

# Opening Lines of Communication

## Advanced Network Services LLC

*Produced by Sean Barr & Written by Molly Cohen*

Advanced Network Services LLC (ANS) has fluctuated with the technology industry since its founding in 1991 as part of TAG, a structured cabling company in New York state. Six years later, the technology boom propelled ANS to form an Albany, N.Y., central office installing equipment for Fujitsu, ADC, Nortell and similar companies. In 1997, those companies asked ANS to supply engineering services, allowing the company to do more turnkey projects. With the addition of engineering, ANS saw business booming, and Paul Fettuccia became the new ANS engineering director in

1999 to help steer the ship to profits. “We took the company from about \$4 million up through about \$40 million in about 2001,” Fettuccia remembers.

However, 2001 brought the telecom bust, and as companies pulled out of projects ANS dropped to \$8 million revenue, and the company shrunk with it. For two years ANS hung tight, until 2003 when the company got back on the growth path to where it is today making about \$30 million thanks to structured growth into diverse markets.

### Diversifying Services

During the ANS comeback journey the company added a couple different product sets: general construction services for data centers, general construction for corporate offices, DC power services, structured cabling and tower services. “Most of the companies we’ve competed against historically have not really jumped into the building construction piece,” says Fettuccia. “Some have gotten into the tower services, but none into the construction world.”

ANS offers its distinctive services anywhere “east of the Mississippi River and north of the Virginia state line,” according to Fettuccia. The company’s workforce is distributed throughout that area, so personnel use a virtual application to work from home. Although they might be spread out, ANS has 125 full-time employees. The company also uses a myriad of subcontracted labor to assist on bigger jobs. For additional labor, ANS uses Ray’s Solutions and Technical Staffing, a company that falls under the ANS umbrella. For construction services, ANS subcontracts all the masonry, sheet rockers and electrical plumbing.

Managing these subcontractors is starting to become more important for the business, especially since ANS has spent the last two years getting into different vendors and becoming more of a general contractor organization. “What we do on a general contracting model is we self-perform as much as we can in-house – like steel work, cabling and power – while all the other pieces we manage,” explains Fettuccia.



## Analyzing High-Quality Work

Using these subcontractors, ANS completed several interesting projects. On the networking side, ANS built an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) network for New York State Power Authority, which had nine locations throughout the state. “We designed the network, implemented the network, and then did long-term maintenance and troubleshooting with a one-hour response time,” Fettuccia shares.

But the project that launched ANS into the construction side of the business was a fairly complex job. A single customer had ANS putting in a 10,000 square foot edition and updating its air conditioning and electrical entrance facility from 1,800 amps up to 4,500 amps, adding a new 1.5 megawatt generator, plus installing a new control system, fire suppression and upgraded HVAC for the whole building. That project started in 2008 and took about a year to complete.

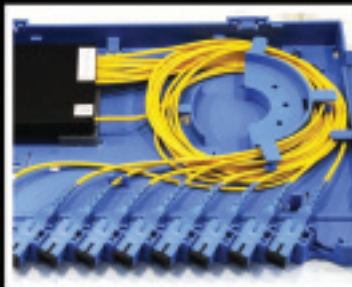
Fettuccia is also pleased with the power projects the company has been involved with, specifically in New York’s Adirondack region. This project included water tanks and some 911 towers for Saratoga County. “We also have a

contract with New York state doing structured cabling,” Fettuccia adds.

After completing projects, Fettuccia uses several indicators to gauge ANS performance. He starts by analyzing gross profit, net profit and revenue levels as key financial indicators. Next, Fettuccia uses net promoter score to measure customer loyalty and reviews the quarterly quality reviews of the company’s larger clients, like Verizon Wireless and AT&T, to benchmark the company’s performance. Lastly, ANS distributes 12-point employee surveys to see how the employees are feeling about the company’s performance. “We want to know what customers think about us, what our employees think about us, and financially how we’re doing; those are the three focus areas,” Fettuccia explains.

With these key performance indicators, Fettuccia stays conscientious in order to maintain large enough work volume for his employees. “This is a word-of-mouth industry, if you’re not performing, you’re not working,” Fettuccia summarizes.

And to not be actively courting work in this economy is not acceptable. Fettuccia feels good about what’s occurring in his industry, however, in regards to the economic outlook. “I



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think from a country perspective, we're not out of the woods yet, there are still issues that need to be solved. For our industry sector, though, there are a lot of investments going into the communications network infrastructure, cellular and landline based. So this sector is in a good place."

Based on Fettuccia's view of the economy and the company's ability to diversify its services to meet customer needs, Advanced Network Services seems to have all the pieces necessarily to continue growing and expanding its service region across the United States. ■

It is an honor and privilege to be considered a valued partner to ANS and to be a part of their continued success. We congratulate you on your many accomplishments and this well-deserved recognition.

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