

Portland Public Schools

This project, begun in the summer of 2002, involved complete replacement of Portland's existing stand alone LANs (at each school building) with a "converged" high-speed Wide Area Network supporting voice and data throughout the district. The project was phased in over a 2 year period in accordance with construction schedules, as the school buildings were undergoing major renovations at the same time. The project was complicated by major delays on the part of the City of Portland in completion of the city-wide fiber optic cable loop upon which the original network design depended. As an interim measure, Kore / Hi Com installed 54MB Cisco Aironet equipment on the roof of each school building and on top of the Portland water tower. The resulting wireless network proved to be a more than adequate medium for transport of both telephone and data traffic across the 3 odd miles separating the various school buildings. David Palme, the PPS Director of Technology made the following comments concerning the project:

Kore / Hi Com came to us highly recommended by Cisco Systems. Our project involved a complete overhaul of the Portland Public Schools' computer network infrastructure, in conjunction with building renovations and new construction at each of the four existing Portland School buildings, the bus garage, and the new Adult Education building.

Portland Public Schools is divided into 2 campuses – the Middle School and Lower Elementary are downtown while the High School, Upper Elementary, and Adult Ed buildings are roughly 2 miles away on the outskirts of town. The City is in the process of having fiber optic cable laid throughout the town, and our plan is to use this cable to interconnect the school buildings, and to eventually provide network and IP telephony services for City Hall and the other City services buildings.

Due to unforeseen delays on the part of the City, the FOC was not ready in time for the 2003-2004 school year. K/HC had just implemented a new centralized Cisco IP Phone system in anticipation of the fiber based "metropolitan area network", so we were faced with a big problem of how to provide homogeneous telephone service throughout the School system. In response, K/HC installed a wireless network to take the place of the FOC, utilizing the city water tower as a relay station. This Cisco 54MB wireless system has not only enabled us to utilize the IP phone system across both campuses (and the bus garage) and facilitated centralized network administration, it has also provided sufficient bandwidth to transport Internet traffic to/from each school via our high-speed point-to-point wireless connection to the Ionia ISD.

K/HC is a very versatile and resourceful company. Their strengths are not limited to expertise with technology matters – they have also demonstrated a thorough understanding of project management and good business practices. Design/Build projects present their own unique challenges, and K/HC has been up to the task each step of the way. I have been very pleased with the service and value provided by K/HC, so much so that we have entrusted our ongoing support to them.

David Palme, Director of Technology, Portland Public Schools

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