

Channels

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Running a restaurant is a complicated business. Just ask Joe Terrell, franchise owner of a Chicago area Denny's Restaurant. Not only does Terrell need to think about the food and service at his restaurant, but he also needs to manage customer flow, track credit card transactions, provide employee training, and conduct back-office administration.

Before he signed up for HughesNet™, Terrell spent long hours entering data into his restaurant's system each time the Denny's corporate office updated its extensive menu—and then countless more hours correcting data entry mistakes. Just when he thought his work was complete, more updates would arrive and the tedious task was repeated.

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HUGHES QuickTakes

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Executive Corner

Hughes Around the World: A Truly Global Company

Bahram Pourmand,
Executive Vice President



Hughes has a long history in the international marketplace. In fact, our first customers were international when we were

a start-up called DCC (Digital Communications Corp.) in the early 1970's. Today we have customers in 119 countries, a credit to our ability to diversify our products and services to meet the changing needs of our global market.

Two factors are key to achieving international success—opportunity and capability. Most countries now recognize the importance of broadband as a basic requirement for economic growth, and are broadening services to their citizens through government-subsidized projects. This includes expanding high-quality education to isolated regions, providing telephony to rural areas, and connecting government offices via video conferencing and voice services. This is generating tremendous opportunities for Hughes. Satellite technology is extremely important in countries with a limited terrestrial infrastructure, while the rise of IP-based applications, particularly video-based services, is another impetus to the adoption of satellite networking.

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Denny's Grand Slam Service

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Streamlined Operations

Menu updating is just one of the challenges Terrell eliminated when he selected a HughesNet managed broadband service as the central part of a Denny's strategic technology package designed to upgrade and streamline business operations. In addition to the HughesNet managed service, the package comprises technology enhancements from other vendors, including point-of-sale registers and related software, terminals for placing and managing orders, labor scheduling software, and a back-office system that runs accounting functions.

The HughesNet managed service delivers a seamless broadband network across corporate and franchise stores. It provides the most efficient and cost-effective technology—whether satellite or DSL—at each Denny's site, enabling affordable, secure, managed networks.

Terrell is among the first of more than 300 Denny's franchise owners to take advantage of the package, which has already enhanced his restaurant business significantly through increased productivity, reduced expenses, and higher-quality customer service.

"I strongly encourage everyone to adopt this package," said Terrell. "The most immediate benefit came from the menu downloads. With the HughesNet service, updating is done automatically, eliminating hours of manual data entry and subsequent pricing errors. When I updated my menu last month, it took all of 15 seconds."

Better Guest Services

Denny's owners and managers aren't the only ones benefiting from the HughesNet service. Customers are also reaping the advantages. Terrell's franchise used dial-up service before installing the HughesNet service. "Now we are saving at least one minute per customer credit transaction," Terrell explained. "Processing of cards is almost instantaneous. We've also experienced fewer dropped transactions, and debit card payments



Denny's Franchise Owner Joe Terrell

are processed more easily with the HughesNet service."

With his old system, Terrell's debit card customers were automatically charged an extra 20 percent due to a system glitch that prevented cashiers from running debit cards twice to account for tips. Because banks held the extra charge for several days before releasing the funds, Terrell occasionally heard customer complaints. "Now I can process the cards once with no problems," said Terrell. "I haven't had a single customer complaint since installing the system." As an added bonus,

Terrell stands to save over \$3,000 a year by eliminating the costs associated with his old dial-up transactions.

Employee Training

Denny's is also leveraging the HughesNet managed service by delivering content for staff training over the network, and collecting and centrally recording results of tests taken in the stores. Employees use training modules to learn everything from entering orders, to cashing out customers, to tracking guest counts. When the system is in training mode, new employees can place orders, experiment on the register, and even

make mistakes without impacting restaurant operations. "The e-training Denny's is providing is moving us light years ahead in training our employees," said Terrell. "Once they reach a certain level of capability, we can see that they are ready to go out on the floor and do their jobs."

Return on Investment

"The HughesNet managed service is ideal for multi-site operations like Denny's," said Ken Cohen, assistant vice president of marketing, North America, at Hughes. "Our fully managed and field-proven service means restaurant owners and managers can rely on Hughes for day-to-day management of their networks, and focus instead on store operations and delivering higher-quality customer service. Joe's experience demonstrates that even for single store operations, a professional, managed service is well justified over a consumer-grade service."

Terrell believes he's received a solid return on his investment. "The HughesNet service has greatly enhanced our business operations," he said. "It frees me up and allows me to spend more time directing my staff and making sure customers are getting the high-quality service they deserve. The advantages have been well worth the investment and the opportunities for the future are even more exciting." Now that's a Grand Slam. ■

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— Joe Terrell, Denny's**