

Customer Stories:
ATQI

AT&T Business

# Serving up fast fiber (internet) at a restaurant chain

- **Business needs** - Speedy, dependable communications services to support growing restaurant franchise group.
- **Networking solution** - AT&T Business Fiber, DNS Security Advanced, and Office@Hand deliver the communications infrastructure to support 9 geographically diverse locations.
- **Business value** - High reliability, cost savings, and the ability to operate point-of-sale, security, and other vital business functions.
- **Industry focus** - Fast casual dining restaurants
- **Size** - 9 franchises and growing

## About ATQI

ATQI is a multi-unit, multi-concept franchise company based in Topeka, Kansas. The company owns and operates six Firehouse Subs® locations and three Fat Shack® restaurants.

## The situation

ATQI's steady growth stressed the voice and data networks of its locations. Delivering adequate bandwidth to support the restaurants' security, point-of-sale, and other business functions was an ongoing challenge. ATQI needed abundant, affordable connectivity, a range of communications services, and enhanced network security to sustain existing operations and support planned expansion.

## Solution

ATQI chose a range of services from AT&T Business to power its Firehouse Subs and Fat Shack franchises. AT&T Business Fiber delivers some of the fastest internet speeds available today to support the company's operations. AT&T Office@Hand gives ATQI voice, fax, text, and audio and video conferencing that support continued, rapid growth. And AT&T DNS Security Advanced serves as ATQI's first line of cyber defense, protecting against cyberattacks, like malware and ransomware.

## Fast casual dining in the heartland

ATQI is a successful company that manages fast casual dining franchises in Kansas and Missouri. It is owned by Jaimi and Kevin Goetz, a married couple, and brothers Christian and Trevor Smith.

The company owns six Firehouse Subs franchises and three Fat Shack franchises in Kansas and Missouri. "Those were our launching spots, and we're going to do a lot more," said Jaimi Goetz, ATQI Chief Information and Relationship Officer.

> "The people I deal with at AT&T are amazing. They know what they're talking about, and they do what they say they're going to do."
>
> **Jaimi Goetz**
> Chief Information and Relationship Officer, ATQI

Her unique title came about because of her familiarity with computers and her people skills. "I'm pretty handy with technology, and I'm not afraid to ask questions," she said. "As for the relationship officer, I'm sort of a liaison between the partners, employees, and customers." Her partners and employees consider Goetz the glue that binds the organization together.

"My job entails putting out fires, fixing anything that goes down, and holding all the passwords," she said. "Everyone else in the management field is busy with so many other things, and it's just part of my nature to want to do it."

With nine franchises, ATQI may seem like a large business, but Goetz said it's a lean operation.

"We're at the point where we've got all these things that need to be done, but we can't add a lot of corporate employees," she said.

## A saving grace for a growing business

Delivering bandwidth was a chronic difficulty for ATQI franchises. The situation at one location was made worse when Goetz installed a security system that required more bandwidth than the location could supply.

"When you have a constant video stream and multiple third-party vendor delivery services it really draws down the Wi-Fi fast," she said. "We wanted to add a Voice over IP system (VoIP), but there was no way that the Wi-Fi would handle it. In addition, ATQI's two Missouri stores had to turn off their security

systems to have enough bandwidth to process credit card transactions, and the POS system at one location struggled to communicate with the network firewall.

Calls to a few connectivity providers convinced Goetz that there was no solution that was both effective and affordable. "You can't be investing $1,200 a month in each location," she said. "Everybody said they could do it, but that it would cost $25,000 to connect us to fiber. Then AT&T Business said they could help us. They were our saving grace."

AT&T Business was able to help ATQI by providing the connectivity, phone, and security solutions the company required. AT&T Business Fiber gave the company fast internet speeds at an affordable price. The service provides low latency, better performance, and reliability.

"AT&T Business Fiber allows for the POS system to work properly in tandem with our surveillance and security systems," Goetz said. The company now has all the bandwidth it needs to conduct business efficiently.

## Easy ways to stay connected

Goetz recently set out to develop a phone system that could handle increased traffic as the company expanded. She wanted the company to be more responsive to customer calls, but its phone system was not well integrated, since most franchises are designed as a single unit, Goetz said.

"They're not designed as multi-unit operations with respect to communications. For instance, we had no way to transfer a call if a customer meant to call a different location," she said. "Instead of saying, 'I'm sorry, you're going to have to call the other location,' we wanted to be able to transfer the call."



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**Jaimi Goetz**
Chief Information and Relationship Officer, ATQI

Goetz initially chose a local provider for ATQI's new phone system. "It was a very bad experience," she said. "They oversold us and there was no help or support. I finally canceled the service, but they continued to bill us for months."

Her experience with AT&T Business was customer friendly, attentive, and built around ATQI's specific needs. Cloud-based AT&T Office@Hand provides voice, fax, text, and audio and video conferencing to connect locations and enhance productivity. While the deployment is not quite complete at all locations, Goetz is pleased so far. "The training, the resources, and the implementation have been top notch," she said.

AT&T Office@Hand is fully integrated with ATQI's office phones and cellphones. It's incredibly easy to transfer calls, even when a manager is away from the office. ATQI provides managers with AT&T cellphones so they can stay in touch even when they're delivering a catering order or running errands. "Now people don't have to take messages. This sets us up for the speed at which we're growing," she said.

Goetz likes the control that AT&T Business gives her. "I love having the dashboard where I can turn things on and off at will," she said. "It's all in one place. I don't have 18 different logins, and I can do what I need to do."

## Defense against malware

ATQI also counts on AT&T Business for security services. The company's locations have firewall protection to prevent data breaches and other attacks from the outside. Adding AT&T DNS Security Advanced improves security defenses for all ATQI locations. The solution protects against malware that an employee might accidentally download.

Goetz said it's all too easy for a busy general manager to click a link that appears to be from the corporate office and accidentally download a trojan virus. Once that happens, cyber criminals can gain backdoor access to ATQI systems and steal sensitive data.

Cloud-based AT&T DNS Security Advanced uses global threat intelligence that stops attacks early in the kill chain. "It not only protects our business, but it protects our employees from feeling bad when they do foolish things from time to time," she said.

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>
> **Jaimi Goetz**
> Chief Information and Relationship Officer, ATQI

## Confidence in AT&T Business

Goetz appreciates the relationship with her account team from AT&T Business. "The people I deal with at AT&T are amazing," she said. "They know what they're talking about, and they do what they say they're going to do."

ATQI plans to add more locations. And without a doubt, Goetz's plans include AT&T Business as they expand. "We are able to say with complete confidence that so long as AT&T keeps going the way they are with the same level of customer service, we're going to be with them," Goetz said.

"I don't have time to learn something new or to change people when I get something that's good," she said. "I like to keep it, because I need to have the confidence that everything is taken care of in the way that I would want it taken care of. AT&T Business has done a phenomenal job."

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