

IT Leadership: Recognizing IT Innovators in the Public Sector

Each quarter, we recognize IT leaders from state and local government, federal government, K-12 education, and higher education. These innovators helped to transform service delivery or reduce costs by adopting advanced networking, data center, collaboration, and mobility technologies.

Sergeant Dale Moushon, St. Petersburg, Florida Police Department:

Provided Unprecedented Situational Awareness at Republican National Convention

The 2012 Republican National Convention (RNC) was designated a National Special Security Event (NSSE). To protect the 20,000 candidates, delegates, journalists, and volunteers attending the RNC, Florida law enforcement agencies wanted thorough situational awareness. They envisioned mobile access to fixed camera feeds and live video transmitted from smartphones; GPS-enabled blue force tracking; and push-to-talk radio. But traditional wireless networks would crash under the traffic load, especially since RNC attendees were expected to wirelessly transmit 1 terabyte of data daily.

Sgt. Dale Moushon of the St. Petersburg Police Department Intelligence Unit solved the challenge by overseeing the implementation of a temporary Public Safety Long Term Evolution (LTE) network based on Cisco IP Interoperability and Collaboration System (IPICS); Cisco Jabber™; components from Nokia Siemens Networks, Reality Mobile, and Amdocs; and project management from Raytheon.

During the RNC, public safety personnel from all levels of government connected to the LTE network with smartphones and laptops to securely share real-time video, voice, and data communications via smartphones and tablets, for unprecedented situational awareness. The event marked the first time federal, state, and local first responders have simultaneously used a 700-MHz D-block broadband network for an NSSE.

“The LTE system provided a private network, eliminating the chances of commercial network congestion,” Sgt. Moushon says. “The specialized applications gave law enforcement an advantage, allowing police officers to use everyday devices in a strategic and tactical way.”

To read a press release, visit:

<http://newsroom.cisco.com/release/1030104/Interoperable-Public-Safety-Broadband-Network-Deployed-at-the-Republican-National-Convention>



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Captain Susan L. Tincher, Operations Officer, Marine Corps Forces, Pacific:

Deployed Wi-Fi Network to Track Asset Location and Environmental Conditions

Under the leadership of Captain Susan L. Tincher, the Marine Corps Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC) implemented its first Wi-Fi network accredited for use in secure areas. Rather than providing data transport, the Cisco® wireless network acts as a sensor. For example, the network detects unauthorized wireless access points that could pose a security risk. It helps to prevent data leakage by pinpointing the location of laptops and removable storage devices, which are tagged with RFID chips. The network even monitors heat and humidity inside data centers, providing early awareness of air conditioning problems that could damage equipment.

Captain Tincher's innovative use of Wi-Fi networks is lowering manpower costs to meet Defense Information System Agency (DISA) requirements. Previously, tracking IT assets meant assigning Marines to walk through the facility and take photographs. And if an item were removed the day after inventory, its loss might not be discovered for a full month. "With this new solution, we know 24/7 where all the assets are without ever having to leave our office, and our information gap is only minutes," Captain Tincher says.

Now the Marine Corps is investigating extending the intelligent wireless network to the garrison to provide secure wireless access.

To read an article about the project in SIGNAL magazine, visit: <http://www.afcea.org/content/?q=node/3038>

Lenny Schad, CIO of Katy Independent School District:

Implemented Mobile Learning Program to Engage Students

A high-growth school district in East Texas, Katy Independent School District (KISD) serves 63,000 students, 31 percent of whom qualify for free or reduced lunches. While watching his children complete their homework, chief information officer Lenny Schad was struck by their constant use of personal devices. Why, he wondered, are students walled off from technology while in school when they spend their other waking hours interacting with technology?

Schad's epiphany sparked KISD's Mobile Learning Program, which is based on a secure, districtwide Wi-Fi network and a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) program. For example, personal and district-owned devices double as classroom clickers, engaging students to interact while helping teachers assess students' comprehension during the lesson. And students have the option of blogging or creating online posters instead of certain traditional paper-and-pen homework.

KISD teachers credit the Mobile Learning Program with increasing student engagement, attendance, and creativity while also reducing disciplinary issues. From 2009 to 2010, reading, math, and science grades for students who used mobile devices for learning improved by at least eight points.

To read the case study, visit: http://www.cisco.com/web/strategy/docs/education/ciscoedukaty_sd_cs.pdf



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Brian Kraus, Director of IT, Volunteer State Community College:

Introduced Computer-Based Instruction Without Increasing Costs

When the state of Tennessee cut appropriations to Volunteer State Community College (Vol State) by 15 percent, director of IT Brian Krauss sought a creative way to comply with a state mandate to shift to computer-based instruction for remedial and development courses. The college, which serves 8500 students, needed to add another 400 desktops to the 2000 already in place, without increasing support requirements.

Krauss found an innovative solution by building a Cisco Virtualization Experience Infrastructure (VXI) that delivers virtual desktops to Cisco Virtualization Experience Client (Cisco VXC™) endpoints in campus computer labs. Students log in from the low-cost endpoint to work with a virtual desktop, including Microsoft Office applications, a browser, and specialized math and science applications. Hosting the desktop applications centrally instead of on each endpoint cuts costs.

Krauss' project has lowered per-user desktop costs by 30 percent while also increasing agility. For example, when the math department requested a new application for students at 7 a.m. on the first day of class, the IT team needed just one hour to fulfill the request, compared to an estimated 30 hours with the previous system.

"Now we can host lab applications in the cloud, on Cisco VXI with XenApp, and students can access the applications on personal devices," says Kraus. "This is helping us make sure that online students get the same learning experience as onsite learners."

To read the case study, visit:

http://www.cisco.com/en/US/prod/collateral/voicesw/ps6788/vcallcon/ps556/case_study_c36-717074.pdf



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