

**Industry**

Banking

**Locations**Ten locations in  
MI, SC, PA, CT and IL**Founded**

1937

**By the Numbers**More than \$170 million in  
assets and over 17,000  
members nationwide**Cool Fact**

PARDA's first till was a cigar box

**Website**[www.parda.com](http://www.parda.com)**Ecessa Product**WANworX<sup>TM</sup>

**"The Ecessa solution was recommended to us. I was skeptical. I've been managing IT for over 20 years and there's usually an element that isn't true. Ecessa proved they could deliver on their promises."**

*Anthony Steffens,  
Chief Information  
Officer at PARDA*

October 2018

Case Study

## PARDA Federal Credit Union

### The Company

PARDA Federal Credit Union understands that best-in-class customer service reinforces member loyalty. That is why, since 1937, PARDA has capitalized on leading edge technologies to enhance its services. Today, PARDA enables members to interact with their credit union like never before, using the latest financial technologies with secure, resilient connectivity.

### The Challenge

To achieve that, Anthony Steffens, Chief Information Officer at PARDA, needed to upgrade the organization's network to take advantage of advanced software-defined wide area network (SD-WAN) functionality. "Our old MPLS was very slow and very expensive," said Steffens. "The performance was terrible, with high latency."

PARDA's branch locations depend on connectivity to the member solution center in Auburn Hills, Michigan, for virtual desktop connections and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) calling. High latency creates enormous problems for those types of real-time applications, resulting in dropped calls and slow application response times.

"I was aware of SD-WAN and wanted to deploy a full mesh network among our locations," said Steffens. "The Ecessa solution was recommended to us. But I was skeptical. I've been managing IT for over 20 years and there's usually an element that isn't true."

### The Solution

Steffens talked to the Ecessa sales and engineering teams to find out what the solution would and would not do. Steffens continued, "They took me through a good, solid demo showing exactly how it worked. I like that the web interface is not overly complicated. And they explained the product roadmap. I appreciate that level of transparency, as well as Ecessa's commitment to advancing technology."



Steffens filled out pre-configuration worksheets, which included all the information needed to configure and deploy the units. Based on the worksheets and in collaboration with Steffens, Ecessa's engineers created a plan for deployment that included network diagrams, configuration files and a schedule. "We had good, quick, intelligent conversations with Ecessa," said Steffens. "Based on that, installing the units was straightforward."

Ecessa helped Steffens deploy the first two sites. Because of the initial planning and training work PARDA did with Ecessa, they were able to figure out the remaining deployments on their own.

PARDA uses their Ecessa SD-WAN products primarily for failover and to proactively prevent congestion. Steffens said so far they've been pleased. PARDA's network is always optimized with granular traffic shaping and prioritization, and there are more features the company plans to implement. Calls no longer drop and applications are always accessible for staff and members.

Another benefit of switching to SD-WAN with Ecessa is cost savings. PARDA continues to use a next generation firewall at headquarters, but has eliminated that expense at its branches, saving thousands of dollars per year. Instead, they use Ecessa's built-in firewall at the edge for guest wi-fi.

Even greater cost savings are expected once the MPLS contracts expire in 2019. "Some of our offnet MPLS connections cost as much as \$800 a month per T1." Until then, they will use a combination of MPLS and broadband in their SD-WAN network. "Ecessa gives me the flexibility to cut out the MPLS at any time and not worry about it. I couldn't do that before Ecessa."

Said Steffens, "I would recommend Ecessa to other credit unions because it works. It simply works."