



Gift and card retailer dramatically enhances wireless performance, coverage, and security with sophos.

Established in the late 1930s, Norman's Hallmark is a family-owned and operated card and gift specialty retailer with 54 stores located throughout New Jersey and Pennsylvania. In addition to offering Hallmark-brand products, Norman's retail outlets also offer a diverse array of fashion merchandise, books, games, gourmet foods, and bath and body items.

With a staff of more than 600 employees, Norman's Hallmark is on a fast growth path, continually expanding its operations and opening more retail stores. Recently, the organization decided to expand its central operation and move to a much larger space to house its headquarters office and warehouse.

CUSTOMER-AT-A-GLANCE



Norman's Hallmark
126 Terry Drive Newtown, PA
18940 (215) 579-2600

Industry
Consumer products retailer

Website
normanshallmark.com

Number of Users
More than 600 employees
across 54 locations

Sophos Solutions
Sophos XG Firewall
Sophos Wireless Access Points

'We deployed the Sophos Wireless Access Points following the recommendations from the site survey, and the wireless network is working flawlessly. Coverage, speed, bandwidth, and roaming are excellent, and wireless printing is now fully in place.'

Greg Paladino
CTO
Net2 Technology Group



Challenges

- › Improving in-building wireless connectivity and coverage
- › Ensuring a faster, updated, and more secure wireless experience for remote and mobile employees and guests
- › Simplifying deployment and management of wireless access points
- › Protecting the network against ransomware, malicious traffic, and known and unknown threats
- › Preventing the lateral spread of attacks via infected devices

How does poor wireless connectivity affect productivity and employee morale?

When the big move was underway, Norman's Hallmark was using SonicWall firewall and wireless access points, which fell short of expectations. The organization experienced spotty wireless coverage and connections when users would try to access the corporate network with their mobile devices locally and remotely. For example, regional managers attending monthly meetings at the corporate office were unable to connect their laptops wirelessly. As a result of a poorly functioning wireless network, productivity suffered and employee frustration mounted.

With the previous solution, Norman's Hallmark had to set up two networks—one for internal use and one for guests. But, all too often, vendors and other visitors had trouble connecting to the guest network, so they would be provided with a password for the internal network. This defeated the whole purpose of having a guest network in the first place and exposed the network to potential risk.



'Sophos changed our whole approach to delivering security. The single-pane-of-glass management console expanded our visibility and allows us to efficiently manage all our clients from a central interface.'

Greg Paladino
CTO
Net2 Technology Group

Why does it make sense to do a site survey before implementing a wireless network?

Fortuitously, team members from Norman's Hallmark's trusted technology advisor, Net2 Technology Group, had just attended a webinar on wireless technology where the Sophos wireless site survey was presented. Net2 Technology Group, a Sophos MSP Connect partner, was familiar with the wireless connectivity struggles that Norman's Hallmark was experiencing and worked with Sophos to initiate a site survey.

Net2 Technology Group CTO Gregory Paladino views the site survey as an all-important first step in implementing a wireless network, as it provides a clear picture of the physical environment from a radio frequency (RF) standpoint and from the perspective of business requirements. Net2 Technology Group uploaded Norman's Hallmark floor plans to get a complete visualization of access point placement. The MSP collaborated with Sophos and placed five Sophos Wireless Access Points in the Norman's Hallmark new main office and four in the warehouse to run the test and determine signal strength and coverage.

This survey enabled Net2 Technology Group to design a wireless network for Norman's Hallmark with the right amount of coverage and capacity to allow key applications to perform the way they should. Based on the findings, Net2 Technology Group proposed nine Sophos Wireless Access Points and a Sophos XG Firewall. Deployment of the Sophos Wireless Access Points was fast, involving just a few simple steps.

"We deployed the Sophos Wireless Access Points following the recommendations from the site survey, and the wireless network is working flawlessly. Coverage, speed, bandwidth, and roaming are excellent, and wireless printing is now fully in place. Our client is getting consistent speeds of 30 Mbps across the entire facility," reports Paladino. "Apart from vastly improving the performance of the wireless network, Sophos makes Net2 Technology Group look good and has strengthened our relationship with our client."

How does Sophos XG Firewall complement Sophos Wireless?

Net2 Technology Group manages the access points through the Sophos XG Firewall Control Center, which Paladino describes as “seamless and easy.” Sophos XG Firewall provides visibility into his clients’ network, users, and applications directly, along with on-box reporting. From the Control Center, Paladino and his team can gain insights into risky wireless activity, suspicious traffic, and advanced threats.

When threats are detected, Sophos XG Firewall’s next-generation security technologies help keep Norman’s Hallmark users and guests secure and productive. Integration of deep learning from Sophos Intercept X prevents malware and ransomware from getting on the wireless network. Sophos XG Firewall also relies on deep learning to catch unseen malware lurking in suspicious payloads and stops these threats dead in their tracks. High-performance, real-time intrusion prevention protects the network from known and unknown attacks from viruses, hackers and other online risks. Additionally, if an unhealthy or compromised device tries to access the corporate wireless network, Sophos XG Firewall’s automatic threat response kicks into gear and identifies and isolates it. This helps prevent the lateral spread of threats from infected devices.

Now, Norman’s Hallmark employees can securely and seamlessly connect to the corporate Wi-Fi network – no more dropped connections, dead zones, or sluggish performance to impede productivity.

The successful implementation of the Sophos wireless solution at Norman’s Hallmark has inspired Net2 Technology Group to present a similar model to other clients. The MSP has also been exploring opportunities to incorporate Sophos Synchronized Security into its clients’ wireless networks. Through the Security Heartbeat™, Net2 Technology Group can monitor the health status of any Sophos Central-managed endpoint or mobile device, while having the endpoints and the firewall communicating with each other. If a user’s device is noncompliant, web access is restricted on trusted Wi-Fi networks, but, once health is restored, the user gets full connectivity. Bringing cutting-edge security to their customers is important to Net2 Technology Group, allowing customers like Norman’s Hallmark to stay ahead of the threat landscape.

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Start your free trial of
Sophos Wireless today.