



Confidence and Trust: A Recipe for Success

Five Points Bank opened its doors in 1971 and has since grown to become the largest banking operation in Nebraska's Tri-City area. It has been continually recognized as a banking leader by banking publications such as Bankrate.com and Bauer Financial for its overall exceptional safe and sound operation. In 2016, Five Points Bank opened its state of the art technology center in its Stolley Park business campus to fulfill its promise of being "Nebraska's Better Bank".

Jason Amick is Vice President, Information Technology at Five Points Bank. It's his job to keep the bank's infrastructure operational so business can run uninterrupted. "We first engaged Intellicom after another company sold us a phone system and dropped the ball," said Amick. "We were impressed and later had them help us with deploying a WebEx solution." WebEx plays a critical role for Five Points Bank. Each location has an immersive video conferencing room enabling team members across the 13 locations to make important financial decisions without the cost and delay of travel."

"A lot hinges on these meetings," said Amick. "The system has to run efficiently and reliably. And when

it does, we can make better decisions faster. But our system was seven years old and we had started at the low end to begin with. It worked, but our users told us it was unacceptable."

During the initial engagement with Intellicom, Brian Hemmer, a member of the Intellicom team, was onsite for three or four days every week. "He filled in for the open network administrator role and helped solve challenges we had. When we first started, it was a lot of putting out fires and getting things back on track."

Over the last five years, Five Points Bank has had tremendous growth. They moved to a new facility and Intellicom was a part of this transition. "We had to take down the entire network and then stand it back up in the new location. The process would have taken my team a full 72-hour weekend. With Intellicom's help, we knocked out the move in just 10 hours."

Confidence was also an important part of the move. "Intellicom wasn't just trying to move our stuff. They also worked hard to make sure there would be no latency or other issues when everyone came back on Monday."



Intellicom



Confidence

"I put a lot of value on our relationship with Intellicom," said Amick. "When I make a call, I don't have to re-explain about that one cable or piece of equipment that was giving an issue before. This makes our conversations a lot easier compared to calling a third-party 3000 miles away. Some of those guys take half a day just to understand the problem, or they tell me the project coordinator is booked out for three weeks. I don't have that kind of time. With Intellicom, I know who I'm talking to, and they understand my business. Instead of being on the phone all day, I get fast resolution."

"Truth is, I can't afford to hire a full-time engineer to manage our access control or pull cables. We have a small system. There wouldn't be enough for him or her to do. With Intellicom, I'm able to hire expertise. I can get answers and assistance when I need them. That's really helpful when say I've got to roll up some VLANs and we don't know exactly how to do it. We can just make a call."

"It's also always nice to bring in more eyes and another set of brains. In a crisis, they can get us quick answers or turn us in the right direction. For example, licensing of software can make getting support difficult. It's that fuzzy area between hardware and software that's so hard to get help with. Intellicom knows how to navigate the different support levels. Because they work with companies like Cisco all the time, they understand the tech support maze."

Confidence has an impact internally as well. "When we have a critical down, I can say that I'm working with Intellicom. Even our CEO has confidence in Intellicom because I have confidence in them. The relationship carries its own weight. It's hard to put a dollar value to this."

Amick also appreciates the flexibility of the relationship. "I understand a call is billable time. But sometimes what we need is to just get it solved now. Rather than quibble over a 2-hour retainer, Intellicom says, 'What do you need?' They do what it takes to get things done when there are heat-of-the-moment issues like the CEO's phone not working. Billing is handled on the back-end."

Trust

The core to Amick's relationship with Intellicom is trust. "With any partner, you need to do due diligence, and there's an even higher degree of that in the banking business. But I know the folks at Intellicom, and they know our business. We don't have an ever-changing group of people working on our systems. I know the engineers who come in and there's a lot of trust."

"Our previous videoconferencing system did not quite meet our needs. We had outgrown our existing hardware and it didn't make sense to add to a solution that was on its way out. Intellicom helped us step into the next phase. We went with Cisco and Webex and many of our issues went away."

"And that's a huge part of the value Intellicom brings us. They know we want to grow our business. They'll tell me rather than spend the money here, spend it this way. They help me figure out how to get the most for my money. I never feel like I just bought a bill of goods."

At times that direction is hard to take. "Sometimes Intellicom tells me, 'This is what you need' and it's not the answer I want. But they've been part of identifying the problem so they know what we need. I can work with that because it's an honest answer."

"We steer Cisco most of the time. For example, when we looked at AMP and what Cisco was doing in their cloud, we felt it was expensive. But Intellicom helped us see the bigger picture and why it would benefit us."

Sometimes the answer isn't what's expected. "As a small to medium company, not everything Cisco offers is a best fit for us. It takes a tremendous investment to truly understand all the options, and I might not be able to see where my best fit is. If not for Intellicom, we probably would not have landed on the video solution we have."

"That's what I like about working with Intellicom. They aren't just selling me stuff. It's not always about the new shiny object. They're selling me confidence that we've made the right purchase. And sometimes we even end up saving 30% with that better fit."

"If our network was all Cisco, we'd probably not be doing everything we need to. I trust Intellicom to give me an honest and untarnished perspective about what's best for Five Points Bank. That's why I call them. If they only told me to buy Cisco, I probably wouldn't call as much."

"Bottom line: at the end of the day, they're really serving us. And that makes all the difference."