

SUCCESS STORY

THE ICON LOS ANGELES



Covad Wireless Super-T Dedicated Access At Work In the Photo Services Industry

The Icon (www.iconla.com) was founded in April of 1999 by Ramesh Venugopal and Luis Diaz in order to serve the needs of Los Angeles area photographers. Today, The Icon has grown from a conventional photo lab to the premiere imaging destination in Los Angeles. Building on more than twenty years of photography experience, the company was able to hone a highly customized approach to film processing that allows for greater versatility in the way The Icon handles its clients' jobs.

Due to the nature of its business, The Icon requires a highly reliable, high speed Internet connection. In fact, to say that their Internet connection is mission critical is an understatement. Clients provide photographic source material to The Icon in a variety of formats – film, digital and others – and The Icon performs developing and other high-end photo finishing services. Following the preparation of a client's film, The Icon uploads files to a secure FTP server. All this, according to Vice President of Technology Joshua Cottingham, requires not one, but two highly reliable "path diverse" Internet connections – one wireline and one wireless.

THE CHALLENGES When Joshua first joined The Icon the company was using a Symmetric Digital Subscriber Line (SDSL) service from the local phone company. This service, commonly called "business DSL," was used for hosting the company's web site and its critical FTP server. "The biggest problem with the SDSL service was downtime," said Joshua. "The service would be up, then it would be down, sometimes for days."

- **Challenge** - Replace The Icon's existing phone company SDSL internet service used for hosting the company's web site and its critical FTP server with a more reliable uninterrupted Internet service.
- **Solution** - Covad Wireless path diversity solution: one wireline connection consists of two wired T1s, which use the local phone company infrastructure, and a wireless Super-T Dedicated Access connection running at 3 Mbps.
- **Benefits** - Now that The Icon is able better to support its existing customers, it has been able to envision some exciting new business opportunities. One of these is an innovative "digital light box" application. An online light box allows high-quality, high-resolution proofs to be uploaded to a secure web page for review and selection.

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“We are excited that the Covad Wireless Super-T service, along with our wireline T1s and Radware Linkproof has given us the flexibility not only to support our current, growing business, but to launch new services like the Digital Light box application, What that means is that the Internet service has now become an enabler for our business, and that is very powerful. I highly recommend Covad Wireless’s service to any business that needs reliable, cost-effective Internet service.”

Joshua Cottingham
Vice President of Technology
The Icon - Los Angeles

The downtime, combined with the sometimes unresponsive customer support, created problems for The Icon, even as the company’s business with key LA area clients – including major national lifestyle magazines such as Cosmopolitan, Vogue and Travel & Leisure – continued to grow. Joshua knew that he not only needed a highly reliable Internet service but a way to guarantee that the service would, literally, never be down.

THE SOLUTION Joshua did his homework, and determined that the only way to guarantee zero downtime was to combine wireless and wireline connections. Such a solution makes use of what Covad Wireless calls “path diversity,” in which two distinct and separate paths to the Internet ensure that a client’s Internet service can rarely be completely interrupted. For The Icon, the wireline connection consists of two wired T1s which use the local phone company infrastructure, and a wireless Super-T Dedicated Access connection running at 3 Mbps. The Covad Wireless service uses a completely wireless infrastructure, including carrier-class microwave wireless facilities to connect The Icon to a separate Internet access point from the wired T1, connections. “I didn’t realize at the time that it was called path diversity, but I knew what I needed to support the business,” said Joshua. The final piece in the puzzle was a Linkproof™ edge access device from Radware, which allows The Icon’s servers to failover from the wired to the wireless connection, should an outage occur.

SUMMARY An added benefit for Joshua was that the Covad Wireless service was considerably less expensive than the wireline T1s, and installed more quickly. Added Joshua, “you guys beat the T1s to installation by 45 days. I was very impressed with that.”

Now that The Icon is better able to support its existing customers, it has been able to envision some exciting new business opportunities. One of these is an innovative “digital light box” application. The photographer’s light box is the box on which he or she typically reviews the initial proofs from a photo shoot to determine which shots will be turned into prints. An online light box allows high-quality, high-resolution proofs to be uploaded to a secure web page for review and selection. Once selections have been made, The Icon can produce the final prints ready for production.

“We are excited that the Covad Wireless Super-T service, along with our wireline T1s and Radware Linkproof, has given us the flexibility not only to support our current, growing business, but to launch new services like the Digital Light box application,” Joshua commented. “What that means is that the Internet service has now become an enabler for our business, and that is very powerful. I highly recommend Covad Wireless’s service to any business that needs reliable, cost-effective Internet service.”

To learn more about Covad Wireless services,
go online at www.covadwireless.com or call 1-866-805-1630



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