



High Tech Ag: Moving at the Speed of LightEdge

Call it the next big digital revolution. Just as more people are turning to Netflix and other online video services while ditching cable TV, more businesses are relying on the cloud instead of in-house computer hardware to manage essential data.

This need has created edge data centers, including LightEdge, a homegrown Iowa success story that's breaking new ground in Altoona alongside tech giants like Facebook.

"As information technology (IT) becomes more complex, we help companies move valuable data beyond their office's four walls," said Jim Masterson, chief executive officer of LightEdge. "It's all about protecting critical business information."

A data center is the "brain" of a company that works behind the scenes to store and protect data. Filled with complex IT infrastructure, a data center also helps ensure business continuity in the event of a disaster. The 40,000-square-foot LightEdge data center in Altoona, which opened in October 2017, is designed to withstand an F4 tornado, Masterson noted.

Leading healthcare, manufacturing, financial services and agribusiness clients with sophisticated IT requirements rely on solutions from the 150 employees at LightEdge, which grew from humble beginnings. Founded in 1996 as an internet service provider, LightEdge offered a vital communication link for companies like Iowa Select Farms.

Today, LightEdge has evolved into a high-tech cloud service provider and consulting company that provides a 24/7/365 monitored network operations center and other IT services for innovative businesses nationwide, including Iowa Select.

"Iowa Select Farms is a very forward-thinking company," said Masterson, who consults with Carl Vogel, IT director, about every six weeks. "We have a tremendous amount of passion for Iowa Select Farms and the importance of agriculture in society."

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-Jim Masterson

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"Technology in ag is sexy, and it's transforming food production," Masterson said. "Like Iowa Select, we have a passion for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). I advise young people to learn all they can about technology and agriculture." Since Iowa Select Farms manages data from many different farms using an internal web application called "Tools", making this data accessible throughout the company is no small challenge.

"Six years ago, we began working with LightEdge to utilize their data center and core services for our enterprise cloud system so our supervisors, farm managers and support departments can access real-time production information on Tools from any site, anytime, anywhere," said Vogel. "Tools allows us to communicate and make important, timely decisions throughout the day, and remains a core pillar of technology success at Iowa Select."

Whether an employee at Iowa Select Farms is trying to access wean schedules, production numbers, marketing information, veterinary reports, production well-being assessment scores, standard operating procedure information or even company announcements, all of the information can be accessed from computers, laptops and smartphones via Tools, which is made possible thanks to LightEdge.

PROFILE

LightEdge
ALTOONA, IOWA



Employees: 150

Iowa Select Farms annually houses **5 billion points of data with LightEdge** adding, on average, **4 million new points of data** every 24 hours.

