



## CASE STUDY

# Ho-Chunk, Inc. Achieves Perfect Resiliency with C1 Technology



Ho-Chunk, Inc. was launched in 1994 by the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska as its economic development corporation. Ho-Chunk, Inc. operates a diverse portfolio of companies, and its mission is to improve life for Tribal members through social and economic advancement. The company has been recognized with awards by Harvard University, the Ford Foundation, *Minority Business* magazine, the U.S. Department of State, Department of Commerce and the White House. Two of Ho-Chunk, Inc.'s biggest revenue producers are its government contracting and its new gaming division. For the government contracting arm, Ho-Chunk, Inc. relies on C1 for cybersecurity as a priority. For the casino business, it relies on C1 to provide the IT infrastructure and services to allow the business to grow, including security and networking.



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*Jerry Beavers | Corporate VP of IT, Ho-Chunk, Inc.*

## The challenge: A Need to Meet Accelerated Timelines for Networking and Regulatory Compliance

After the legalization of casino gambling in Nebraska, Ho-Chunk, Inc. aimed to become the first casino to open, but it had concerns that it would not be able to get all of the equipment it needed in place to open on schedule.

"We were very concerned about getting all of our switches and all the networking we needed to open on time," said Jerry Beavers, Corporate Vice President of IT for Ho-Chunk, Inc. "And it was critical for us to open as quickly as possible because we wanted to be the first casino in Nebraska."

Casinos are a magnet for cyber-thieves, and threats evolve faster than many organizations can prepare themselves. Ho-Chunk, Inc. was concerned it would not be able to keep up with the threat landscape.

"I miss the days when the English was broken and the punctuation was terrible, and it was obvious that you didn't inherit \$10 million from a Nigerian prince," said Beavers. "Then the prevalence of things like ransomware-as-a-service and other capabilities means attackers don't even have to work very hard."



In addition, for Ho-Chunk, Inc. to retain its business as a government contractor, it needed to remain current with federal rules and regulations, including NIST 800-171, a series of controls companies must meet to participate in Department of Defense contracts, as well as the Cyber Maturity Model certification (CMMC).

## **The solution: C1 Provides Expertise in Design Infrastructure and Procurement and Threat Monitoring**

On the government contracting side, Ho-Chunk, Inc. used C1's Virtual Chief Information Security Officer (vCISO), which acts as an experienced guide in navigating complex cybersecurity terrain, to achieve and maintain compliance with NIST. It also used a vCISO to prepare for the onerous certification process surrounding the Cyber Maturity Model certification, or CMMC.

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On the gaming side, C1's vCISO service serves as an experienced guide in navigating complex cybersecurity terrain. vCISO will step in as needed to conduct assessments and identify vulnerabilities, weaknesses and potential threats that may have gone unnoticed.

"In the early years, we took care of all the big attack paths and all the major points of entry," said Beaver. "But there are horror stories about the ways companies have been attacked: the fish feeder in the aquarium in the lobby, for example, as it was an unsecured connection. There have been attacks using heating and air conditioning systems. C1 helps us monitor every possible entry point."

## **The result: A Perfect Track Record of No Outages, and Fulfillment of Regulatory and Certification Needs**

With C1's help both in the network design and then with equipment procurement, Ho-Chunk, Inc. was able to hit its deadlines, attract investors, and succeeded in opening the first state-regulated casino in the State of Nebraska.

Currently, Ho-Chunk, Inc. is in the process of doubling the size of the initial casino, and C1 has helped the company with the procurement of networking equipment as well as guided it through Microsoft licensing for security products.

On the gaming side, Ho-Chunk, Inc. has not had a single outage in a year and a half of operations. The company credits C1 for helping it choose the right equipment and services and monitoring all network ingress points.

C1's vCISO solution has allowed Ho-Chunk, Inc. to meet and exceed its obligations in its government contracting operations.

"Having the vCISO filled a very important niche that we needed in order to move our security practice forward with the certification model to maintain government contracts," said Beavers. "The government contracts are a significant portion of our revenue. If we didn't meet the regulatory and certification needs, we couldn't do business."



C1 designs and delivers technology solutions built for outcomes. We focus on communications, networking, and cybersecurity—pairing leading partner platforms with our advisory, professional, and managed services to make modernization practical, secure, and valuable from day one. Where others talk about transformation, we make it real—faster, simpler, and more resilient. Learn more at [onec1.com](https://onec1.com).