

IoT delivers sweet fleet telematics

- **Business needs** - The company wanted powerful, dependable connectivity for its core location devices.
- **Networking solution** - The AT&T IoT Global SIM delivers outstanding performance to SareKon customers, and AT&T Control Center enables SareKon to easily deploy and manage its connected devices.
- **Business value** - Dependability, visibility, agility
- **Industry focus** - Core location telematics
- **Size** - 4 million connected devices over the past 20 years

About SareKon

SareKon engineers, perfects, and pioneers GPS telematics. Unparalleled expertise with cellular components and networks, hardware design and manufacturing, backend communication and logic, and operational efficiencies reduce costs and give customers the highest performance and peace of mind.

The situation

SareKon needed powerful, reliable, and easy-to-manage IoT connectivity to power its pioneering HelKon core location devices.

Solution

AT&T Global SIM delivers dependable end-to-end connectivity to SareKon's devices. And the cloud-based AT&T Control Center makes it a simple matter for SareKon to manage its HelKon GPS devices.

Superior hardware, outstanding customer care

SareKon has 20 years of experience in pioneering GPS solutions. Sales of more than 4 million devices over two decades and a 99% customer retention rate are a testament to the effectiveness of the company's solutions and the outstanding customer care it delivers.

More than two decades ago, SareKon founders started a business to deliver core location-based services—those services which determine a device's geographic location, altitude, and orientation by using services such as Wi-Fi, GPS, Bluetooth, and cellular hardware to gather data. At the time, the industry itself catered to high-end fleet applications. SareKon founders decided to also focus on the 98% of vehicles that could not justify high GPS costs: sub-prime, new car, powersport, heavy equipment, and numerous other types of vehicles that didn't have standard GPS features during that era.

A legacy of innovation

SareKon founders started with Aircept in 2001 which pioneered GPS technology and cost advancement. After remarkable success, SareKon acquired CalAmp in 2006, which is today one of the leading providers of GPS solutions to the industry.

In 2007, SareKon started building Enfotrace, which became part of the foundation for Spireon in 2011, another leading provider of the GPS industry.

Most recently, reliability issues of other GPS providers led the founders to call on their proven successful track record to launch SareKon GPS, a platform that revolves around the voice of the customer.

A valuable tool for dealerships and consumers

SareKon and its founders, including CEO Ken Wiesner, Chief Hardware Officer Bill Northrup, Chief Sales Officer Reggie Ponsford, and Chief Marketing Officer Sean Graham, have an advanced vision that has evolved over more than two decades. Their expertise in hardware design and manufacturing, knowledge of cellular networks, and development of advanced features for user interface has allowed the company to listen to customers and respond with implementations that meet their needs quickly and effectively.

The company is one of only a few backed with virtually a century of combined leadership experience in telematics with the internet of things (IoT), with the highest performance levels, customer satisfaction, and company success.

"We're top leaders in the market," Wiesner said. "We're dedicated to the foundation of a product that is unbeatable from a performance standpoint. As one of the few entities that design our own hardware from head to toe, we control the whole process. We design the firmware and monitor the performance of our products. By controlling the whole process, in most instances, we have advanced notice of a performance issue that we'll correct before it becomes a customer concern."

In search of a secure network

The superior performance of SareKon's service has helped lenders, used car dealers, and rental car companies reduce potential fraud, protect collateral, and rapidly recover vehicles. Dealerships choose SareKon services for lot protection and to capture additional aftermarket revenue while providing a valuable tool to consumers, who get real-time information on their vehicles' whereabouts.

SaraKon's services help prevent theft, capture driving behavior, and deliver speed and geographical boundary violation alerts the moment they occur. The devices do not have user interfaces, nor do they require general internet access.

The company needed a way to give customers the ability to make real-time requests of their installed HelKon devices. It also needed to enable its servers to communicate with the devices at any time. "For us, this meant the security of a private network," Northrup said.

The company chose AT&T Business to deliver dedicated connectivity to SareKon's core location devices. "It was the right connectivity solution. It was also a solution that our team was extremely comfortable with, based on our prior experience," he noted.

The right technology and infrastructure

AT&T Global SIMs provide worldwide, end-to-end connectivity for the innovative devices. SareKon uses the AT&T Control Center to manage its IoT solutions across the world in real time. The automated, cloud-based platform delivers visibility and agility, putting SareKon in control.

SareKon's founders have been connecting with cellular providers since the late 90's with the start of cellular digital packet data, Wiesner said. "We have engaged with more than 10 different cellular companies in our first 20 years, and hands down AT&T Business gave us the most comfort of all of them."

"The reality is our comfort level with AT&T Business is very high, for technical reasons and confidence reasons as well," Wiesner continued. "We're very comfortable



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Ken Wiesner,
CEO, SareKon

with the soundness of the AT&T network and working with AT&T Business on these types of projects."

Ponsford said AT&T Business's international footprint has made it a simple matter for SareKon to implement its devices around the globe. "International deployment is always a factor when selecting a long-term connectivity partner," he said. "We have already started deployment outside the U.S. borders. AT&T Business has managed our needs well."

For example, AT&T Business easily accommodated a static SIM configuration that other carriers do not easily offer. This configuration maximizes the performance of devices. "AT&T Business has always been ready and willing with the technology and infrastructure to accommodate our needs," Graham said.

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Sean Graham,
CSMO, SareKon

Simple device management

Northrup said the AT&T Control Center simplifies the ordering and management of SIMs for SareKon devices. “The AT&T Control Center lets us monitor and analyze device usage patterns and identify issues,” he said. “Control Center also provides us with access to billing invoices and allows easy interface for device management and communications.”

Wiesner believes AT&T Business has helped to support his company’s growth. “The enhancement to our billing structure to include bulk rates has allowed SareKon to offer greater sales options to our customers as well as help us manage our finances with lower future risk,” he said.

AT&T Business has also enhanced Sarekon’s ability to recruit new clients. “We must commit to meet a prospect’s need for them to become a customer,” Ponsford said. “This requires internal and supplier commitment for each segment. Gaining supplier commitment is crucial to on-boarding a prospect. AT&T Business’s account team has been helpful to our need to turn our opportunity into revenue, thus accelerating our growth.”

Ensured coverage

Like most organizations, SareKon has weathered production challenges over the past few years. “Obviously, our world has become much more complicated with the pandemic, worldwide component shortage, and technical delays due to worker shortages,” Wiesner said.

SareKon counts on the relationships it has built with crucial vendors to weather these storms. “One constant we’ve appreciated is being able to rely on 100% uptime on the AT&T network,” Wiesner said. “Our customers don’t see the behind-the-scenes activity, but the relationship between SareKon and AT&T Business ensures their device performance and sets them up for success.”

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