue on that growth trajectory. All the signs are that it is set to do so.