

Rocket Launch: Propelling into a New Market



The Situation

Southwest Arkansas Electric Cooperative made the decision to launch Four States Fiber with a mission to serve their region with high-speed internet that is both reliable and a superior value. The region's population had previously had only one, or in some cases, no options for broadband service. At the very start of Four States' journey to launch, their timeline was about six months to turn on their first customer. Marty Allen, the General Manager of Four States, was familiar with Leverage from his time at South Central Connect and wanted to get the team involved at the very start.

The Challenge

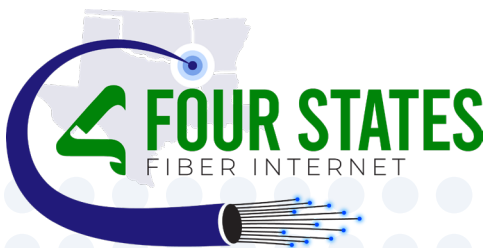
Four States started with just one employee – Marty. With the network build on schedule and customer pre-signups going well, Four States had three immediate needs:

1. Access to diverse path bandwidth at a reasonable price
2. Organizational design and planning
3. Product and pricing design

"Leverage made what could have been a slow and painful process so smooth and helped ensure we were up and running by the launch date," said Marty.

The Solution

First, Leverage tapped into their carrier network to recommend a partner that would provide the bandwidth that Four States needed, at a substantial savings. Next, the Leverage team, along with Marty and the newly hired CEO Dion Cooper, went to work on products. A series of spirited discussions shaped a product offering that aligned the mission of Four States with the needs of their diverse customer base. The team then embarked on an intensive education/training mission.



"Our front-line employees came from the electric side of the business. They weren't familiar with our products, and they had no previous sales experience. Leverage provided them with product knowledge and customer behavioral insights and tied it all together with a 'right-sizing' plan. Our customer-facing employees began taking calls with confidence, and the results far exceeded our plan," said Marty.

The Results

Thus far, Four States Fiber customer service representatives are upselling to premium Internet service 67% of the time, and subscribers are adding managed WiFi at a rate of 90%. This performance means that customers are being installed at 150% of planned recurring revenue.

Leverage continues to support and reinforce Four States' sales and marketing functions. Looking forward, the team will help address:

- Organization development related to hiring
- Business rules for defining boundaries with customers and products
- Which metrics are most important to track and the best way to interpret results

"We consider Leverage a part of our team – I even put them on the org chart!" said Marty. "They continue to adapt with us as our needs change."

"They provide great perspective on so many aspects of the business, but more importantly, they help us to see around corners. Along the way, I keep asking what's next and what should we do to prepare, and the Leverage team always has the answers." - Marty Allen