More Than a Vendor: The Decade-Long Partnership of Atlantic Bay Mortgage and INW Solutions

How collaborative engineering and Cisco Meraki standardization transformed a distributed network into a high-performance engine for growth.

Executive Summary

Atlantic Bay Mortgage Group (ABMG) faced significant performance bottlenecks as its national footprint expanded. By transitioning from a centralized, tunneled network to a standardized Cisco Meraki architecture designed by INW Solutions (INW), ABMG achieved a full-scale deployment in just four months. Today, the partnership spans over a decade, rooted in technical excellence and a shared commitment to long-term enablement.

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>
> INW helped us get started with Cisco Meraki over 10 years ago and has been a trusted partner and friend ever since. We love working with them and look forward to many more years together.
>
> —*Jason Phillips, Head of IT,*
> *Atlantic Bay Mortgage Group*

The Challenge: Performance Bottlenecks & Scalability Gaps

As ABMG grew, its legacy network architecture became a liability. All branch traffic was fully tunneled back through the Virginia Beach headquarters, creating severe performance slowdowns for both remote branches and the home office.

Key pain points included:

- **Connectivity Issues**: Persistent performance drops and connectivity issues across all branch locations.
- **Scalability Barriers**: A lack of standardized designs made opening new offices complex and risked 'one-off' configurations that would limit future growth.
- **Audit & Compliance Risks**: Early challenges in reporting accurate firmware versions for regulatory audits, as the platform did not yet report these clearly.

The Solution: A Future-Ready Meraki Framework

INW moved beyond a simple hardware sale, acting as a collaborative architectural guide. We recommended a $200,000 investment in Cisco Meraki equipment, specifically sized for each branch location.

Our Architectural Approach

1 **Split-Tunnel Implementation**

We designed a split-tunnel solution to improve speed and reliability, allowing branch traffic to flow efficiently without overloading HQ.

2 **Meraki Dashboard Standardization**

Established unified configuration templates and equipment standards to ensure every new site is identical, repeatable, and easy to manage.

3 **Operational Enablement**

Instead of a "black-box" implementation, we focused on knowledge transfer, providing as-built documentation and configuration standards so ABMG's team could manage and extend the network independently.

4 **Cisco Development Collaboration**

When ABMG faced audit challenges, we connected them directly with Cisco's development team. This collaboration led to firmware reporting becoming a standard Meraki feature, ensuring ABMG could provide auditors with real, accurate data rather than estimates.

Business Outcomes

Feature	Technical Outcome
Deployment Efficiency	Completed rollout in 4 months, significantly ahead of the projected schedule.
Standardization	Implemented Cisco Meraki Configuration Templates and dashboard standards across all sites.
Audit & Compliance	Transitioned from estimates to real-time, accurate firmware reporting now integrated as a standard feature.
Network Optimization	Resolved HQ bottlenecks by deploying a Split-Tunnel architecture, improving performance for all branches.
Operational Self-Sufficiency	Delivered comprehensive As-Built Documentation, enabling ABMG's IT team to execute new buildouts independently.

The INW Difference

What sets us apart is a rare blend of high-level technical expertise and deep personal commitment.

- **Unmatched Expertise**: CEO Tom Maurin, described as a "wizard" by ABMG, resolved complex issues that Phillips said even Cisco's own Technical Assistance Center (TAC) could learn from.
- **Relentless Support**: During the course of the project, INW engineers frequently worked onsite late into the night—sometimes working until 2:00 a.m. with Cisco directly—to ensure critical updates and complex firewall issues were resolved.
- **Integrity-Driven Business**: According to Phillips, INW prioritized the relationship over the transaction, even absorbing a $4,000 quoting error themselves rather than passing the cost to the client.

"It really comes down to the personal relationship. [INW staff] feel like part of our team. They're incredibly smart but never act like it. They stick with problems until they're fully resolved... No other vendor does that," said Phillips.

A Partnership Built for the Next Decade

The architecture established over 10 years ago remains the standard for all ABMG Meraki equipment today. As ABMG continues to expand, they do so with a network that is as reliable as the partnership that built it.

"INW is hands down the best vendor we work with," said Phillips.

Ready to Modernize Your Branch Architecture?

Learn more about our leadership team and their commitment to architectural excellence: About Us

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