

## Peer-to-peer partnership opens door to new opportunity

### How Trust X Alliance made it happen

No matter how prepared a business is for a new client pitch, there's always the potential for an unanticipated ask to bring the meeting to a screeching halt. Paul Smith, partner at Datasmith Network Solutions, experienced just that when he sat down with a prospective client. But luckily, a quick call to a Trust X Alliance partner flipped that roadblock into a win.

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After learning that the prospect had some doubts about their current IT provider during a cold call, Paul and his Datasmith team were ready to step in with a full service offering to address the company's concerns about their current level of support. "We explained in detail how we work, that each client has an inside rep, an engineer—a full team if that's what's needed," explains Smith, who has guided his family-owned, Massachusetts-based managed services company since 1986.

Then it happened. During the initial pitch meeting, the owner voiced concerns about Datasmith's experience with Cisco, particularly the highly integrated phone system used by the company's 80-plus employees.

"He asked if we had anyone on staff specifically focused on Cisco phones, and we didn't," recalled Smith. And then the lightbulb went on. Datasmith didn't have the expertise on staff, but his Trust X Alliance peer Teracai did. In fact, Teracai was a certified Cisco Gold Partner. Smith arranged a call the next day with Teracai CTO Tim Duffy and his team, laid the prospect's concerns to rest and won the business.

Fast-forward six months and the Trust X Alliance partnership between Datasmith and Teracai faced its first test with the new client when an unexpected phone system outage left them in the market for a new Cisco solution. Without missing a beat, Teracai and Datasmith collaborated on a new proposal for the client's phone woes and got to work.

In a nutshell, the Syracuse, N.Y.-based Teracai team sent Datasmith their highly-skilled Cisco engineer, and the teams worked together to integrate and deploy the \$40,000 VoIP solution. Supported by Ingram Micro on the procurement side, the team soon had a solution in place—and a happy customer. "Teracai was really the brains behind the solution, but our guys were right there, and they learned a lot along the way," explained Smith. "Most importantly, it was seamless for the customer."

Now, five years later, they remain a Datasmith customer, and subsequent projects have included deployment of the business' first virtualized server and implementation of a modern business continuity solution. "As their trust



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in us grows, we continue to push them forward with improved technology options,” said Smith.

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Being part of Trust X Alliance has changed the way Smith looks at his business challenges and customer needs. “There was a time when the customer would have looked at us as a small company, been worried and leaned away from us. I wouldn’t have had the option to call in a partner, but thanks to Trust X Alliance, I have a much broader offering to share with my customers. It makes you realize your competitor can actually be your partner, and that opens up a lot of new opportunities.”

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