CASE STUDY

((BANDWIDTH))
COMMANDER
ADVANCED BANDWIDTH CONTROL

Sjoberg's Cable needed to identify the
bandwidth bottlenecks in thier network.

Bandwidth Commander helped them
keep their data flowing.

> I think customer education is a
> major part of managing bandwidth,
> and our subscribers have an overall
> better experience when they are
> aware of the situation and take
> control of their usage by conserving.
>
> **-Nate Stroh**
>
> **Sjoberg Cable**

ZCorum™

MANAGE DATA USE

AS PART OF A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO IMPROVED BANDWIDTH ALLOCATION, SJOBERG USED BANDWIDTH COMMANDER TO NOTIFY THEIR TOP-TALKERS WHEN THEY WERE APPROACHING THEIR USAGE LIMIT.

INTRODUCTION

Sjoberg's Cable, a family owned, Minnesota based cable TV, phone, and internet provider has been the local provider since 1962 and prides themselves on offering high speed internet, cable, and digital services to the residents of Thief River Falls.

Recently Sjoberg's had begun to experience the bandwidth squeeze as they watched their bandwidth usage double from year-to-year and they found that managing their bandwidth appropriation had become increasingly difficult and costly.

THE CHALLENGE

As the explosion in bandwidth greedy applications like OTT TV viewing and online gaming became the norm among their subscribers, Sjoberg's found themselves having to frequently upgrade their equipment in order to keep up with the increasing bandwidth usage. Sjoberg's main focus is to keep their plant running smoothly for their

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>
> **NATE STROH**
> **SJOBERG'S CABLE**

subscribers, and the difficulty of that task grew as the bandwidth usage did. Top talkers were consuming large amounts of bandwidth, typically from video streaming that was occurring during peak hours when the majority of subscribers were also trying to connect.

Another toll was being taken on Sjoberg's in-house staff as they tried to educate their subscribers about bandwidth use before taking stronger action. For two years the cable TV, phone, and internet provider wrote letters to their top talkers, notifying them when they used bandwidth over and above their internet package limits. They offered suggestions for conserving bandwidth and hoped that this would help delay enforcing bandwidth usage limits on their subscribers. During this

time bandwidth use continued to grow, and the number of subscribers regularly going over the bandwidth thresholds had grown from a handful to hundreds. Sjoberg's realized that warning letters were no longer having an impact and decided to look for a solution to help them manage increasing bandwidth use on their network.
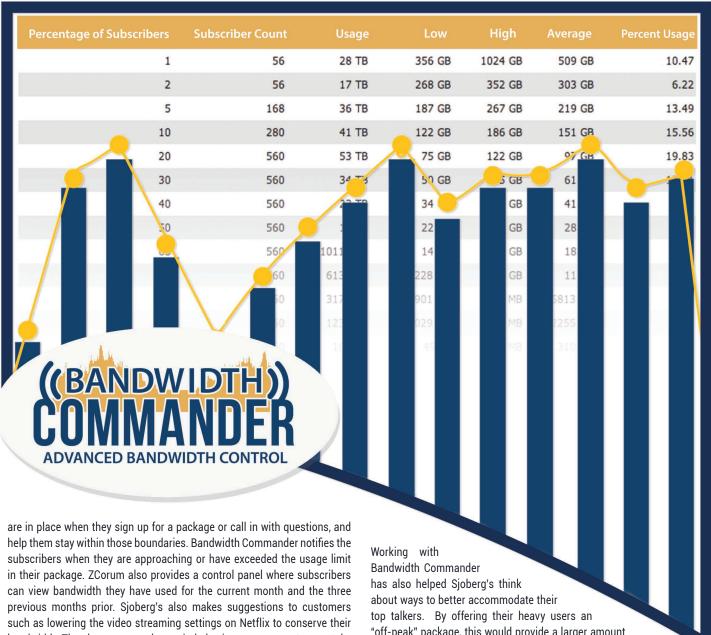
THE SOLUTION

Sjoberg's had been a ZCorum customer for fifteen years using the company's managed services and diagnostics software to control costs and manage their network. It was a natural step to look to ZCorum for a solution to their bandwidth challenges. ZCorum's Bandwidth Commander looks at bandwidth use in real-time. It tracks individual subscriber usage and can enforce bandwidth limits based on set monthly usage quotas, which easily manages the top talkers who consume a majority of the bandwidth. The tool also provides the comprehensive reporting, automated customer notifications and dynamic bandwidth policy management that would help Sjoberg's reclaim control of their bandwidth. Automated customer notifications would mean Sjoberg's staff would no longer need to put time into sending warning letters to their subscribers.

Bandwidth Commander would help control company costs due to a better allocation of bandwidth usage. This would improve the overall customer experience by reducing network congestion during peak hours, and present opportunities for more revenue from subscribers who upgrade to a package with a bandwidth allotment more appropriate for their use.

Because of the features available in Bandwidth Commander and their positive experience working with ZCorum, Sjoberg's decided to implement Bandwidth Commander in their operation.

THE RESULTS

Since implementing Bandwidth Commander, Sjoberg's Cable has been able to delay purchases and upgrades on their equipment by up to a year longer than usual due to more efficient bandwidth use. They continue to educate their customers on the policies and limitations that

Percentage of Subscribers	Subscriber Count	Usage	Low	High	Average	Percent Usage
1	56	28 TB	356 GB	1024 GB	509 GB	10.47
2	56	17 TB	268 GB	352 GB	303 GB	6.22
5	168	36 TB	187 GB	267 GB	219 GB	13.49
10	280	41 TB	122 GB	186 GB	151 GB	15.56
20	560	53 TB	75 GB	122 GB	97 GB	19.83
30	560	34 TB	50 GB		61	
40	560		34		41	
50	560		22		28	
60	560	1011	14		18	
	60	613	228		11	
		317	901		5813	
		123	029		2255	
		1	45		310	

are in place when they sign up for a package or call in with questions, and help them stay within those boundaries. Bandwidth Commander notifies the subscribers when they are approaching or have exceeded the usage limit in their package. ZCorum also provides a control panel where subscribers can view bandwidth they have used for the current month and the three previous months prior. Sjoberg's also makes suggestions to customers such as lowering the video streaming settings on Netflix to conserve their bandwidth. They have seen a change in behavior as some customers take this approach of conservation and budgeting, while others have decided to purchase a package that allows for more bandwidth use, providing Sjoberg's with additional revenue for future bandwidth upgrades.

Working with Bandwidth Commander has also helped Sjoberg's think about ways to better accommodate their top talkers. By offering their heavy users an "off-peak" package, this would provide a larger amount of bandwidth overall, but would be slowed during peak usage hours.

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THE BOTTOM LINE

Sjoberg's Cable was in need of a tool to keep subscriber bandwidth usage in check by enforcing existing bandwidth usage policies. They looked to ZCorum, their long-time partner in broadband, for a managed solution. Sjoberg's implemented Bandwidth Commander and reclaimed control over their bandwidth allocation. The company has seen top talkers using less bandwidth or switching to higher packages. This has led to an increase in revenue, a delayed need for equipment upgrades due to the reduced bandwidth usage, and lower operating costs. By having a way to automatically manage policy enforcement and continually educating their subscribers on bandwidth use, Sjoberg's Cable has been able to reduce network congestion, which has resulted in a better subscriber experience.