

When your ability to compete is measured in minutes, you can't waste a second with unreliable Internet connections.

CASE STUDY

Sunstone Circuits, located in Mulino, Oregon, is a printed circuit board (PCB) provider that specializes in small production runs. Its customers use American made prototype PCBs to test early versions of new electronic products before entering full-scale production. Quick prototypes often require completion in as little as 24 hours and can include change orders right up until manufacturing begins.

A pioneer in online ordering, Sunstone was the first PCB manufacturer to accept drawings and specifications over the Internet. Sunstone's average response time of 30 minutes regarding sales orders, change requests, and other communications sets them apart from other PCB manufacturers.

Before reliable telecommunications services reached Sunstone's headquarters south of Portland, the company housed its web and database servers in an offsite collocation facility. They originally installed an Ecessa PowerLink device primarily for failover.

Building in redundancy saves the day

As better and faster communications services became available to Sunstone, the IT team brought their website and database services in house. While they are no longer vulnerable to failures at a separate facility, they are very aware that risk still exists of a communication link being severed or for a failed single device on the network to create issues. For this reason, they built redundancy into their network by installing two fiber lines and one broadband line for backup, as well as upgrading to two ShieldLink units in a mirrored hardware failover configuration.

"Things can happen," said Mike Butler, Network Administrator at Sunstone. "During bridge construction in the area, contractors accidentally cut our fiber lines. Ecessa's automatic failover worked as planned. Our operations were not interrupted."

In addition to automatic failover, Sunstone uses ShieldLink's firewall features and plans to implement VPN features.

Now Sunstone is able to handle heavy traffic loads and is confident of their ability to implement new online services as needed. "There's no throttling in terms of the pipe. Our users are delighted. We're not hearing of any delays," Butler said. "We're pleased with the continuing performance of Ecessa and its top notch customer service team."

"It's nice not to get phone calls in the middle of the night about communication links being down," Butler concluded. "Everything works great. Ecessa has made my life considerably easier."



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