

## Customer Stories: Presidente Supermarkets

# Ripe for growth thanks to AT&T voice and data solutions

- **Business needs** – The grocery store chain needed better connectivity to support customers' debit, credit, and food-stamp-card transactions. It also needed updated voice and data networking.
- **Networking solution** – An AT&T Virtual Private Network (VPN) and AT&T IP Flexible Reach deliver the tools the supermarket needs to process transactions and collaborate more effectively.
- **Business value** – Help business process improvement, enhance customer service.
- **Industry focus** – Grocery store chain
- **Size** – 32 supermarkets and growing

## About Presidente Supermarkets

Presidente Supermarkets is a growing grocery chain that operates in central and south Florida. The family business, founded in 1990 by Omar Rodríguez, strives to provide the highest quality products and the best customer service at prices that working-class families can afford. The strategy is working. Today, Presidente operates 32 supermarkets from Miami-Dade County to Orange County, and many more new locations are planned.

## The situation

The company has succeeded by providing quality merchandise at fair prices and treating customers with respect. Technology had not been a top priority, but as the business grew and Presidente opened dozens of new stores, it experienced problems with network environment and security. The company needed data and phone networks to support its continued growth.

## Solution

Presidente chose the powerful, highly secure AT&T VPN as the core of its operations. It also replaced its outdated voice connectivity with AT&T IP Flexible Reach, which allows voice traffic to be delivered over their AT&T VPN circuit. The staff can use the Call Forwarding feature to deliver calls no matter where they are. The highly secure and flexible solutions can scale as Presidente adds new locations.

## A winning formula for success

Presidente Supermarkets provides quality products its customers need at fair prices. Rodríguez and his family are extremely customer focused. According to the store website, “The life experience of our immigrant founders provides us with a special understanding of the everyday customer and how to fashion our inventory to their satisfaction.”

Providing value and treating customers with respect has become a winning formula, said Ariel Martínez,

“With AT&T, everything has been consistent; we haven’t had any issues at all. It’s AT&T, and you expect the best when you’re working with AT&T.”

**Omar Rodríguez**  
Founder,  
Presidente Supermarkets

Presidente Supermarkets store operations manager. “We operate 32 supermarkets and two distribution centers and are now building seven new supermarkets,” he said.

The company is also looking to grow beyond central and south Florida, including a store in Tampa. The business’s growth rate over the last 30 years has made Presidente Supermarkets one of the largest Hispanic-owned grocery stores in the United States.

Presidente has succeeded in areas where other supermarket chains have not, Rodríguez said. Many other grocery stores have pulled out of neighborhoods that house a lot of low-income families. “The big chain stores have been closing because the demographic is not good for them,” Rodríguez said. “We have been taking over some of those places and have grown the business really fast.”

## A focus on the communities it serves

Rodríguez believes that family ownership is another reason that Presidente Supermarkets has been so successful. “It’s easier to make decisions because you have to find a middle ground, regardless of your point of view,” he said. “That’s why it’s been easy for us to grow. We don’t have to go through five layers of corporate decision-makers. We are proud to be family-owned and run.”

Presidente officials also understand the needs of their customers because they come from similar backgrounds. “We’re proud American citizens, but we’re also immigrants, so we understand their needs and culture,” he said.

For example, Presidente tailors the products on its shelves to meet the needs and preferences of each neighborhood store, Martínez said. “For instance, Hispanics from Mexico don’t necessarily eat the same types of food as Hispanics from Central America. It can be a completely different type of food. The same goes for Haitians and Jamaicans,” he said.

## Connectivity challenges

Like every business, Presidente Supermarkets faces challenges. Protecting its workers during the pandemic was a priority for Rodríguez. “We were essential workers, so we were open throughout COVID,” he said. Keeping some items on the shelves during the pandemic was another problem.

Presidente Supermarkets leadership understood that their business could benefit from a new phone system and data network. The company’s internet service needed to become a priority, especially since customer service is most important for ongoing success.

“We can’t go dark in any supermarket,” he added.

Presidente Supermarkets needed a network with the bandwidth to support thousands of customer purchases daily.

## Speed and security with AT&T Business

The Presidente team met with several different companies to discuss solutions before choosing AT&T VPN. It made the move based on a recommendation from friends in the industry. Presidente’s data now flows through the AT&T Global Network, which offers a wide range of available port speeds and high security.

“With AT&T, everything has been consistent; we don’t have any issues at all,” Rodríguez said. “It’s AT&T, and you expect the best when you’re working with AT&T.”

The network supports fast and secure checkout transactions. “It’s really quick,” Martínez said. The network makes it easy for the Presidente team to view transactions and other network processes from their laptops or phones. “AT&T Virtual Private Network is a tremendous improvement on our old system,” he said.

## Peace of mind

The new network performs well for the company, even under adverse circumstances. “The VPN that AT&T built has helped us tremendously, especially with all the COVID issues we had last year,” Martínez said. “Thanks to AT&T, with our current plan/service it doesn’t matter how many people are connected from their home computers while working virtually.”



Presidente Supermarkets also replaced its outdated phone system with AT&T Flexible Reach, a Voice over IP solution that consolidates voice and data over the same transport and enables easy collaboration. “The system is very clear and there’s no downtime,” he said.

Presidente Supermarkets leadership is enthusiastic about the company’s new phone and data networks. “We can trust the system that AT&T Business built,” Martínez said. “It’s great to have peace of mind.”

## Technology investments benefit customers

Presidente Supermarkets has become an American success story because of the owners’ commitment to the communities they serve. Despite the advent of online groceries, the owners remain committed to a more personal way of doing business.

The core of the business is still the same. “We believe our customers still like to go to a supermarket and pick out their meat and fish and hold the produce in their hands,” Rodríguez said.

However, Presidente has always been open to adopting new ideas and new technology when they benefit customers. The AT&T networks support the company’s business and helps make life easier for customers. “They have peace of mind, too,” he said. “That’s very important not only for us but also for the community.”

While other telecommunications companies continue to court Presidente Supermarkets, the company’s leadership is satisfied with products and the support they receive from AT&T Business. “We have had very few difficulties, but whenever we have any questions the response is fast,” he said.

Presidente Supermarkets just signed a new deal to continue with AT&T Business for three years. “Other companies come to us, sometimes at a better price,” Martínez added. “But we’re happy with the products and services AT&T gives us, so we don’t see any need to move to another provider.”