

# TruHome Goes All-In on Cloud Telephony with Bigleaf SD-WAN as the Foundation



Founded in 2004, TruHome is an award-winning mortgage credit union service organization that provides a full range of private-label services to credit unions nationwide. With its expertise, technology solutions and member-centric focus, TruHome leverages the power of collaboration that already exists in the industry to provide full-service originations, secondary marketing and servicing solutions.

The company began as a business unit of a larger company, relying on their IT infrastructure and self-hosted telephony solution. As TruHome matured and grew to operate autonomously, it had a critical need to institutionalize itself as a fully standalone enterprise and that meant building out its own back-office functions. It also needed its own telephony solution, which was being managed and controlled through a parent company.

“From its start, TruHome had a cloud-first mentality. It was natural we wanted to go all in on software-defined and cloud-delivered telephony via UCaaS and have someone else shoulder the burden of infrastructure,” said John Pentlin, Vice President of IT at TruHome. “Maintaining a focus on UCaaS from the get-go meant we could build a system that decoupled us from on-premise and geographic carrier-based circuits.”

Pentlin had to first convince the company’s leadership team on his approach. The company’s leaders knew they had a single point of failure in their phone system. If the phones were down, their call centers weren’t operating so they wanted to know how moving to the cloud would solve that problem.

“Our business leaders had call center backgrounds, so they understand both the importance and the challenges of telephony,” said Pentlin. “Half of our employees operate out of two call centers, so reliable telephony is critical to us because every minute our phones are down half of our workforce is unable to do their jobs.”

Pentlin knew that even the best telephony software would not operate well if a solid network foundation wasn’t in place. He and his team looked to SD-WAN to accelerate the decoupling from their parent company, but quickly discovered that not all SD-WAN vendors adhere to the definition of the technology itself.

Originally, TruHome started down the path with one SD-WAN vendor it thought would be the safe bet to provide the call quality the company required. Pentlin liked the proposed delivery methodology, but the rollout ran into a brick wall when the solution didn’t live up to their sales pitch. After talking with the SD-WAN vendor’s engineering, it became clear that they had oversold the ease of the insertion topology and couldn’t provide the high availability that Pentlin was looking for.



**Successful migration**  
to Cloud telephony



**No downtime**  
to date



**Real-time visibility**  
into circuit performance

The vendor couldn't facilitate TruHome's solution the way Pentlin wanted without blowing up their cost model. What's more, the topology would've forced TruHome to over design its edge network. It couldn't provide proper high availability and introduced a single point of failure into the network.

"It's one thing to run your data applications on ISP circuits and your telephony on a standard carrier separately," Pentlin explained. "If one is down, some operations can still continue. When you are running data and telephony needs over the same solution, that means you must up the ante on your edge network and data circuits. It means you need a topology that allows you to leverage multiple diverse carriers and solves every outage scenario you can throw at it, not just the ones you think to write policies for."

## Deciding to go with Bigleaf's cloud-first SD-WAN

TruHome pulled the plug on the initial vendor and began looking for a new partner who could deliver on the promise of SD-WAN.

"We found vendors have various definitions of SD-WAN, some well-defined and some not," lamented Pentlin. "When you get to the core, you find some are just WAN optimization in disguise and not true SD-WAN. When adopting a fully software-defined telephony solution, we wanted to operate it over the top of standard ISP's, not provision each location with its own carrier circuits. You want the SDN at the edge to allow for carrier diversity and high resiliency."

With the company's migration to its UCaaS provider, bearing down, the vendor recommended Pentlin take a look at Bigleaf's cloud-first SD-WAN. Lightbulbs started going off once Pentlin saw Bigleaf. "We looked at a dozen other SD-WAN providers. When we saw Bigleaf it was a no-brainer."

While checking off all the foundational boxes TruHome needed from its SD-WAN, Bigleaf's firewall transparency and insertion topology solved many other challenges for TruHome.

"We weren't averse to trying to build and deploy a custom solution - but if we don't have to, why would we? Bigleaf was easily integrated into the existing network edge. As a former network engineer, moving to Bigleaf was a home run."

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The TruHome IT team welcomed the simple network integration as their time was more valuable solving more vexing technology issues for the business, including its telephony solution.

“We couldn’t have asked for a simpler solution,” Pentlin said. “Bingleaf’s design meant it was purely at the edge, abstracted and transparent to the firewall. Its automation and ability to let the algorithm do what policy-based solutions try to do, translates into huge time savings.”

As the team started to learn the deployment model of Bingleaf, they found that the insertion topology eliminated many challenges and aligned with their timelines.

“At each step of the deployment, Bingleaf solved every roadblock we ran into with that original vendor,” Pentlin said.

### **Bingleaf provides the network topology TruHome needs**

Bingleaf’s unique Site-to-Cloud Architecture links TruHome’s call centers to the backbone of the Internet. They are always within a few hops from any cloud technology that they decide to use. The company’s intelligent software creates a resilient and high-performance connection utilizing readily available Internet connections anywhere that TruHome does business. Bingleaf’s Dynamic QoS feature automatically detects and prioritizes their most critical Cloud application traffic. The Intelligent Load Balancing feature ensures that those priority applications are routed over the ISP that will provide the best end-user experience. These autonomous decisions are made and implemented 10 times per second, ensuring uninterrupted application performance.

“With our original vendor, we were constantly trying to translate our network requirements in intimate detail to a third party. We don’t have a full-time network engineer on staff. Using Bingleaf meant we could roll it out it all on our own.”

Bingleaf meant TruHome could deploy quickly without redesigning its network or making routing decisions that the Bingleaf software could intelligently do for it.

“Bingleaf was extremely straightforward to implement into the network. The insertion topology completely met our criteria,” said Marc Cote, TruHome’s Cloud Systems Engineer. “Their staff gathered our ISP information, the equipment was delivered preconfigured ready to plug in, cable up, and run.”

“Bingleaf’s design...let[s] artificial intelligence do what old policy-based solutions try to do... I no longer have to intervene at the network layer on a daily basis.”

## With Bigleaf, TruHome's IT team can focus on what it does best

Today, more than 200 TruHome employees operate behind two 100mb circuits with tier 1 carriers in the company's call center. Pentlin says the company's network is operating more efficiently now that Bigleaf's router is shepherding its traffic. "Bigleaf works behind the scenes to allow our people to do their jobs. We have incurred no Internet access downtime since implementation and have more resiliency in an area of the business that was sorely needed to maintain uptimes."

Pentlin also found that the real-time visibility Bigleaf gives him through its web dashboard is a way to catch carrier issues before they become a problem. This multi-tenant web dashboard provides TruHome the visibility needed to troubleshoot WAN or Internet issues, evaluate bandwidth/speed adjustments, and understand the impact of network performance on application experience. This data includes statistics, graphs, and events about the performance of Bigleaf services and ISP connections.

"One of the great things about Bigleaf is that, by design, it makes sure carrier issues don't impact our business. It programmatically and intelligently monitors each of your Internet connections 10 times per second, understands which connection is providing the better service and utilizes the best path. If you're not paying attention to your carrier service levels, they can get away from you. Nobody wants to call their carrier to hassle with them over outages or quality of service. Bigleaf saves us time that can be better spent innovating."

Bigleaf has become business as usual for TruHome. It's saved the company from carrier outage downtime and saved Pentlin's team from having to work after hours in some cases.

"It's refreshing to have a solution that delivers with tangible results. Bigleaf allows us to focus on the things we need to focus on."

Bigleaf gave TruHome the solid foundation it needed to become the autonomous company it set out to be.

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### JOHN PENTLIN

Vice President of IT, TruHome



## About Bigleaf Networks

Bigleaf provides a software-defined WAN solution built with a Cloud Access Network that enables you to ensure performant uptime for any Cloud-based technologies across all sites and users. Unlike policy-based solutions, Bigleaf auto-detects application needs and network conditions and intelligently adapts traffic in real time. With Bigleaf, you can easily provide Enterprise-grade connectivity for all of your Cloud applications, improve visibility into your internet usage, and simplify your network.