

Fabric and Crafts Retailer Hancock Fabrics Enhances Customer Shopping Experience and Security with EarthLink Comprehensive Managed Network and Security Solution
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Adding Secure WiFi™ for in-store convenience and advanced analytics

ATLANTA, Dec. 10, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- EarthLink Holdings Corp. (NASDAQ: ELNK), a leading managed network and cloud solutions provider for multi-location businesses, today announced that Mississippi-based [Hancock Fabrics](#), operating 262 retail stores in 37 states, recently selected EarthLink to simplify infrastructure operations via a comprehensive, secure managed network solution. Once implemented throughout all locations, Hancock Fabrics will rely on its private EarthLink MPLS network to run in-store applications including point-of-sale, inventory management and employee communications and training. EarthLink's [Hosted Voice](#) solution will handle voice traffic, delivering a fully-featured hosted PBX system without the cost to purchase and maintain on-premise equipment, while their [network-based firewall](#) will protect the network and deliver reporting and analytics. In addition, Hancock Fabrics will deploy [EarthLink Secure WiFi™](#) to all locations to further enhance their customer shopping experience with a more secure wireless network for social media engagement and valuable business intelligence analytics.

Hancock Fabrics selected EarthLink based on satisfaction of multiple factors including network reliability, security, and the opportunity to reduce credit card processing costs with EarthLink's [MPLS Direct Connect service](#) to their payment processor. As a result, the company will reduce transaction times to as little as two seconds and cut transaction fees using MPLS Direct Connect services to route credit card transactions directly from the point-of-sale over the MPLS network to payment processors.

Hancock Fabrics also will use EarthLink's [PCI Compliance Solutions](#) to provide additional financial protection from potential data breaches, and to help them achieve and maintain PCI compliance including employee training, security policies, record-keeping, and quarterly vulnerability scans.

"When Hancock Fabrics assessed providers, EarthLink won the business on several fronts, but primarily due to the outstanding relationship and confidence we built with the local account team," said James Hayes, Divisional Vice President of IT, Hancock Fabrics. "While the cost-savings with EarthLink is important to our bottom line, it's their keen understanding of retail dynamics that won our business. This is a true partnership and I consider them a part of my IT staff."

Hayes estimates that EarthLink's multi-faceted solution will save Hancock Fabrics approximately 20 percent over their previous plan even though it delivers more robust functionality.

Commenting on Hancock Fabrics' new EarthLink solution, Rick Froehlich, EarthLink Executive Vice President, Products and Consumer said, "Hancock Fabrics has a vision of how technology can create more dynamic customer interactions, and EarthLink is very pleased to work with them to make it a reality. Their more secure WiFi network will enable everything from better wireless intrusion protection and social analytics to personalized, opt-in marketing programs and PCI compliance. With EarthLink managing their network infrastructure and connectivity for a fluid, secure and enhanced shopping experience, their IT team can focus on proactive initiatives that add value to the business and positively impact their bottom line."

About EarthLink

EarthLink (EarthLink Holdings Corp., [NASDAQ: ELNK](#)) provides managed network, security and cloud solutions for multi-location businesses. We help thousands of specialty retailers, restaurants, financial institutions, healthcare providers, professional service firms and local governments deliver a reliable and engaging customer experience in their stores and branch offices. We do so by building and managing [MPLS WAN networks](#), by providing virtualized infrastructure, [security](#), [hosted voice](#), [secure WiFi](#) and [compliance solutions](#), and by offering exceptional customer care. We operate a nationwide network spanning more than 28,000 fiber route miles, with 90 metro fiber rings and secure data centers that provide ubiquitous data and voice IP service coverage. Our EarthLink Carrier® division sells facilities-based wholesale telecommunications to other providers and our award-winning Internet services connect hundreds of thousands of residential customers across the U.S. For more, visit www.earthlink.com and follow [@earthlink](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Google+](#).

About Hancock Fabrics

Founded in 1957, Hancock Fabrics is committed to nurturing consumers' creativity. We are the inspirational authority in fabric and sewing with a complete selection of fashion and home decorating textiles, crafts, sewing accessories, needlecraft supplies and sewing machines. Hancock Fabrics currently operates 262 retail stores in 37 states, along with the Internet store, www.HancockFabrics.com.

To view the original version on PR Newswire, visit: <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/fabric-and-crafts-retailer-hancock-fabrics-enhances-customer-shopping-experience-and-security-with-earthlink-comprehensive-managed-network-and-security-solution-300006825.html>

SOURCE EarthLink Holdings Corp.

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