

- **CLIENT**  
San Ramon Valley Unified School District
  
- **INDUSTRY**  
Education
  
- **CHALLENGE**  
SRVUSD wanted a modern, robust phone and PA system in their schools, but was also challenged to reduce costs.
  
- **SOLUTION**  
Berbee InformaCast® for the bell, clock, and PA system in five schools.
  
- **BENEFITS**
  - Saved 50% of the cost of the total traditional PA system
  - Easy configuration changes through InformaCast web interface
  - Quick and easy speaker installation

## Case Study:

# San Ramon Valley Unified School District Saves Time, Money with InformaCast® Bell, Clock, and PA System



### The Client

The San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) encompasses the California communities of Alamo, Danville, Diablo, Blackhawk, and San Ramon as well as a small portion of the cities of Walnut Creek and Pleasanton. It is comprised of 31 schools serving more than 24,000 students in Kindergarten through Grade 12.

### The Situation

SRVUSD was experiencing rapid growth and needed to modernize many aging schools. These needs led to the construction of eight new schools and the complete modernization of ten more.

Facing construction cost inflation, SRVUSD was looking for ways to migrate to a district-wide telephone system and improve its school low voltage communications systems without exceeding its already-strained budgets.

To capture substantial cost savings, SRVUSD began implementing a 'one-wire' solution. They no longer used separate wires for phone, data, and speaker systems. Rather, they ran the entire infrastructure on 'one-wire', providing significant costs savings, easy administration, and a very modern platform that is easy to expand.

### Leveraging Berbee's Expertise

"About two years ago, we discovered that Berbee was really ready to start putting out addressable speakers that would allow us to effectively build school-wide bell, clock, and PA systems," said Jon Threshie, Director of Technology. "This would help us eliminate two or three more cable systems, which was part of our construction savings goals." Berbee licenses their technology to Atlas Sound, who then manufactures the speakers with integrated clocks.

SRVUSD started installing the InformaCast system as their bell, clock, and PA system for five schools in 2005.

#### Technology

The Berbee implemented solution included:

- InformaCast®
- InformaCast IP Speakers

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- **About Berbee**

Headquartered in Madison, Wisconsin. Since 1993, Berbee has delivered technology solutions that drive bottom line results for our clients. Our entrepreneurial spirit and values guide us and we continue to set the standard for uncompromising customer support and technical leadership

- **Why Berbee**

Berbee's InformaCast IP Broadcasting Solution revolutionizes organization-wide communication. It provides the capability to simultaneously send an audio stream and text messages to any combination of Cisco IP phones, InformaCast Complaint IP speakers and PCs. With the push of a single button on the phone or a single click from a PC, a user can send a live, recorded, or scheduled broadcast to one or more paging groups.

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[www.berbee.co](http://www.berbee.co)

They installed the speakers in late August with no experience and had the system up and running in three days at all five schools.

A Berbee engineer and one SRVUSD Cisco engineer were on site to complete the installation, and a few members of Berbee sales staff assisted in getting the project off the ground.

By November, all system level work was complete. Since November 2005 the only changes made to the five school systems have been to modify bell schedules and speaker volume levels in particular classrooms. All of these adjustments were done online via the InformaCast web interface.

**Results: Significant costs savings, easy administration, and a very usable bell, clock, and PA system.**



SRVUSD found the InformaCast bell-clock-PA system cost effective. Compared to installing a traditional Bogen analog system in new or modernization construction (the prior district standard), they saved approximately 50% of the cost of the total Bogen system, primarily in the areas of conduit, cabling, and installation.

On top of the costs savings, using and maintaining the system is easy. The web interface makes handling changes, district wide, extremely fast and efficient. "I'll get an email from a school office manager who says that a certain classroom needs the volume of the speaker changed," says Threshie. "So I'll open up the InformaCast web interface, and within a couple of minutes the volume is changed. For a non-technician to be able to go into the tool, address the issue, and solve the problem that quickly; it's a wonderful thing."

SRVUSD also found that moving speakers around has never been easier. While construction projects were in full swing,

several schools had setup temporary classrooms that included the InformaCast system and IP Speakers. When the new, permanent classrooms were ready, SRVUSD simply unplugged the speaker from the network, and plugged it back in at the permanent classroom.

In addition, school administration at SRVUSD has total access to communications systems throughout the campus right on their desktops. Moreover, since there are often outdoor walkways, the speaker system effectively projects out to the playground and various wings of the school.

There are several types of announcements going out through the InformaCast system, including general announcements and emergency communications such as campus lockdowns, fire drills, and shelter in place. These can be initiated by the principal or administrative staff. A tone is sent over the speaker system,

and a message is also displayed on the IP phone.

"We were having conference week, and the teacher and parents were here, and someone called 911," said Carol Loflin, Principal at Quail Run Elementary School. "We didn't know who had called, but the police were here. I was able to do an all call through the InformaCast system and find out who called 911 in a matter of seconds."

Based on the success of the original summer 2005 installation, SRVUSD is now ordering 5 more school's worth of InformaCast IP Clock Speakers and zone controller / speaker systems. These systems are being ordered from an Atlas Sound dealer.

Says Threshie, "We do not hesitate to recommend this system. Since November 2005, we have experienced zero down time and zero field service calls at the first five schools."

