

Community College Upgrades its Campus-Wide Communications

CASE STUDY

Highland Community College includes the NVT Phybridge switch innovation in its new emergency response system.

Executive Summary

Highland Community College
Industry: Education
Location: Freeport, Illinois
Number of Employees: 150+

CHALLENGE

- Migrate a campus environment to IP Telephony in a cost effective manner.
- Eliminate deployment and security risks.
- Deploy a new voice solution without disruption.

SOLUTION

- ShoreTel voice solution powered by NVT Phybridge Power over Long Reach Ethernet switches.

RESULTS

- Leveraging existing infrastructure eliminated all disruptions and risks.
- Secure network with a separate physical path for voice.
- Overall improvement in the ability to manage call control.
- A quick, easy and economical migration to IP Voice.

PRODUCT LIST

NVT Phybridge Switch Series

As a community college, Highland Community College mission is built around meeting the needs of our greater northwest Illinois community through quality educational and cultural programs. They have served thousands of students at their campus in Freeport and at satellite locations throughout the district. Highland offers comprehensive academic programming with over 60 degrees and certificates.

Challenge

On any given day, thousands of students and hundreds of instructors can be on campus at Highland Community College. Unfortunately recent happenings dictate that colleges must prepare emergency response plans in the event tragedy strikes. Whether it's a natural disaster or a man-made crisis, Highland must have a solid system in place to communicate to students, teachers and visitors inside campus buildings, as well as to stakeholders outside the College's boundaries.

In order to prepare a solid emergency plan and to comply with a life safety grant, Highland was tasked with implementing a campus-wide solution to prove complete building survivability in the event the main phone room/building was deemed inoperable.

Highland Community College has eight main buildings built over the course of four decades. Their existing phone system was a 12 year old digital PBX that was discontinued and spare parts were becoming difficult to find. They wanted a voice over IP solution (VOIP) solution, but due to budget constraints and data security issues, Highland needed to keep voice communications traffic on a separate network and did not want to layer voice on the data local area network (LAN) and go through the LAN readiness requirements.

Solution

The College's telecom provider, ATI, recommended the NVT Phybridge network switch - a solution they believed would come in under budget and solve the security concerns surrounding a shared voice and data network. ATI also felt NVT Phybridge was a good fit for Highland as the campus had a fair amount of Cat3 cabling, allowing Highland to use their existing infrastructure, greatly reducing the cost to create an optimized LAN foundation for IP telephony.

NVT Phybridge provides the only data network switch in the world to deliver Ethernet and Power over Ethernet over a single pair of telephony grade wire with 4 times the reach of traditional data switches. Customers are leveraging their existing, proven reliable voice infrastructure to create a separate network path for voice communications, complimenting an existing data network, while optimizing an organization's IT infrastructure for voice and data convergence. It was designed specifically to handle any organization's existing or future real-time voice requirements delivering a robust platform ensuring voice quality of service today and into the future.

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Tom Bruehler
Manager of Maintenance Services
Highland Community College

Results

“The installation of the NVT Phybridge (system) went very smooth,” says Tom Bruehler of Highland Community College. “There was a week allocated for the implementation, and the entire 8-building campus was up and running in a few days. AT&T was able to install, test, and have the new IP Telephony system with NVT Phybridge installed in a few days, without any complex integration issues with the data network.”

It has been well demonstrated in previous incidents that communication is key in a crisis situation and can greatly impact emergency services response time. With the NVT Phybridge solution in place, Highland can be rest-assured that their voice and data communications capabilities are up to the task. In turn, Highland is able to focus their attention on the College’s top priority: “shaping the future of (its) communities by providing quality education and learning opportunities through programs and services that encourage the personal and professional growth of the people of northwestern Illinois.”

Many campus-like environments have the existing voice infrastructure connected between buildings. The extended reach capabilities of the NVT Phybridge switches mean customers can consolidate all the PoE requirements in a single location supporting all the new IP phones in all locations on campus. This greatly reduces the cost and complexity of the network.