# A Mako Networks Case Study - Return on Investment

*This scenario illustrates why implementing a Mako solution makes sense for a franchise business.*

The franchise business model is a proven winner. With an attractive, established business others can buy into, a strong brand, and efficient management, the only limit of a franchise's success is its ability to deploy new locations and expand into new geographies.

While expansion is surely a sign of success, one of the other keys is uniformity across locations. That way, customers know what to expect every time they visit a franchise business, whether that's a burger that tastes the same across town as it does across the country, or a quality standard of service customers can depend on. But consistency benefits management as well; the more consistent the locations, the easier they are to manage and operate. That's particularly true for the systems that the overall franchise runs on, such as their Information Technology (IT) systems.

Let's take a look at how a typical large-scale franchise restaurant business might set up its IT system:



**Individual Site**
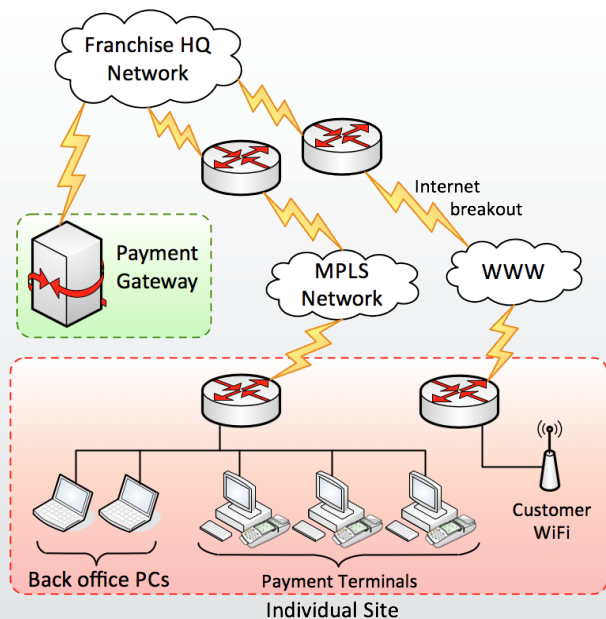
- Three payment terminals out front
- Two back office PCs for accounting, inventory and ordering
- A WiFi access point providing customer Internet access
- A router connecting the payment terminals and back office PCs to a Multi-Protocol Label Switched (MPLS) network
- A second router connecting the restaurant WiFi access point to the Internet

While this setup can work for a franchise chain with a moderate degree of success, there are some drawbacks worth considering. Using a MPLS network keeps the computer network separated from the wider Internet, increasing privacy and keeping sensitive

traffic away from potential security threats and intrusions. But because of the way data is exchanged over the MPLS network, information is typically not encrypted, which has serious implications for sensitive data like credit card details.

The WiFi Internet connection is run wholly independent of the restaurant connection, and can be difficult to manage and administer. There's likely little control over what sites are visited, what can be downloaded, or how long a connection is permitted. That WiFi connection costs the franchise money, so it's logical to get control and manage or reduce those costs.

If the restaurant network requires any technical support, the telecommunications company will have to be contacted and may need to send a technician for a site visit to troubleshoot and manage any changes to the sensitive MPLS connection. It's not friendly to the nontechnical users at the store locations, and could leave a store crippled if even a relatively simple problem should arise.

Moreover, the MPLS network comes with a significant monthly cost for each location. If a franchise expands exponentially, so will the costs to maintain that MPLS network connection. The MPLS network is constrained by geography; each site needs to be within reach of the MPLS network provider's service. That means that if it's provided by the local telecommunications company, it may prevent the franchise from expanding overseas.

There's an alternative way of building this network to incorporate the same functionality, while addressing some of the high cost and technical issues associated with MPLS solutions.
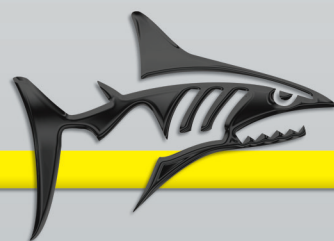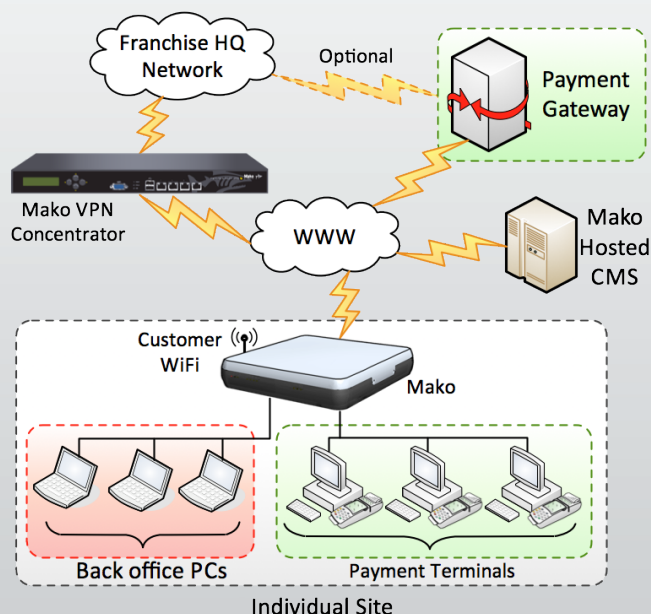


**Individual Site**

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Using a Mako Networks system, all the site's devices can be connected through a single unit, connected directly to the Internet, that's easier, faster, and cheaper to administer.

The payment terminals and back office PCs can connect to head office through a single device that also provides WiFi Internet access to restaurant guests, all while maintaining a secure network that meets new obligations from the credit card companies known as the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS). Mako provides complete visibility and control of network traffic and activity, ensuring that use is limited to a predetermined set of rules or criteria.

Rather than connect back to the head office through the MPLS network, the Mako system connects via the broader Internet and a Virtual Private Network concentrator. Since Internet access is available almost everywhere, this option also addresses the geographical obstacles of the MPLS network solution.

Mako units are administered over the Internet through a Central Management System, so network configurations and settings can be remotely adjusted from anywhere. This means that if a technical issue should arise, it can be dealt with remotely without the need for an on-site technician. Mako network appliances are plug-and-play, so non-technical staff can connect and set up the basic functionality without the need for a PCI DSS-certified technician.

Mako Networks products and services work with any Internet Service Provider, making for a truly flexible system.

For franchise businesses that quickly expand, this means that the network is easily scalable; simply by plugging in a Mako unit they're able to bring new locations onto the corporate network and manage all configuration from one central location, providing global reach and limitless possibilities for growth.

Without the MPLS network, monthly network costs are substantially reduced and overall operations are streamlined, all while meeting the stringent new PCI DSS. For a franchise, or any business managing interactions across a large number of smaller sites, the business case is clear.

## What is PCI DSS?

In 2006, the five major credit card companies – American Express, Discover Financial Services, JCB International, MasterCard Worldwide, and Visa Inc. – created the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS) to reduce the risk of credit card fraud and protect cardholder data.

These standards are a set of guidelines for businesses to make sure there are basic security steps in place to protect credit card information. While the PCI DSS can't prevent all card fraud from taking place, these standards can help substantially reduce the chances of card information falling into the wrong hands.

The standards apply to all merchants and organisations that store, process or transmit cardholder data, and also include specific requirements for any software or equipment used in the card transaction process.

Simply stated, if a business accepts or processes payment cards, it will have to address the PCI DSS in some way.

The PCI DSS consist of 12 requirements that ensure cardholder data is protected at all times, from start to finish in any transaction. But compliance is more than a simple checklist, so these criteria require regular check ups to make sure that cardholder information is always protected.

Depending on how a business is set up, meeting all of the PCI DSS requirements can be a lengthy and rigourous process. Mako Networks helps businesses reduce the scope of PCI DSS and simplify the compliance process for businesses of all sizes.

## Contact information

For more information on how a Mako Networks solution can simplify your business, contact us today:

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**Mako**
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