

# AIRESPRING PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



**Jeff Rains**  
Founder  
Telecom Professionals



**To begin, please tell us a little about yourself, your company, and your professional background in Telecom?**

I started out in the telecommunications industry with LCI International, a long-distance telephone and telecommunications company based in Virginia. The company experienced rapid growth in the late 1980s and early 1990s, largely due to the deregulation of the U.S. telecommunications industry. I worked there in sales and eventually moved into sales management where I excelled for seven years. LCI was eventually purchased by what is now, Lumen.

I quickly recognized that the local telecom industry was going to boom with the breakup of local telephone monopolies and the expanding use of the internet. I immediately started to plan my move to this competitive and dynamic area of the telecom industry. Local telephone service competition was just beginning with the construction of fiber optic networks, creating alternative options for the first time in 100 years. These were exciting times so when I was presented with an opportunity to work at Phone Michigan, I jumped on it. I was one of Phone Michigan's original employees. For the next seven years, I was a Regional Sales Manager accomplishing goals well beyond my expectations. Then Phone Michigan was acquired by McLeod USA.

In 2000, the Dot-Com Bomb hit and McLeod USA, (now part of Windstream) went bankrupt. At that point in my career, I vowed to never work for one of

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**Jeff in the Swiss Alps skiing the Matterhorn.**

***"I've been through many training classes and AireSpring's SD-WAN and security training with Mike Chase is second to none".***

the big telecom providers again. I made a commitment to work for my customers instead of the big telecom companies. I started Telecom Professionals as an independent consulting firm designed to help businesses better evaluate their needs and assist in choosing the best provider(s) for their application and location(s).

**What do you like about working with AireSpring?**

We like working with AireSpring because our customers can consolidate several services and locations all on one invoice. AireSpring also places a high value on training and partner support. I've been through many training classes and AireSpring's SD-WAN and security training with Mike Chase [SVP Solutions Engineering, AireSpring], is second to none. Additionally, our representative, Rick Komon [Regional Channel Manager], responds quickly with pricing and information that our clients need.

**What would you say is the secret to being a successful trusted advisor/sales agent in today's marketplace?**

Instead of just selling products, we stay in contact with our clients and look for areas to improve their telecommunications network while reducing costs, whether we

are compensated or not – it's the right thing to do.

By listening to our clients, we locate pain points and analyze them in order to determine which technology upgrades will provide the greatest reward for the time and resources invested. In the long run, this has allowed us to keep growing with our clients for over 20 years.

**What is the "next big thing" you think trusted advisors/agents should be aware of or get involved with in 2021 and 2022?**

I'm not sure I know what the "next big thing" is, we have always focused on promoting new products and providers, once they have proven that they can deliver and service customers to a standard that exceeds our expectations.

We do not promote bleeding-edge technology as the rewards may not be worth the risk in some cases. We'd rather be second and get it right than first and be wrong. Of course, when customers have a need for the newest technology, we bring in experts to assist our clients in the evaluation of cutting-edge technology. That being said, we have had some great successes with SD-WAN and are also actively selling edge routing products.

**What are some of your hobbies and interests outside of telecom?**

I'm very interested in smart home and artificial intelligence technologies. I've implemented them in my own home and enjoy testing new technology. I love the outdoors! Mountain biking and tennis have taken the place of running over the years. In the summer and winter, you will find me waterskiing and snow skiing whenever I get a chance.

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**Jeff on a break between matches at Wessen Lawn Tennis Club in Pontiac, Michigan.**