

Producer's Gin

Producer's Gin Keeps on Ginning with HughesNet Business Internet Service



High speeds and always-on connectivity have helped this regional cotton gin produce more than 30,000 bales of cotton per year.

“It was very time consuming to hand write or type each receipt and then have to mail it to the new owner. Plus, we ran the risk of having the record lost in the mail.”

As a company that processes and sells cotton, Theodore, Alabama-based Producer's Gin Co. relies on regular electronic communication with the USDA and the transmission of electronic warehouse receipts—two tasks that proved to be almost impossible for a company using a dial-up Internet connection.

To rectify its slow connection speeds and avoid any fines from the USDA, Producer's Gin decided to upgrade its service to satellite broadband from Hughes. Producer's Gin selected HughesNet® Business Internet service to ensure that its growing business would have consistent, high-quality connectivity and enterprise-grade equipment—despite being beyond the reach of cable or DSL.

The Gin Gets Going

In 1994, a group of enterprising Alabama cotton farmers who were tired of traveling long distances to get their harvest processed, hatched the plans for Producer's Gin. The nine original owners then opened their own local gin in 1995, and keeping with tradition did all their business by hand—both in the field *and* in the back office.

Back then, each time a bale of cotton was ginned and produced, it was given a number and paper receipt to represent the gin's ownership. Once the bale was sold, the receipt was sent to the customer using the U.S. Postal Service or a private mailing service.

Georgi Starr, Producer's Gin office manager, notes that “not only was it unnecessarily time consuming to hand write or type each receipt, but every day we ran the risk of having the record lost in the mail. Since the receipts are treated like real money, we couldn't afford to have them misplaced.” To solve some of their record keeping problems, Producer's Gin finally went electronic in 2001.

Dialing Off, Not Up

Since Producer's Gin is in a rural part of the state without access to DSL or cable, they initially settled for a dial-up Internet connection to transmit receipts electronically. But trying to do business over a phone line with speeds of only about 12 kbps proved impossible.



HughesNet Business Internet service offers flexible access plans to suit any size business, with download speeds of up to 5 Mbps, the fastest available in North America, and including bandwidth-on-demand options. Implement secure, private networks—for as few or as many locations as your business needs. All from Hughes, the industry leader in satellite broadband—redefining the network with enterprise-grade private networking solutions that are easy to implement and can grow with a small business of any size.

Starr got tired of waiting to download and upload and knew a change had to be made. "On dial-up, it would regularly take us three days to transmit a receipt and the file transfer would usually end up timing-out. So not only did we tie up our phone line, but we risked getting written up and fined by the USDA if we couldn't transmit properly."

She continued, "Our speeds were so slow after Hurricane Katrina that to get work done, I actually had to put everything on a disk and drive to the house of a friend who had DSL. We were even issued a warning by the USDA because of late transmissions. That's when I realized we needed a change if we wanted to stay in business."

Getting Up to Speed

Since Producer's Gin is located beyond the reach of cable and DSL, Starr researched other options for connectivity that would fit within their budget and give them the speed they needed. She found a solution in broadband satellite Internet. The first provider she went with, however, made life harder, not easier.

"Our first experience with satellite Internet was all about being on the phone with their customer service department. Our connection was slow, we had countless outages, and everyone here was getting frustrated with paying for something that simply wasn't working," said Starr.

So she decided to look into HughesNet after hearing about the high-quality service from a local farmer. Starr spent three months researching HughesNet and in June 2008 purchased HughesNet Business Internet service. Starr was impressed with the proven success of Hughes and the wide range of customers from Fortune 500 companies to consumers/small businesses.

About Hughes

Hughes Network Systems, LLC (HUGHES) is the global leader in providing broadband satellite networks and services for large enterprises, governments, small businesses, and consumers. HughesNet encompasses all broadband solutions and managed services from Hughes, bridging the best of satellite and terrestrial technologies. Its broadband satellite products are based on global standards approved by the TIA, ETSI, and ITU standards organizations, including IPoS/DVB-S2, RSM-A, and GMR-1. To date, Hughes has shipped more than 1.9 million systems to customers in over 100 countries. Headquartered outside Washington, D.C., in Germantown, Maryland, USA, Hughes maintains sales and support offices worldwide. Hughes is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hughes Communications, Inc. (NASDAQ: HUGH).



Better Business, More Bales

Today, Starr can process an electronic warehouse receipt (EWR) in three seconds instead of three days. That's a good thing because Producer's Gin, as a medium-sized production facility, now processes more than 30,000 bales per year, drawing in freshly-picked cotton from farms as far away as 150 miles.

"Without HughesNet satellite broadband, we simply wouldn't be in business," said Starr.

**For additional information about HughesNet consumer and small business services,
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