

Chimney Oaks Golf Club Case Study

Putting Big-City Technology to Work in a Rural Community



Located 75 miles from Atlanta in Northeast Georgia, Chimney Oaks Golf Club and Residential Development provides country club living in a residential community with a world-class golf course, restaurant, pool and tennis courts. In order to attract a population of upper-middle-class city dwellers seeking a more peaceful lifestyle, Chimney Oaks must offer a level of broadband service that is as exceptional as the rest of its amenities.

Challenge: Incorporate Modern Conveniences and Streamline Operations

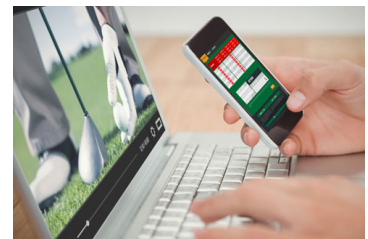
Chimney Oaks is an upscale golfing community that promises potential buyers a cleaner, healthier life in a beautiful country-club setting away from the frenzy of daily life in the city. But midway through the development of this multimillion-dollar

subdivision, management was experiencing operational difficulties due to their sluggish and intermittent 3 Mbps internet service transmitted through copper lines. The challenges of running a busy golf course with unreliable credit card processing and spotty connectivity to online bookings for tee times were becoming increasingly difficult to surmount.

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The outdated infrastructure was becoming a marketing roadblock as well. While more people are abandoning their urban lifestyles in search of simpler lives in more remote areas, inhabitants of metropolitan neighborhoods have become accustomed to reliable, lightning-fast WiFi and refuse to settle for less. In order to compete with developers of similar communities, Chimney Oaks decided it was time for an upgrade.

To entice young professionals, retirees and families to relocate to their peaceful community away from urban and suburban areas and to facilitate smoother operations throughout the country club, Chimney Oaks' developers decided to invest in a fiber-optic infrastructure that would allow for state-of-the-art internet broadband speeds.



“People have top-notch expectations for broadband. We saw it as really critical to get this high level of service so that we didn’t have to make any apologies. We want our facilities and amenities to be as good as you can get anywhere else in the country, and our broadband requirement was based on that.”

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Solution: Cutting-Edge Connectivity

When Kinetic Business by Windstream discovered the developers of Chimney Oaks were considering implementing a high-speed fiber-optic network, they partnered with them to facilitate its deployment. Kinetic Business made one-gigabit connectivity available to every home throughout the residential area of the community and delivered a 50 Mbps dedicated internet circuit to power the pro shop, back office and the common areas of the country club. This level of connectivity provides ample bandwidth for residents working from home

“One major customer service benefit of OfficeSuite UC® is that calls to our pro shop have been set up to simultaneously ring in the back office or anywhere else we might be working. So we never have to miss a call. We can always answer the phone within three rings.”

and families running multiple devices simultaneously. It also allows club staff to seamlessly take payments, book tee times and use a VoIP phone system all while accommodating members who expect full access to their smartphone apps in the clubhouse and at the pool.

The scalability of the new network checked another box on Chimney Oaks’ list of critical requirements. Future growth is key as the community is still under development, with more homes being built and additional amenities for security and course-wide WiFi being planned.

In addition, Kinetic Business replaced the clubhouse’s old analog phone system with OfficeSuite UC, a robust, cloud-based VoIP solution. OfficeSuite UC’s any-place, any-device access has allowed the clubhouse to miss fewer calls and respond faster. This has been a powerful tool in building and maintaining customer relationships.

Future Benefits: Limitless Evolution

As the community enters the third phase of development, there are several strategic enhancements underway. First, the 50 Mbps connectivity has been expanded to the pool area, where web-based security cameras are being installed. To provide even greater security, management is planning to have infrared cameras installed at the subdivision entrances and throughout the golf course. This will enable 24-hour monitoring of anyone entering the community, minimizing any risk of theft and vandalism.

The existing satellite TV dishes are being phased out in favor of internet television throughout the clubhouse areas. “Establishing reliable broadband access was a revenue-neutral decision, as it allows us to increase security and eliminate the expense of satellite TV,” commented Brad Day, COO of Chimney Oaks.

Internet connectivity has been so reliable since the installation that management has moved its corporate office on-site in order to eliminate the lease payment at its previous location. The flexible nature of the fiber-optic network, as well as the VoIP communications system—which is already equipped with such business productivity tools as HD video, audio and web conferencing, real-time presence and company-wide chat—allowed for a fast and seamless transition.

“Connectivity is essential for the success of our development. The first question modern professionals ask is, ‘What’s the internet like?’ Being able to offer one-gig connectivity in a rural area 75 miles outside of Atlanta has been a game changer for us.”