

Helping small businesses take advantage of our consumer heritage

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I remember Lumen Technologies when it was a small company. Even today, it still feels very much like a family business. Our people are family, and our customers are family. I have always felt it's our company's commitment to use technology to make everyone's lives better. This sets us apart and makes me proud to be here.

I've spent a large portion of my career supporting our consumer business. When I was asked earlier this year to run our small business unit as well, I immediately thought about how I could apply my past experience to this new challenge. Small businesses are like families, too, and we knew from experience that consumers and small businesses share similar needs and buying patterns. Our knowledge and technology could be applied seamlessly to both; we just had to take the right steps.

Here are three reasons why our consumer heritage gives us an edge when we approach small business customers.

Fiber is the great equalizer. Shortly after we launched the Lumen brand, we also introduced a new, fully digital experience with **QuantumSM Fiber**, which was designed to support consumers and small businesses with superior fiber services. Quantum Fiber builds on the momentum we have already seen in the marketplace, where our fiber footprint has grown to 2.34 million households. That footprint also includes connections to tens of thousands of buildings that house

multiple business tenants. When we asked our small business customers what they viewed as most important, they listed many of the same features we heard from our residential fiber customers: speed, simplicity, and reliability. Quantum Fiber delivers all three, enabling us to take a unified approach to supporting the needs of both consumers and small businesses.

Make things simple. Traditionally, we sold different solutions to businesses than to consumers. Our Enterprise solutions do the job well, but they can be very complex for small business customers when it comes to ordering, contracting, and installing. Recently, we started deploying G.hn technology to allow buildings to use their existing wiring to enable high broadband speeds. It's the same basic approach we use to connect fiber to the home, then super-charge the existing copper wiring to deliver the faster speeds consumers want. Best of all, G.hn allows us to offer small businesses the same streamlined processes we have in place for consumers, such as three-step online ordering, competitive pricing, and no term commitments.

Our people make the difference. Quantum Fiber taps into one of the world's most amazing platforms to deliver the connectivity our customers want. And while our fiber network is enabled by technology, it is powered by our people. The introduction of Quantum Fiber allowed us to reinforce new processes that make customer support simpler, more responsive, and transparent. While Quantum Fiber is new, our customer-first approach is not. Recently, *Newsweek* named CenturyLink the No. 1 brand among Internet Service Providers in its 2021 list of America's Best Customer Service Companies. Our reputation for constantly thinking about how we can meet our customers' challenges, needs, and goals applies to small businesses, too.

Barbara Bush once said, "Family means putting your arms around each other and being there." Fiber is a lot like that. Over the past year, as fiber enabled more companies to adopt a work-from-anywhere approach, we have seen the lines blur further between commercial and residential customer needs. Even the largest company in the world starts with one human being; and with fiber, we can deliver the right services, regardless of where that person is sitting – in an office or on a sofa.

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