



# INGRAM MICRO CLOUD SERVICES CASE STUDY

## f8 Tech

Founded:  
2011

url:  
[www.f8tech.com](http://www.f8tech.com)

Employees:  
5

**Key Market Vertical:**  
Auto dealerships, manufacturing

**Business Challenge:**  
An automotive dealership's entire IT infrastructure, including computers, servers, Wi-Fi, security, and network was left in very poor condition by a previous reseller and the dealership was unprepared for an upcoming General Motors audit.

**Solution:**  
After conducting a network assessment and developing an inside-out IT strategy for the client, f8 Tech was able to get the dealership's IT infrastructure up to par and to provide RMM services to ensure the network and IT assets would remain in good working order.

**Customer Benefits:**  
The dealership passed the GM audit and now has far fewer IT problems than ever before, plus it's in a better position to replace its aging phone system in the near future.

### How An MSP Brought An Automotive Dealer's Network Back From The Dead

*Conducting a network assessment and providing ongoing RMM services were keys to this MSP's \$100,000 IT overhaul project win, which included monthly recurring revenue and ongoing upsell opportunities.*

When you're a reseller who lands a new client who just fired its previous VAR/MSP, you never know what you're in for. For example, is the customer going to be unrealistic about what it costs to have a secure network and reliable IT, or was your competitor really not doing its job? When Brent Wolff, owner of f8 Tech first met with the general manager of Henna Chevrolet, a 165-employee+ automotive dealership with five buildings, located on a 20-acre plot in Austin, Texas, it didn't take long to find out the answer to that question.

"The symptoms the customer was describing were slow computer response times and frequent downtime, but when I started investigating the source cause I found a worst-case-scenario IT situation," says Wolff. His investigation into the matter started with a walk around, observing the dealer's IT closets, computers, switches, and servers. "In a couple of the rooms, servers were lying on the floor, the wiring was a total mess, and a lot of the equipment was very outdated. For example, they were handling the email for 165 employees on an outdated Microsoft server that was designed to accommodate only 75 email accounts. The server was often running at 98 percent capacity and crashed on a regular basis."

Before proceeding further, Wolff recommended a complete network assessment and told the client he needed to establish an IT foundation in order to solve their IT problems and help prepare them for their upcoming GM audit. After getting the go-ahead, Wolff installed a network assessment tool from Solar Winds on the customer's network and allowed the software to inventory the network, including all applications and IT endpoints connected to it. Upon completion, several additional issues were revealed. "The dealership was out of compliance with its Microsoft licensing, plus it was using several different brands of Wi-Fi routers – some of which had no security turned on — plus they had no antivirus in place," he says.

After the assessment was completed, Wolff put together a proposal that spelled out his recommendation of a complete IT overhaul. "They went with everything we recommended, including moving servers out of dusty closets and putting them in secure, properly cooled and vented server rooms," he says.

### Working around the Customer's Business Hours

One of the biggest challenges with the implementation was completing the overhaul in the least disruptive way possible. And, due to the dealership's business hours, which far exceeded the typical 9 to 5 workday and even extended into the weekends, everything needed to be planned carefully. "Our team worked on the project on the weekends, immediately after the business closed, and completed the installation over a four-month period."

The implementation included replacing legacy Wi-Fi routers with secure, enterprise class wireless

routers from Ubiquity. The MSP also replaced the legacy servers with two HP DL380G7 Servers, complete with an HP P2000 SAN with Windows 2008 R2 Datacenter licenses running VMware. "We also upgraded the network with Cisco 3750X and 2960 switches," says Wolff. "We also migrated them from Exchange 2003 to Exchange 2010." f8 Tech's VAR partner, CDW, was instrumental in helping with staging and drop-shipping the IT hardware at the appropriate time during the rollout. f8 Tech also purchased IT hardware for the project through its value-added distributor partner Ingram Micro.

### Make Reactive IT a Thing of the Past with RMM Services

f8 Tech also sold the customer several IT services, including a backup solution that combined a local disk-to-disk backup to a SAN appliance with Intronis cloud backup, plus McAfee SaaS-based email and web filtering services. The MSP completed the overhaul with N-able's Ncentral RMM services, which allowed f8 Tech to continue monitoring its customer's network and IT assets to ensure everything continued working smoothly after the initial deployment.

"Ncentral allows us to be more proactive with our customers rather than just reacting to IT emergencies," says Wolff. "Not only does Ncentral help us detect low disk space on servers, it alerts us to outdated firmware, and it allows us to perform application updates and patch update tasks without having to be on-site at the customer's premises. On one occasion following the initial rollout, Ncentral alerted us on a Saturday that one of the server drives was down, and we were able to resolve the problem before they opened for business again on Monday."

Since completing the IT overhaul with Henna

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Chevrolet, f8 Tech has helped the client make other incremental upgrades such as replacing their previous instant messaging solution with Microsoft Lync, which offers better security as well as a tighter integration with Outlook email. In the near future, the MSP will help the customer replace its aging PBX-based phone system with a VoIP system.

"Their network has come a long ways since we first started working with Henna Chevrolet less than two years ago," says Wolff. "In fact, in our most recent monthly report, it shows that last month alone the spam filter caught 27,088 spam messages, including 425 emails containing viruses — all of which would have previously made their way onto their network. The customer has been so pleased with the turnaround with their IT network that they're now serving as a champion referral and helping us to become the IT services provider for other Chevy dealerships."