

Access

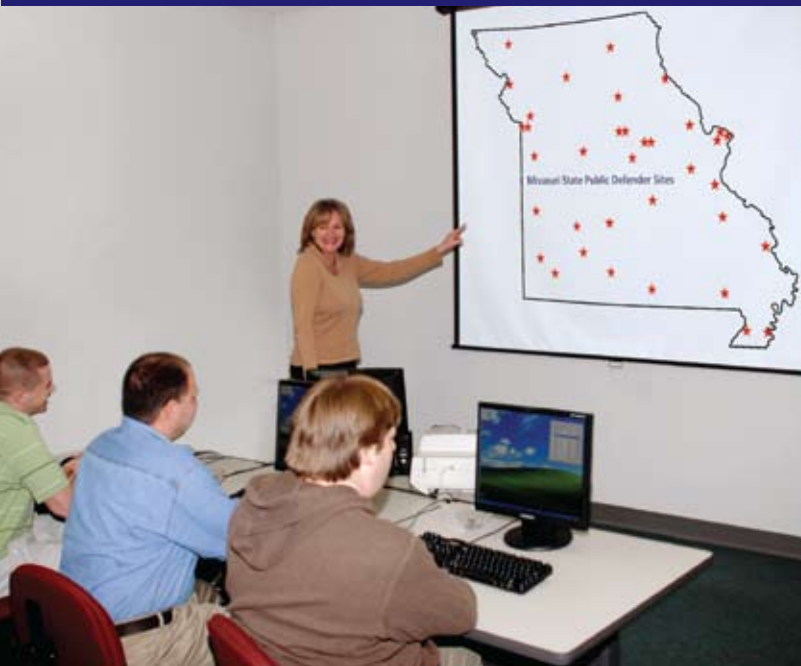
A quarterly business telecommunications update from Socket

Missouri State Public Defender System

Upgrade a network without increasing costs.

Also in This Issue:

- When a T1 Can Save Money
- Cut Costs with Conference Calling
- Adding Video and Audio to Web Sites





At a Glance

www.publicdefender.mo.gov

What They Do:

- Provide criminal defense to those accused of a crime who cannot afford an attorney
- Try more than 90,000 cases per year

Socket Services:

- MPLS networking for 39 locations
- 1-10 megabits per second connection
- Fully supported wide area network
 - 24-hour network monitoring
 - Hardware maintenance
 - Troubleshooting

Featured Client

Missouri State Public Defender System

A state agency accelerates its network without increasing taxpayer costs.

About MSPD

The Missouri State Public Defender System is mandated by the United States Constitution to provide criminal defense to those who cannot afford an attorney. With 39 statewide offices, the organization makes sure any Missouri resident in need can quickly obtain legal counsel.

The importance of an efficient network

Handling more than 90,000 cases each year, MSPD's 558 employees work to ensure each client gets his or her guaranteed access to legal representation. Mary Willingham, information technology director for MSPD, says technology is vital to making every case happen.

"Because we handle so many cases, efficiency is vital," said Willingham. "Our employees rely heavily on technology to do their jobs, and it's up to our IT department to ensure that technology runs smoothly."

Unfortunately, MSPD's network hasn't always kept up with demand. Until recently, the majority of employees connected to a wide area network at speeds of just 128 kilobits per second. Connecting to the Internet, as well as internal applications and databases, was painfully slow. Applications and processes often failed, and employees struggled to do their work.

In addition, Willingham and the rest of MSPD's IT staff were finding it increasingly difficult to properly manage the network. If a problem occurred, they had to contact one of three different telecom providers. In case of hardware issues, some technicians even had to leave their other duties to travel across the state to fix a problem.

Converting to a fully managed solution

Socket proposed an upgrade for MSPD to utilize multi-protocol label switching (MPLS) technology in order to increase speeds, allowing all locations to connect eight times faster at a minimum of 1 megabit per second. The new network would also be fully supported by Socket's Missouri technicians, which meant no more hassling with several providers, following up on issues, or traveling across the state to fix hardware problems.

"Socket offered exactly what we needed, not necessarily what's easiest for them," said Willingham. "With better bandwidth and service, switching to Socket's network was an easy decision."

In addition, the upgrade resulted in no cost increases for MSPD, something that was very important to a state agency accountable for every taxpayer dollar spent.

With better bandwidth and service, switching to Socket's network was an easy decision.

-MARY WILLINGHAM,
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR, MSPD

Refocusing on priorities

Since the transition, MSPD's employees are finding it much easier to conduct legal research and transfer case files. With an enhanced, fully supported wide area network, MSPD's IT staff can now focus on other projects essential to fulfilling the organization's technology needs.

"Technology is certain to progress over the years to come," said Willingham. "We're confident as new advancements are made, Socket will grow to provide even more and better telecom services."

Cut Costs with Conference Calling

Four ways your business could benefit from this convenient service.



“Teleconferencing is a great way to coordinate gatherings and helps employees who choose to stay at the office rather than travel.”

-GEORGIA FERGUSON,
LAWRENCE W. FERGUSON & ASSOCIATES

Many businesses benefit from conference calls, regardless of size, industry or the technical expertise of employees.

Here are a few ways conference calling can help your business:

Save time.

Spend more time efficiently on important work matters instead of traveling, benefiting both you and the employees or clients you speak with. Consolidate several phone calls into one highly productive phone call.

Save on travel costs.

Business trips can be costly, and driving or flying quickly consumes employees' valuable time. Save money and time by holding a conference call instead.

Keep records of important information.

Conference calls can be recorded for later reference or archiving. Audio files can also be shared with individuals who were unable to participate in the call.

Increase flexibility.

Unlike a business trip, conference calls can be planned quickly and inexpensively with minimal disruption to tight work schedules. Many conference calls require no reservation and callers can quickly and easily dial in at any time.

Socket offers customized conference calling solutions with no set-up fees, monthly charges, contracts or extras to buy. **To try 500 free minutes, call 1-800-762-5383 or visit www.socket.net/conferencing.**

Adding Video and Audio Content to Web Sites

How much space does your Web site need?

As Internet users demand more multimedia content, many businesses are beginning to add video and audio files to their Web sites.

However, it is important to ensure your Web hosting space can handle extra traffic before adding any type of multimedia content.

Check the size of your Web site.

This is the total amount of disk space that your entire Web site takes up, including all text, images and multimedia files.

According to web performance firm www.websiteoptimization.com, the average Web page has tripled in size over the past five years, but most Web sites are still well under 1 GB. However, adding video and audio content can quickly raise that total, so be aware of your site's limitations.

Be prepared to upgrade if you plan to significantly expand multimedia content.

Ensure adequate transfer bandwidth.

The amount of transfer bandwidth—or network traffic—needed in a Web hosting package depends on both the Web site's size and the number of visitors expected.

For most Web sites with text and images, 3-5 GB should be plenty. If users are expected to download large multimedia files, or if more than 500 visitors are expected per day, consider a package with more transfer bandwidth.

For a free analysis of your business's Web hosting needs, call Socket at 1-800-SOCKET-3 or go online to www.socket.net/webhosting.

About Access

Access is published by Socket as a service to its clients and other Missouri businesses. It is intended to provide general information concerning telecommunications and related topics.

For more information about the subject matter covered, or to determine its applicability to your specific business, please contact Socket at:

1-800-SOCKET-3
www.socket.net/Access

Socket provides bundled voice, data and Internet services to area businesses. Founded in Columbia, MO in 1994, Socket now covers the largest service area throughout Missouri with competitive telecommunications.

When a T1 Saves Money

Four situations to reduce telecom costs.

T1s offer enhanced Internet connection speeds, reliability and performance. However, many businesses can also save money by upgrading to a T1. If the following situations apply to your business, a T1 may be worth considering.

1 You have six or more phone lines. At this point, the cost of a dedicated T1 may be more cost-effective than a combination of traditional phone service and DSL Internet. A T1 also offers the flexibility to easily add or change phone lines, sometimes with one phone call.

3 Outages are hurting your bottom line. T1s are more reliable than DSL or cable and also come with service level agreements (SLAs), which ensure you are up and running 99.9% of the time. Problems, though rare, are typically fixed in a few hours or less.

2 You have more than 10 employees. A T1 provides a dedicated connection to the Internet, ensuring you get the amount of bandwidth you are paying for. Upgrading to a T1 can boost speeds for the entire office network.

4 You use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) or host servers. Upload speeds are critical for a VPN. A T1's upload speeds are multiple times faster than a typical broadband connection, making it ideal for VPN connections or transferring voice and video files.

To find out whether your business could save money and increase efficiency by upgrading to a T1, contact Socket at 1-800-SOCKET-3. You can also request a custom-made, competitive quote by visiting www.socket.net/quote.

Socket offers a custom-made, competitive quote for your business's voice, data and Internet needs. Just fill out our fast and easy form online at www.socket.net/quote or give us a call at 1-800-SOCKET-3 (800-762-5383).



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