

Big Sky Lumber Supply

Fiber ethernet helps a rural business stay on top

ziply fiber

ZiPLY Fiber Case Study



About

Big Sky Lumber Supply is a family-owned business in Libby, Montana, that provides materials to more than 70 vendors across the United States and into Canada.

Challenge

Lack of a fast, reliable internet connection meant Big Sky was struggling to keep up with demands of the business.

Solutions

Ethernet Internet Access (EIA)

Hosted Voice

“We can fix this. We can have faster speeds.”

When Jim and Jeanne Brooks took over a local millworks business in their hometown of Libby, Montana, in 2005, they operated out of a 12x16 office equipped with two phone lines and a fax machine.

Within four years, their company, Big Sky Lumber Supply, was growing so fast that they decided to build a showroom and a new office, and in 2014 they started to migrate from paper to a computer system using the DSL internet network available in Libby.

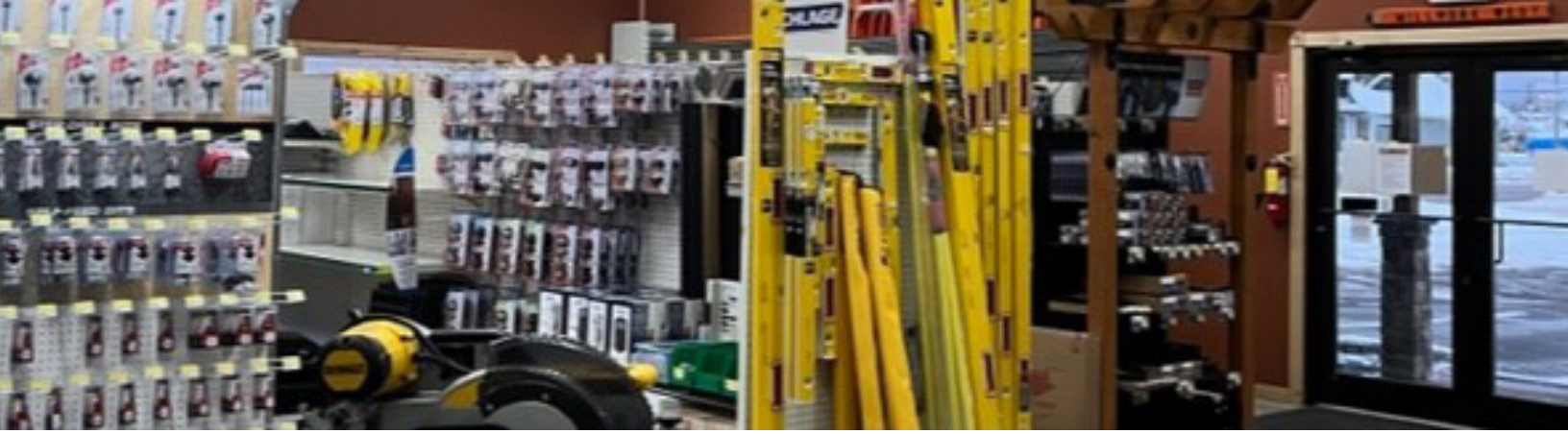
But as more vendors moved their business operations online, the Brooks family and their growing office staff found that they weren't fully able to keep up with supply chain demands. “A lot of vendors are in more metropolitan places where fiber was,” Jeanne Brooks says. “I was always trying to keep up to their speeds, but sometimes we were just bogged down. **My sales staff would come to me saying that web pages weren't loading fast enough. We found ourselves struggling.**”

Libby, located along the Kootenai River and beloved by the Brooks family for its wealth of outdoor activities, is in Lincoln County, which ranks 10th in Montana for the lowest percentage of 100 Mbps coverage. Montana ranks 50 out of 50 states in percentage of the population with access to gig-speed internet.

Roadmap for success

The arrival of ZiPLY Fiber and fiber internet to the scenic town of barely 3,000 has been game-changing for Big Sky Lumber Supply.

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“It all changed when John appeared that day,” says Brooks, referring to Ziplly Fiber mid-market account executive John Freeman. Brooks realized, **“We can fix this. We can have faster speeds.”**

Brooks was already updating the company’s hardware and changing the merchant services for point-of-sale systems when Freeman knocked on her door. **“Everything had to go in sequence,” she explains. “That’s where John was great and Ziplly was great. They understood that.”** Freeman also suggested Ziplly Fiber’s Hosted Voice service for their phone system. Every time Brooks runs into an issue learning the new system, Ziplly Fiber is ready to help.



“I can’t stress how much we appreciate John being there when we have questions,” Brooks says. “John has been excellent. **He stops by occasionally and makes sure we’re taken care of. He’s always there to point us in the right direction.** The people he puts us in contact with have been great. They really care.”

Taking the business into the future

Getting fiber to Libby means that people like Jim and Jeanne Brooks can run a thriving business in the town they have called home for their entire lives. They will have even more time for the things they love in Libby, because it’s happening now they are handing Big Sky Lumber Supply down to their son and daughter-in-law, David and Victoria. David has been working with Ziplly Fiber to fine-tune the phone system and get ready to take over operations.

“We feel fortunate to have grown up in the place we love,” says Jeanne Brooks. “We are working together as a family to ensure that our business can grow and stay with the times and be here for the future of the community.”