



## SUCCESS STORY: NEW JERSEY RESOURCES

### BRINGING A NEW ENERGY TO IT INFRASTRUCTURE



When energy utility New Jersey Resources

(NJR) needed to reenergize its internal and customer-facing business applications while keeping user and company data secure, they turned to Aspire Technology Partners.

Aspire, an IT consulting and technology firm, specializes in securing the applications and services that matter most to businesses and their customers. Aspire's proven methodology and deep networking and security expertise enabled them to design, implement and transition NJR to a cutting edge network and security infrastructure that could provide continuous customer service.

#### LOOKING FOR A FLEXIBLE YET STRONG NETWORK FOUNDATION

As a provider of natural gas to thousands of families and businesses in the Mid-Atlantic region, NJR needed a highly available network and security infrastructure whose total cost of ownership was completely optimized, as well as:

- A LAN and WAN network foundation that could support a full suite of business applications and assets.
- A network secure enough to block external and internal threats that would also provide a visible audit trail and meet Sarbanes-Oxley compliance standards.
- A user-, customer- and supplier-friendly solution that is scalable and flexible enough to easily accommodate rapid growth.

- New, fully supported hardware and software with full replacement and update capabilities.
- A redundant network core and wide area design that provides for business continuity.

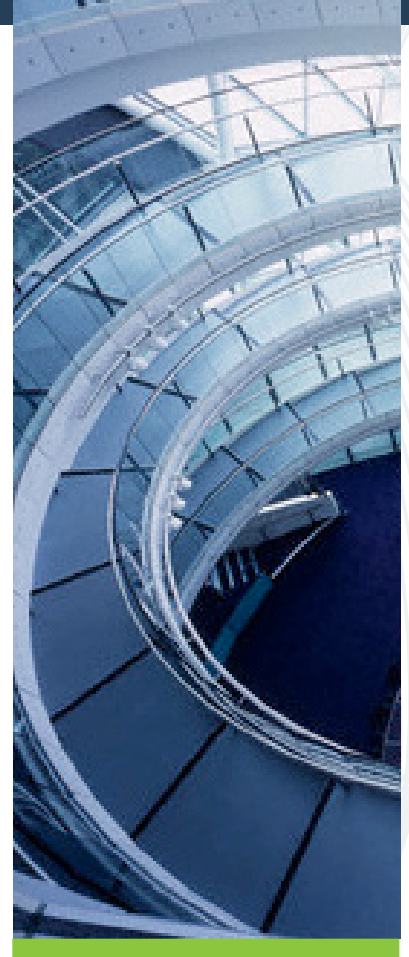
#### DETAILED PLANNING LEADS TO ROBUST SOLUTIONS

Aspire, a Cisco Premier certified partner, used the PPDIIO methodology—Prepare, Plan, Design, Implement, Operate, Optimize—to create and execute NJR's solution, ensuring seamless deployment and minimal risk to the company's vital assets.

Aspire's expert team collaborated with necessary stakeholders to ensure that all of NJR's unique business needs, workflow and technology requirements were met at each step. Next, they began the planning process by defining business, technical and timeline constraints.

Aspire's philosophy of communicating with problem owners directly proved to be the best way to ensure that the solutions solve business challenges and bridge any gaps between the internal IT team and business constituents.

An extensive transition plan minimized risk and mapped out a seamless switch to the new infrastructure. Then, before deploying NJR's new robust and secure solution, Aspire conducted a detailed testing phase that focused on staging and configuration of the new network infrastructure switches and security devices. The in-depth planning and testing phase ensured that—to internal users and to customers—the solution felt more like a low impact upgrade than a complete overhaul of the legacy system.



*"With a proven project methodology and their grasp of our internal processes, Aspire was an ideal partner in the creation of a network that will enable greater customer satisfaction while keeping vital information secure."*

– Kevin Fornino,  
Manager of Information  
Technology,  
New Jersey Resources



## SECURE FOUNDATIONS FOR WEB-BASED CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Aspire team's core competency is securing the business applications and services that matter most to you and your customers. So, when NJR needed new internal and customer facing business applications to keep user and company data secure, they turned to Aspire.

Not unlike more than 70% of utility companies, NJR provides customers with the ability to view energy usage and make payments over the Internet. Aspire recognized that these self-service portals are crucial

to the health of the business, so the solutions had to be flexible and scalable enough to accommodate users and encourage growth while keeping customer and company data secure.

Because these web-based services are designed to extract data from key internal systems and present them to the outside world, it is imperative that they are constructed with a strong, secure foundation.

### ABOUT ASPIRE

Aspire Technology Partners is a provider of secure converged network solutions and services that transform enterprise infrastructures into enablers of business excellence. Aspire delivers cost-effective solutions for wired and wireless networks, the data center and communication endpoints. With a strong emphasis on enterprise security, we deliver a high degree of business value in the form of improved staff productivity and organizational responsiveness, simplified IT management and regulatory compliance.

### LAYERED SECURITY SOLUTIONS FOR MAXIMUM PROTECTION

First, Aspire developed the initial implementation plan for the transition, as well as performed both old and new hardware inventory and testing.

Using Aspire's full arsenal of hardware and software technology, the team was able to implement a solution that addressed all NJR's security and usability needs while allowing for future growth.

But deployment wasn't the end of Aspire's involvement. Execution of a comprehensive knowledge transfer and extensive post deployment support ensures the future success of the solution.

### RESULTS THAT BENEFIT EVERY CUSTOMER

After phase I of the project, NJR realized several benefits, including:

- Business continuity as a result of the infrastructure's redundant cores.
- "Transparent Wall" flexibility that will allow the company to scale with future growth.
- Improved internal reporting and auditing processes that allow for improved compliance.
- Lower operating costs, with savings passed on to customers.

*NJR is already working with Aspire's team to complete additional phases, including the implementation of a secure wireless network that will enable a new generation of communications and service.*