

Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services Raises Their Community's Quality of Life With Entire Calix Portfolio



The Challenge

Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services (PPCS) was established in 1937 to deliver reliable, sustainable, and affordable energy to rural Wisconsin communities. Today, PPCS serves over 7,000 members across Pierce, Pepin, St. Croix, and Buffalo counties. The cooperative recognized that the lack of ubiquitous broadband was compromising members' quality of life—from students having to drive into town to complete their homework to seniors without in-home connectivity required to monitor their medical devices.

PPCS knew they needed to bridge the critical broadband connectivity gap, so members didn't get left behind. In 2021, PPCS launched a broadband subsidiary, SwiftCurrent Connect (SwiftCurrent), to bring high-speed fiber-optic internet to rural western Wisconsin. Led by PPCS president and chief executive officer Nate Boettcher, the initiative required an experienced and reliable partner to help turn his vision into reality.



COMPANY

SwiftCurrent Connect

BUSINESS TYPE

Cooperative

LOCATION

Ellsworth, Wisconsin

SERVICES

Residential and business services including high-speed internet and voice

WEBSITE

swiftcurrent.coop



The Solution

SwiftCurrent selected Calix to support the delivery of end-to-end broadband services. As a new broadband service provider (BSP), SwiftCurrent uses the [Calix Broadband Platform](#) to meet all its network and member needs.

Intelligent Access forms the foundation of their fiber broadband network, enabling SwiftCurrent to deploy new services rapidly while simplifying operations and reducing costs.

SwiftCurrent takes advantage of [Calix Cloud](#) to drive further efficiencies. Calix Cloud delivers actionable insights, analytics, and automation to empower their marketing, customer service, and operations teams. With the power of Calix Cloud, they can anticipate members' needs, quickly resolve problems, and deliver excellent member experiences.

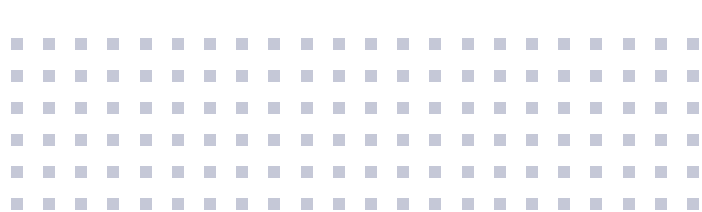
Backed by the growing portfolio of GigaSpire® BLAST Wi-Fi systems, SwiftCurrent provides a range of value-added SmartLife™ Managed Services. SwiftCurrent gives every residential member [ProtectIQ®](#) home network security, keeping them safe from cyberattacks and privacy breaches. Members can easily manage their connected home experience with the [SwiftCurrent Connect App](#), based on [CommandIQ®](#). They can change their password or SSID, check connectivity, run speed tests, add devices or users to the network, and perform basic troubleshooting—without ever calling the support desk.

To help small and medium businesses (SMBs) thrive, SwiftCurrent offers [SmartBiz™](#), which provides essential connectivity, productivity services, and security, all managed via the CommandWorx™ self-service mobile app.

Together, these managed services deliver unmatched experiences to previously unserved and underserved areas and help ensure the long-term social and economic viability of the communities SwiftCurrent serves.

"The guiding principle behind our broadband rollout is that fiber fixes everything. As we continue our journey to connect our communities, it's clear that we must go beyond fiber and offer excellent member experiences, too. With Calix, we have opened a whole new world of opportunities for our members—from better student outcomes to reliable at-home healthcare to prosperous businesses. Our commitment to our membership has only been matched by the dedication and support of Calix, a true partner in helping us bridge the digital divide."

**Nate Boettcher, President
and Chief Executive Officer**



The Results

With a robust fiber broadband network in place, PPCS plans to connect load controllers, thermostats, and electric vehicles to the grid to help members reduce their energy consumption. SwiftCurrent has also allowed them to connect one of the first data centers in western Wisconsin. In the meantime, SwiftCurrent is well on their way to connecting every home without access to fiber and high-speed internet. To date, they have surpassed 3,500 members and continue to grow.

The Calix Broadband Platform and integrated managed services have had a transformational impact on rural communities in western Wisconsin. Students no longer have to drive to the nearest town to complete their homework—they now have access to educational opportunities previously not available to them. Likewise, the SwiftCurrent fiber broadband infrastructure can easily handle bandwidth-intensive teleworking applications. This helps attract new residents more easily, driving further economic development.

Seniors and those requiring at-home medical care are also benefiting significantly. A consistent connection enables people to regularly check in on their elderly family members. Wearable devices can also be monitored more reliably. For example, a local woman whose husband wears a connected heart device can now sleep at night, knowing that data is being transmitted to health professionals who can alert emergency services if needed.

A strong partnership with Calix has enabled SwiftCurrent to thrive in the digital age. Once a poster child for students falling behind, the BSP is now a shining example of how electric cooperatives can build on their legacy of connecting communities with the broadband they deserve.

Learn how electric cooperatives are working with Calix to provide life-changing connectivity to their members by watching [our video](#) with Pierce Pepin.



- ***Offers a future-proof fiber broadband network***
- ***Connects members with new opportunities to work, learn, and thrive***
- ***Levels the playing field to boost long-term economic viability***

