

BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

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How This Kansas Company Keeps Its Locations Connected



CROSSWIND
Petfoods, Inc.


RainbowSM
COMMUNICATIONS

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BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

Networks keep us linked in business and in life. Whether it's a network of organizations, people, or technology, the whole is often greater than the sum of its parts. In this issue of *Business Connections*, we explore how networks can bring connection, expansion, and a better quality of life.

On page 3, we fill you in on how Rainbow Communications is **Broadening Broadband**. We are investor-members of the Kansas Fiber Network, a company that helps us extend our services to underserved areas within the state and enables us to offer better prices.

In our Business Spotlight on pages 4 and 5, you'll learn how **Crosswind Industries** uses a special kind of networking called Transparent LAN Services (TLS) to connect its business locations. This service allows dispersed employees to work more closely together.

Next, turn to page 6 to understand how **Fiber is the Next Utility**. It's just as important for connecting people, ideas, and commerce as transportation lines were in previous centuries. Fiber networks are key for enabling small communities to compete with urban areas.

Finally, on page 7, we talk about **Rainbow in the Community**. Our community network, through which we contribute to local organizations, is one reason we hope companies will choose us for all their telecommunications needs.

Ready to add or expand a network? We're happy to help. Just give us a call to let us know how we can assist.

Sincerely,
Rainbow Communications
Sales Department



L to R: Julie Bergman, Sales Representative; Amiee DeFore, Technology Solutions Clerk; Angie Kreider, Sales Account Manager, and Jerad Enneking, Sales Representative



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Broadening Broadband

Rainbow Communications expands our reach with the Kansas Fiber Network



Rainbow Communications is always looking for ways to improve the services we provide to our customers, which is why we became an investor-member of the Kansas Fiber Network (KFN) when it started in 2010. Rainbow Communications was one of 29 independent rural telecommunications companies that joined at that time.

Benefits for the Community

Rainbow Communications Assistant General Manager Jason Smith says, “Through the KFN, we have access to a statewide network, so we can easily provide services to business customers and anchor institutions. We get a better price than we did when working with other companies, and we pass those savings along to our customers.”

Structured as an LLC, the KFN has 21 full-time employees and over 100 contract workers. KFN President Steven Dorf says, “At our headquarters in Wichita, we keep a core of very highly skilled professional people that manage and engineer the network, and outsource other functions to various companies (some of which are investors). These functions include network operations, construction, and legal/regulatory skills.”

As we deploy fiber to business and anchor institutions, we’re expanding our wireless footprint to serve unserved and underserved areas of our communities.”

—JASON SMITH, ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER,
RAINBOW COMMUNICATIONS

Smith describes an example of the benefits of Rainbow Communications’ investment in KFN: “We have a hospital here that connects to another one in Saint Joseph, MO, through our network and KFN’s. This wouldn’t be possible without the KFN component and it’s

seamless to each hospital. That is, they have access to high speeds and the ability to run software, network, and transfer patient information, almost as though they’re in the same building.”

Dorf appreciates Rainbow Communications’ membership in the KFN. He says, “The management team at Rainbow Communications is very progressive. They’re always looking for ways to partner with us on new opportunities to expand their network and ours in joint ventures and mutually beneficial business partnerships. They’ve been great people to work with.”

Kansas Broadband Initiative

One such venture is the Kansas Broadband Initiative, which is a statewide push to bring broadband to rural areas of the state of Kansas. Dorf notes, “For 2015 we started a new phase for underserved areas in the southeast part of the state. We will make a substantial investment in bringing broadband to those areas.”

Smith adds, “Rainbow Communications is continually investing in its network to help meet the goals of the Kansas Broadband Initiative. As we deploy fiber to business and anchor institutions, we’re expanding our wireless footprint to serve unserved and underserved areas of our communities.”

Looking ahead, Smith says, “Having access to these types of services positions us well for the future. We don’t know what’s coming down the road, but high-capacity bandwidth connections give us endless potential and endless possibilities.”

Crosswind Industries

Flexibility and efficiency keep customers coming back



When large pet food manufacturers want to produce specialty products, but aren't set up to do it at their own facilities, they contract with a company like Crosswind Industries to provide this service. Crosswind Industries IT Manager Kevin Boulware explains, "Often, these manufacturers don't have the environment to manufacture specialty treats, or the flexibility to set up such an environment, but we do. Ninety percent of our equipment is mobile, so we can create different production environments — including varying conveyor belts, cutters, and extruders — on short notice."

Pet Food Production

In addition to producing products for customers, the company manufactures its own private label pet food and treats. It also assists with formula specifications for customers' products and designs production environments to produce them.

A significant part of the process for manufacturing pet food is known as extrusion, which mixes, cooks, and cuts the food. Boulware explains, "You can think of it as a big Play-Doh machine which squeezes the material through in certain shapes. This is the most efficient way to do it. Our machines put out 10,000 pounds in an hour."

Fifteen Years of Growth

The company started in 2000, when Owner Ken Matson purchased what was then a test facility called Startech and converted it to a full production facility. Over the years, the company's footprint has grown on the same site in Sabetha — which now has three production plants and an

administrative office — and beyond. The company also has a packaging plant in Hiawatha and a production plant in Topeka. The corporate office is in Parkville, MO.

Customers include companies in the U.S., Mexico, and other parts of the world. Boulware (who started at the company as a packager 11 years ago) observes, "Our customers appreciate that we have the flexibility to produce based on their exact needs, our industry standard certifications, and our years of experience in the industry."

Crosswind Industries employs between 250 and 300 people as machine operators, packagers, quality assurance personnel, warehouse employees, managers, and administrators. Boulware notes, "Most of our employees are at the Hiawatha location because packaging requires a lot of workers." Employees appreciate the company's family atmosphere, flexible scheduling, and good benefits.

Staying Connected with TLS

To work most efficiently between the various offices, Crosswind Industries uses Transparent LAN Services (TLS) from Rainbow Communications. Boulware comments, “We use TLS to connect our Hiawatha and Sabetha locations. Our primary datacenter is located in Sabetha and we don’t host anything at our Hiawatha facility. This line carries phone and data traffic, including all of our internal business system traffic.”

Rainbow Communications Sales Manager Angie Kreider describes how TLS works: “It enables customers to run their network off of Rainbow Communications’ fiber backbone without having a physical network to connect. You can think of it as an invisible CAT5 cord that links two locations together, kind of like an extended LAN.”

The service can even be used between locations if one is inside and the other outside Rainbow Communications’ service area. Kreider says, “When we go outside of our territory—for example, if a company has locations in Hiawatha and Kansas City—we use a router from the Kansas Fiber Network to extend our reach.” She adds, “This wouldn’t be possible without our fiber network. This is one of the benefits of having fiber in our community: we can keep local businesses at home and still make critical connections to metropolitan areas.”

Rainbow Communications has the infrastructure and services of a large telecom provider, but somehow continues to provide the personality and support one would expect from a local telecom provider.”

—KEVIN BOULWARE, IT MANAGER, CROSSWIND INDUSTRIES

The company previously used a point-to-point (PTP) wireless connection that was in place for eight years. But, it failed to keep up with demand for bandwidth as the company grew. Boulware compared the cost of upgrading the PTP setup with using TLS from Rainbow Communications, and found it was much more cost-effective to go with the Rainbow Communications option. “Plus,” he says, “with a single phone call, we can increase our bandwidth from 20 Mbps to 100 Mbps to meet future requirements.” He adds, “The difference this upgrade made was phenomenal. We increased our network traffic load tenfold, which allows our management and administration staff at the Hiawatha facility to be much more efficient.”

The company has been very pleased with the services from Rainbow Communications. Boulware says, “Rainbow Communications has the infrastructure and services of a large telecom provider, but somehow continues to provide the personality and support one would expect from a local telecom provider.”



CROSSWIND INDUSTRIES’ WIDER REACH

Crosswind Industries includes two subsidiaries: Crosswind Foods, Inc. and Crosswind Petfoods, Inc. Crosswind Foods is a food processing and product research company dedicated to transforming other food producers’ ideas into marketable products. To ensure customers’ confidence, Crosswind Foods employs various precautions to ensure quality production. They include excellent manufacturing practices, documented cleaning and sanitation procedures, quality control, and food safety programs.

Crosswind Petfoods is the largest pet food and treat contract manufacturer in North America with over 20 years of experience in the pet food industry. Products include dog food, dog treats, cat food, cat treats, bird food, small animal diets, reptile foods, and zoo foods. Crosswind Petfoods works with customers to evaluate and develop products, promotional programs, and packaging. The company doesn’t store large quantities of raw ingredients, a practice that ensures an ongoing supply of fresh, locally supplied ingredients.

Fiber is the Next Utility

It's also a key to business growth, especially in rural areas



To understand the importance of building fiber networks, it's useful to look back at a couple of other life-changing infrastructure projects. By 1900, much of our nation's railroad system was in place; it cleared the way for the settlement of the West, provided new economic opportunities, and stimulated the development of communities. In the 1950s and 1960s, the new Interstate Highway System brought business to the towns it went through while towns far from the new faster roads struggled to survive. Today, fiber is becoming as essential to business growth, and everyday life in general, as railroad tracks and highways were in the previous century.

The huge impact of fiber is even more amazing when you consider just how tiny it is; each strand of glass is only about the size of a human hair. Fiber uses light to transmit data and is unique in its ability to transport virtually unlimited bandwidth over long distances. It's the only technology that delivers enough bandwidth—reliably and at a low enough cost—to meet the ever-increasing demand for more robust Internet, video, and voice services as well as other applications.

Thanks to fiber, Internet speeds of 1 Gbps and higher are starting to become available. Why do we need all this bandwidth? Here are a few reasons:

- Businesses are making a massive shift to cloud services. For economic efficiency, their critical systems now operate at remote data centers rather than on-site computers. The speed, reliability, and security of fiber connections make cloud services viable.

- The American Telemedicine Association estimates there are now 200 telemedicine networks in the U.S., connecting over 3,500 service sites.
- Services such as distance learning and remote energy management are expected to grow considerably over the next several years.

Bandwidth demand is growing at an enormously high rate, and is projected to grow for years to come. According to the Cisco® Visual Networking Index (VNI) Forecast (2011-2016), 3.4 billion Internet users are expected to be active by 2016—about 45 percent of the world's projected population, according to United Nations' estimates. In addition, the average fixed broadband speed is expected to increase nearly fourfold, from 9 Mbps in 2011 to 34 Mbps in 2016.

The presence of fiber networks in smaller cities and rural communities helps level the playing field and close the urban-rural technology gap. Existing businesses can access the Internet speeds and reliability needed to expand e-commerce. Economic development organizations have an easier time attracting new businesses. Plus, educational opportunities, once only found in large schools, can now be delivered to rural classrooms via online education.

To learn more about how Rainbow Communications' fiber network can benefit your business, call 800-892-0163.

Rainbow in the Community

Our motto at Rainbow Communications is, “Big Enough to Deliver. Small Enough to Care.” In addition to local customer service, this caring extends to our support of many community programs and organizations.

Benefits of a Local Telco

Companies that are already customers of Rainbow Communications know the benefits of having a telecommunications company in your community. Proximity goes a long way toward convenience for paying your bills and for getting problems addressed in a timely manner. You also get peace of mind, knowing that the people installing your equipment, taking your payments, or talking with you on the phone are friends and neighbors.

In addition, you haven't lost anything by not doing business with a national provider. We offer similar services, often at lower prices, and are always on the lookout for ways to better serve you.

Our Community Involvement

Rainbow Communications is involved in the following local organizations:

- **Hiawatha Foundation for Economic Development.** This organization helps to keep and recruit businesses in the area. PR/Community Development Coordinator Stacy Simmer was recently elected as a board member; in this role, she'll assist existing businesses and support the organization's director.
- **Local Chambers of Commerce.** Rainbow Communications' employees volunteer their time, make signs, and help market events. Mike Twombly, Local Content Production Manager for Rainbow NEK Channel 68, serves on the Hiawatha Chamber board of directors. Julie Bergman, Business Sales, serves on the Sabetha and Seneca Chamber of Commerce board of directors.
- **Northeast Kansas Enterprise Facilitation.** This organization helps new and existing businesses with business and financial plans, and marketing ideas. Simmer serves on the board of directors.
- **Hiawatha Kiwanis Club.** Rainbow Communications' employees attend meetings and help with events, such as Sunday at the Park. The organization also helps families in need during the holidays and gives scholarships to local kids.

Rainbow Communications' employees also contribute their time to Big Brothers and Big Sisters; 4H Brown County Fair; the Brown County Humane Society; local schools and churches; and more.

Let Us Speak to You

Need a speaker for your next civic organization, school, or company meeting? Rainbow Communications is happy to send someone out to talk to your group about products and services we have in the works, upcoming events, or careers at Rainbow Communications.

Hearing our speakers can help you understand the wide scope of our services (we're not just a cable and Internet company!) and update your technology plan accordingly. We want audiences we address to understand that we're always pushing the boundaries to grow, expand, and give you the best that the latest technology has to offer.

If you'd like to have a Rainbow Communications representative speak to your group, please call Stacy Simmer at 800-892-0163 x2104.



Multiple **locations.** Multiple **connections.** Multiple **benefits.**



Does your business have multiple locations? Rainbow Communications offers fully managed Transparent LAN Service (TLS) to connect multiple LANs, and point-to-point TLS to connect LANs and WANs seamlessly. By choosing us for TLS, you gain multiple benefits including:

- Reduced complexity of networking
- Increased network manageability
- A single physical interface at each location
- Efficient redundancy across our fiber network



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