

Top Company 2014: Telecom

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Winner: ViaWest

Nora Caley



Telecom winner: ViaWest ([Watch a video about ViaWest.](#))

viawest.com

Information technology services have become more complex, and that's good news for ViaWest, says Nancy Phillips, CEO of the colocation, managed services and cloud services provider.

"The last couple of years have been outstanding for ViaWest," says Phillips, who is also co-founder of the Greenwood Village-based company. "We have seen high-teens growth in revenue and EBITDA and new customer acquisition."

ViaWest also opened three new data centers, bringing its total to 27. The newest centers are firsts in Minneapolis and Phoenix, and the fifth in Denver. Features include high density wattage, raised flooring, security cameras and an energy-efficient cooling system.

The facilities also have 24/7 on-site engineers and service staff to help maintain uptime. Customer service is as important as the technology when it comes to protecting clients' data.

"We have an exceptional work force," Phillips says. "We like to talk about technology and providing great products and services, but what resonates with customers is having a delightful experience. We try to make IT easy and worry free."

The industry has acknowledged ViaWest's success in this goal. Canadian communications company Shaw Communications Inc. announced in July its purchase of ViaWest Inc. for \$1.2 billion. Shaw operates data centers in Calgary and intends to use ViaWest's capabilities to bundle its offerings, win customers and boost revenues. The company plans to continue ViaWest's operations and management from its Denver base, leaving it as a stand-alone entity. Earlier this year the company was recognized in the annual CRN Data Center 100 list of technology vendors that support and protect data center services. One of the keys to ViaWest's success, Phillips says, is the company offers hybrid services, multiple platforms to solve various technology issues.

"The fact that ViaWest provides optionality and flexibility is resonating with many leaders," she says. "The degree of complexity, the speed at which things happen, security concerns, uptime, compliance, all these things are sitting on the IT person's desk."

Less complex are ViaWest's efforts to help the community, a goal that Phillips says has been a pillar of the company since its launch in 1999. Employees are encouraged to volunteer in building projects with Habitat for Humanity, for example, and last year employees volunteered with the American Red Cross to help after the floods in Boulder. This year ViaWest launched a program in which each employee can take a day off to do volunteer work for a nonprofit of his or her choice.

"Some of that is the hardest work you will do," Phillips says. She serves on the board of directors of the National Center for Women and Information Technology (NCWIT), a coalition of companies, schools and government agencies working to get more girls and women into computing and technology roles.

Telecom finalists:

tw telecom

Littleton

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tw telecom is a leading provider of managed services including business ethernet, and converged IP VPN solutions for enterprises and large organizations across the U.S. and their global locations. tw telecom competes successfully against the largest telecommunications companies in the world. It is the top-ranked competitive provider of Business Ethernet in the U.S., according to industry analyst firm Vertical Systems Group, and operates one of the 10 most interconnected IP backbones in the world. The publicly traded company (TWTC) announced on June 16 it will be acquired by Broomfield-based Level 3 Communications (LVL3) in a stock-and-cash transaction expected to close in the fourth quarter.

Zayo Group

Boulder

Zayo.com

Zayo Group provides comprehensive bandwidth infrastructure services in more than 300 markets throughout the U.S. and Europe. The company delivers a full suite of lit services and dark fiber products to wireline and wireless customers, data centers, Web content providers, high-bandwidth enterprises and government agencies across its 77,000–route-mile network. Zayo has gained a competitive advantage in the telecommunications industry by pioneering and committing to its bandwidth infrastructure business model, further strengthening and expanding its network. The company also offers 27 carrier-neutral colocation facilities across the U.S. Zayo Group filed with U.S. regulators on July 2 to raise up to \$100 million in an initial public offering.

Nora Caley is a freelance writer specializing in business and food topics.

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