ICN Insider

ICN

Iowa Communications Network

Sharing Iowa's
Infinite
Possibilities™

Latest News on ICN's IP Video Platform

Iowa educators looking for an ICN high school course for their students can post or view "want ads" at

IowaLearningOnline.org.

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A lot of effort is taking place with ICN integration of its new Internet Protocol (IP) based video conferencing system.

The Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission approved the proposed IP video rates during their regular January meeting. ICN has incorporated multiple options with the rates, which includes unlimited, tiered, and hourly pricing models. The IP rates will be available to selected customers beginning May 1, and will become available for E-rate discounts for users on July 1.

With the rates approved, ICN will continue to add customers on a case-by-case basis to the IP network platform for testing purposes. This is to minimize the customer challenges related to the equipment and/or network connections between mixed sessions (IP and MPEG video sites). Customers that embrace IP video from ICN will notice flexibility not only with the rates, but also with the multiple options of services available.

An IP video conferencing site at Iowa Central Community College.

We are thrilled to announce that Iowa Central Community College (ICCC) is installing four new sites that integrate IP video conferencing capabilities received from ICN. ICCC agreed to participate in ICN's early adopter program by providing opinions and feedback regarding the technology.

ICCC added one IP cart system and one IP classroom at the main Fort Dodge campus, and one IP classroom at both the Storm Lake and Webster City campuses. The systems are equipped with Polycom video equipment, open microphones (unlike the push-to-talk microphones), and

speakers. ICCC has the option of exclusively video conferencing with only the four new IP video rooms (Triton Network); an additional benefit is the interoperable capabilities offered between these new IP rooms and the full motion video rooms previously connected to the Network.

Customers will not be required to move from MPEG to IP video and ICN is not eliminating the MPEG video rates. We will continue to offer the hourly rates for customers who use their MPEG video site(s).

For additional IP video information contact ICN's Video Services Project Team at ICNVSPTeam@iowa.gov.

ICN's Broadband Grant Quarterly Update

The ICN made considerable progress with its federal broadband grant during the fourth quarter of 2011. Via this grant, many customers will be able to connect to the ICN through a 1 Gbps (gigabytes per second) interface, providing for the opportunity of significant bandwidth availability. This is over 260 times the capacity of the 'standard' speed for broadband that was set by the FCC.

The most significant achievement was that the remaining Network core electronics were upgraded; making a total of six rings active on the Network. In order to complete these upgrades, switching equipment, routers, and additional equipment purchased in the second quarter was deployed and installed. This accomplishment means that the foundation of the Network is ready to support the on-site customer upgrades.

During this period, four contracted field installation technicians were added to the ICN staff. These staff members have begun conducting on-site installations at customer locations. At the end of the quarter, approximately 40 site installations had been completed. In addition, ICN's engineering division has initiated the design work for 234 newly signed fiber-optic leased contracts.

ICN's sub-recipients have also been making progress. The Decorah MetroNet posted a request for proposal for construction of network engineering during the last quarter, and is prepared to accept bids. The Meskwaki Nation completed engineering on portions of the project, and they are prepared to issue requests for proposals for construction.

As of December 31, 2011, the ICN has drawn down and committed over $5.7 million of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.

Participation with STEM Advisory Council

Director Lingren was a technical advisory guest at the Governor's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Advisory Council Meeting held on January 25.

The council is working to grow Iowa's commitment to bolstering STEM education, STEM innovation, and to better position Iowa's young people and the state's economy for the future.

The meeting's theme was *Business and Community Partnerships in STEM*.

Lingren's objective was to advise on different ways of thinking about distance learning, and how using interactive technology will help educate young Iowans. Lingren participated in open discussions in explaining the importance of distance learning, and discussing how individuals should have an online learning experience.

"Individuals can read about technology, but to truly understand how technology works requires a hands-on approach," stated Lingren.

Lingren will continue to provide distance learning advice to STEM participants, as requested.

Created by Executive Order 74, the STEM Advisory Council is co-chaired by Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds and University of Northern Iowa's President Benjamin Allen. For additional information about STEM visit www.iowamathscience.org.

Recommended FY 2013 Appropriation

As the Governor released his budget recommendations for Fiscal Year 2013, the Regional Telecommunications Councils (RTC) appropriation of $992,912 was listed as a General Fund appropriation to the Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission (ITTC).

These funds have previously been appropriated to Iowa Public Television (IPTV), who allocated the funding to the Iowa's Community Colleges to support the functions of the RTCs.

If the appropriation is approved, the funds would be a pass-through for ICN, and specifically allocated for the provision of video service support, which includes scheduling for K-12 and Area Education Agencies (AEA) classrooms, classroom equipment troubleshooting, as well as Local Area Network (LAN) planning and support, as it relates to video services only.

Beginning with scheduling of video rooms in 1998, duties directly relating to video services managed by IPTV have been migrated to the ICN. Over the past couple of years, the video technician roles have been relocated from IPTV to ICN, as well as the work order system that supports this maintenance requirement. This appropriation change would complete the migration of the video service support functions from IPTV to ICN.

Currently, IPTV administers the necessary procedures to distribute the funds. ICN has proposed to the ITTC and the Education Telecommunications Council (ETC) a process that will modify the distribution by including a factor for site usage.

The ICN, a state agency, is the country's premier fiber-optic Network, committed to continued enhancement of distance learning and providing Iowans with convenient, equal access to education, government, and healthcare.
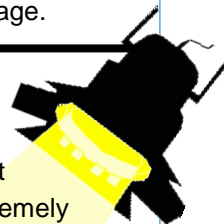
Employee Spotlight: Dave Marley

Dave Marley has been with the ICN for eight years. Currently, he is the Manager of Network Operations and Engineering, which is the division responsible for the daily operation, monitoring, and maintenance of the Network. He oversees employees providing ICN services including video, voice, and data transmission. Duties of the division include processing service requests, designing technical solutions for customers, installation and configuration of network equipment and circuits, troubleshooting, and scheduling maintenance. Dave says that the best part about working for the division is the ability to watch a plan or process come to fruition that a team of people put together.

Dave and his wife were born and raised in south central Indiana. He ran the family farm for 12 years and opted for a career change to communications in the early 1980s. They packed up a rental truck and drove to the rustling city of Dallas, Texas. Dave and his wife stayed in Texas for seven years. He describes this adventurous part of his life as extremely memorable. Dave and his wife also lived in Tulsa, Oklahoma for 11 years prior to moving to Iowa.

As for hobbies, Dave enjoys old machinery (tractors, cars, trucks, etc). He also enjoys reverse engineering almost anything, which allows him to learn from history. He believes history promotes a better understanding of how things are today. He also enjoys movies, weekend trips, and traveling anywhere warm during the cold winter months.

Upcoming Video Session for Students and Educator through Iowa Public Television's K-12 Connections

Zoo Friends: Zoo Detectives

Wednesday, February 8, 9:00 AM - 9:50 AM; 10:00 AM - 10:50 AM
Audience: **Grades 1-4**

Join educators from the Blank Park Zoo for this fascinating session about clues that animals leave behind. Kids become detectives as they read the story *What Am I?, An Animal Guessing Game* and as everyone explores all the different ways that scientist learn from what animals leave behind.

Droppings, tracks, and remains are just a few of the topics discussed with children. Also, meet a couple of live friends from the zoo and talk about what clues they leave behind.

Registration Deadline - Friday, February 3, 2012

Buxton, Iowa through Primary and Secondary Sources

Wednesday, February 15, 10:00 AM - 10:50 AM; 1:00 PM - 1:50 PM
Audience: **Grades 3-5**

Buxton was a coal mining town in Iowa at the turn of the 20th century. It was company owned and operated, like many towns at this time, but Buxton was truly unique. The majority of Buxton's citizens were African Americans, and there was very little racism. Using Primary and Secondary Sources, your 3-5 grade students will explore the cause and effect of this fascinating place.

Registration Deadline - Friday, February 10, 2012

Tuition In Billing and Special Education Supplement (SES) Tools, Continuing the Conversation

February 20 and February 23   Audience: **District Business Mangers & Superintendents**

The *Tuition In Billing* program and the electronic form of the *Special Education Supplement* are designed to save local school district, business managers, and superintendents time and meet code requirements by linking to their accounting program. Key to making this a real timesaver is a basic understanding of the financial aspects of special education and your books so the first upload is error free. Sessions will be both fun and informative.

Registration Deadline – Friday, February 10 or February 17, 2012

Iowa Communications Network
Grimes State Office Building
400 East 14th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

Phone: (515) 725-4692
Toll Free: 1-877-426-4692
www.icn.state.ia.us

For More Information about Upcoming K-12 Connections Contact:

Marcia Wych or Abby Brown
Educational Services
(800) 532-1290 or (515) 242-4181
abby@iptv.org
www.k12connections.iptv.org