Calix

Centranet Achieves 9.5/10 Customer Satisfaction Score Thanks to a Member-Centric Strategy That Matches Outstanding Broadband Experience With Exceptional Support

Founded in 2020, Centranet is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Central Rural Electric Cooperative, providers of rural electricity in north central Oklahoma since 1938. In the same way the cooperative lit up local homes and businesses over 80 years ago, Centranet was established to bring high-speed fiber broadband services to portions of seven Oklahoma counties. They turned up service in the summer of 2021 and have grown to more than 4,000 broadband subscribers just a year later.

Their vision is simple and powerful: every home, business, and school should have high-speed connectivity regardless of location. The Centranet mission statement reinforces this: "We believe the view out your window shouldn't determine your ability to connect with the world." Underlying these ambitious goals is a promise to deliver fiber to the home with the same level of professionalism, care, and service that the cooperative has brought to members for generations.

Previously, residents in Centranet's rural territory didn't have many options for high-speed broadband connectivity. Although satellite providers offered service, it wasn't particularly reliable and was quite expensive in most cases. In some areas, the local service providers pulled out, leaving residents and businesses to fall into the broadband gap. From its start in 2020, Centranet set a goal of providing all Central members with access to reliable, high-speed internet. Unsurprisingly, when Centranet launched their fiber broadband service, there was tremendous excitement and pent-up demand. With the tagline "Breaking the Rurals," Centranet's goal was to give rural communities the same quality of experience enjoyed by their big-city counterparts.

But with a very lean network operations and support team, Centranet needed a way to onboard new members quickly and then support the exceptional experience that members had come to expect of their cooperative. Centranet required a robust subscriber management system that would give them end-to-end visibility of members' networks and provide insights to help rapidly diagnose and resolve any issues that may arise—ideally without rolling a truck. Additionally, they wanted a self-service support solution that would allow members to manage their home experience, helping them diagnose and address simple problems and avoid calls to the help desk.

CENTRANET

COMPANY
Centranet

COMPANY TYPE
Internet service provider

WEBSITE
centranetfiber.com

LOCATION
Stillwater, OK

SERVICES
Residential and business services including internet, telephone, and TV

Subscribers
4,000+ members in Oklahoma

Calix Revenue Edge and Calix Support Cloud Streamline Service Delivery and Instill Operational Excellence To Sustain Rapid Network Expansion

Members sit at the heart of everything Centranet does. From the executive team to network technicians to contractors, everyone understands that the quality of each member's onboarding and the experience thereafter is key to their long-term success. Building an exceptional "Subscriber Experience" permeates throughout Centranet and is the primary key to long-term success. From the start, Centranet ensured they were putting the right people, systems, and processes in place to embed a member-centric mindset. Their approach was to combine broadband connectivity with managed Wi-Fi and value-added managed services that enrich the lives of their members, and implement systems and tools to ensure end-to-end visibility of the subscriber experience.

To deliver on this vision, Centranet selected Calix as their preferred technology partner, leveraging the service-delivery capabilities of Calix Revenue EDGE™ and the operational efficiencies of Calix Support Cloud (Support Cloud). The Centranet Ultimate Wi-Fi Experience is built around Calix GigaSpire BLAST® Wi-Fi 6 systems and managed by the Centranet App (their branded version of Command**IQ**®). To provide even greater value, Centranet gives every member Experience**IQ**®, which delivers advanced home network management capabilities, and Protect**IQ**® for home network security. This comprehensive managed Wi-Fi offering delivers a convenient and secure online experience and, most importantly, it removes unnecessary complexity for members.

To optimize their support operations, Centranet relies on Support Cloud. Support Cloud provides the end-to-end visibility and data-driven insights they need to quickly identify and resolve any subscriber issues—or prevent them altogether. This extends to not only Centranet customer support representatives (CSRs) and field technicians, but also their external Tier 1 support provider. With a 360-degree view of the member experience that spans from the WAN to the residential gateway, Wi-Fi, connected devices, and apps, support staff can react quickly to troubleshoot problems—and adopt a more proactive approach to support.

Support Cloud will also help Centranet simplify and accelerate the rollout of additional Revenue EDGE Managed Services in the future. Support Cloud gives the support team account activation status and subscription details for faster Tier 1 troubleshooting of managed services along with escalation paths for advanced technical issues.

Beyond the robust capabilities of Support Cloud, Centranet is taking full advantage of the power of Calix Cloud. Calix Marketing Cloud (Marketing Cloud) has played an important role in Centranet's proactive support approach. For example, during a service outage, Centranet used Marketing Cloud to communicate status updates directly to members, dramatically lowering the number of inbound support calls. "For many people today, losing internet service is worse than having a power outage," said Mark Prather, president of Fiber and Technology at Centranet. "The push notifications enabled by Marketing Cloud have been hugely helpful, particularly when we're dealing with an outage. We now have multiple ways to communicate with people about the issue and what we're doing to resolve it."

92%
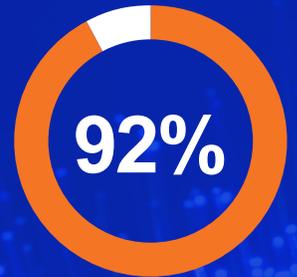
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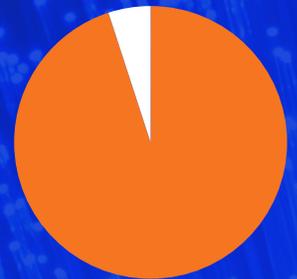
9.5/10

CSAT Score

Centranet is also rolling out Calix Operations Cloud (Operations Cloud) to help them improve efficiency, optimize network performance, and react to (or avoid) member-impacting network issues. Data and insights from Operations Cloud are shared with Support Cloud, providing an enhanced, single view for support roles including CSRs, field technicians, and network operations.

Centranet has partnered with Calix Customer Success Services to get the most out of their support systems and tools. Customer Success provided insight and expertise to help the Centranet support team gain organizational alignment, establish operational goals, and ramp up quickly. They gave CSRs and technicians in-depth training on Support Cloud. Customer Success also helped Centranet with readiness initiatives to ensure every member-facing employee was familiar with the Ultimate Wi-Fi Experience, particularly the Centranet App, which is integral in onboarding and supporting members.

Centranet Achieves 92 Percent CommandIQ Adoption, Boosting Customer Satisfaction to 9.5/10

Centranet connected their first subscriber in July 2021 and by August 2022, their services were available to more than half of the electric cooperative's residential members. With over 4,000 managed Wi-Fi subscribers, Centranet is on track to reach another 1,000 members by the end of 2022.

By making the Centranet App a central element of the onboarding process, Centranet has driven a 92 percent adoption rate of the mobile app. Technicians spend time with every member at the point of installation to download the app and ensure they are familiar with the app. A week later, the marketing team sends a survey to check app usage, followed by a six-week email campaign to reinforce the capabilities and benefits of the app.

Members have enthusiastically embraced the first Revenue EDGE Managed Services that Centranet has rolled out, as demonstrated by the 94 percent adoption rate of both Experience**IQ** and Protect**IQ** just two months after launch. Now, 100 percent of subscribers are using Protect**IQ**. This has enabled Centranet to block nearly 8,700 intrusions, viruses, and web threats from entering members' homes in a 30-day period. Not only does this give members peace of mind, it results in fewer issues being reported to the help desk, reducing both the workload on the support team and operating costs. The combination of Command**IQ**, Protect**IQ**, and Experience**IQ** has contributed greatly to member satisfaction—Centranet boasts a 9.5 out of 10 customer satisfaction score—and helped Centranet reduce the number of support calls going to Tier1 support by 50 percent.

Support Cloud underpins Centranet's subscriber experience. With Support Cloud, the support team has the end-to-end visibility they need to identify and address issues faster. In addition to responding to problems more quickly, Support Cloud allows Centranet to take a proactive approach to support. With robust reporting capabilities, they can pre-emptively reach out to subscribers to resolve minor problems before they

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Mark Prather, president of Fiber and Technology at Centranet

ever impact the subscriber. Through the combination of state-of-the-art systems and tools and local support, Centranet delivers an exceptional experience that underscores their 9.5 satisfaction score.

Cross-organizational alignment has played a major part in Centranet's success to date. All support and operations team members are fully trained on the value of the comprehensive Revenue EDGE solution. This helps them gain a deep understanding of the end-user experience and they can better convey the benefits to members. Centranet had employees trial Command**IQ** functionality so they could develop processes and programs that would maximize app adoption with members. Centranet even structured payments for contract technicians around the number of completed installs, which required techs to help members download the app and walk them through it.

Prather summarized: "We've been really focused on the customer experience. You're always adjusting as you grow and it's important to stay on the leading edge of the customer experience—to know about a problem at somebody's house before they do, if at all possible. Calix has the tools that can help us do that. There's so much more to unlock and we look forward to taking advantage of our investment, building in even more proactivity and meeting our goal of being the best provider in our area."

In less than 16 months since they turned up their first subscriber, Centranet has demonstrated the effectiveness of aligning business objectives, people, and technology behind a clear vision. They've engaged teams across their business, taken a proactive support approach, and learned from the data and insights provided by the Calix platforms. By delivering an exceptional member experience and making it as simple and seamless as possible to support, Centranet stands out as a role model for other rural service providers.