

Case Study

Kenton County Leaps into a Next-Gen Network Environment

Growth can be an exciting challenge for any organization, from government agencies to private enterprises. Expansion of facilities and capabilities brings with it new opportunities, but also new challenges, such as the task of making a new headquarters building operational or transitioning to a modern networking environment.

Many organizations in this situation turn to a service provider partner to manage the process. The administrators of Kenton County, Kentucky, sought out assistance with their network transition process with favorable results.



| The opportunity | The solution | The result |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new administration, as well as an existing headquarters, needed to be made operational with up-to-date networking infrastructure. During an audit, several services were found to be outdated and out of service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple sites, circuits, and services were brought back up to modern standards. The network was also migrated from premises-based PBX to a BroadSoft-based CBTS UCaaS solution. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This process was instrumental in transforming Kenton County's administration into a modern office environment. Kenton County now benefits from significantly improved communication capability and a better disaster recovery system. |

About the client

Kenton County is a county located in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, with approximately 275 employees. As of the 2010 census, the population was 159,720, making it the third-most populous county in Kentucky. Its county seats are Covington and Independence. The county was formed in 1840 and is named for Simon Kenton, a frontiersman notable in the early history of the state.

Kenton County, with Boone and Campbell Counties, is part of the Northern Kentucky metro area and is included in the Cincinnati, OH, metropolitan statistical area.

The opportunity

When former IT Director, Lisa Desmarais, came to Kenton County, she took over for an IT Director that had held the position for 25+ years. Prior to Kenton County, Desmarais was the Director of IT and Head of Finance for the City of Covington. Entering the position at Kenton County, she knew the network she inherited was antiquated but she didn't have a firm grasp of everything involved due to poor documentation. She was also dealing with the construction of a new administration building.

Enter CTO and senior consultant, Nick Enger, with Advanced Technology Consulting (ATC). Previously, Desmarais worked closely with Enger at the City of Covington. Through a comprehensive network audit, Enger gave Desmarais visibility into the entire network down to the circuit ID, DID, cost per line item, contract end date, and utilization. During this process, circuits and services were uncovered that were thought to be canceled or no longer in service. This constituted immediate savings.

Next-gen IT, network transformation, and cloud telephony

The audit process allowed Desmarais and Enger to collaborate on what an ideal network would look like, bringing seven antiquated sites up to standards for additional applications to be on the network. Enger assisted in architecting and designing the new network while negotiating with multiple providers on the County's behalf. Through CBTS, since we are no longer "Cincinnati Bell Technology Solutions", the County's network was updated from a point-to-point, hub-and-spoke environment with copper-based facilities to a next-gen "any-to-any," fiber-based environment with multiple Internet drains and Disaster Recovery (DR) built-in.

"We needed to stand up the entire network, including the newly constructed admin building and migrate from the legacy network to the any-to-any environment," said Enger. "This allowed us to stand up an existing headquarters and a newly constructed HQ at the same time, as well as a DR facility, and have all the routing take place in the network. The vision is to make sure citizens can interact and access the services of the County in a crisis, DR-like situation."

Once the network was brought up to standards, Desmarais and Enger worked together to migrate from a very old, premise-based PBX to a BroadSoft-based CBTS UCaaS solution. ATC assisted in the auditing of each of the eight business units to determine the decision criteria of a new UCaaS and collaboration solution from both a technical and an operational standpoint. Once the criteria were developed and weighted, Enger solicited and negotiated with multiple vendors to secure the best pricing and solution for the County's needs, which ended up being CBTS. The UCaaS solution included over 400 Polycom handsets and conference room phones. The solution included Cisco switching and routing fully managed by CBTS.

Going the extra mile with specialized IT

Enger then assisted in the project planning and roll-out of the solution, leading as project manager over a six-month period. In 2019, Kenton County's administration building was being moved to a newly constructed building that was going to not only house the existing eight business units at Kenton County, but also reel-in five additional agencies. The site of the administration building was the combination of rehabilitation of an existing building with the addition of new construction.

Enger assisted Desmarais in all aspects of the IT infrastructure for the new building, beginning with meeting with the architect and General Contractor (GC) before the ground broke. Enger also assisted in mapping out low voltage plans, including MDFs, IDFs, fiber pathways (interior/exterior), switch stacks, etc.

Enger also helped map out the server room down to the cabinet and what's going to be in every single Rack Unit (RU). Since there needed to be multiple networks within building for ancillary agencies that are not part of the County, cabling was color-coded throughout the building and for all the jacks. The agencies receive Internet access from the county but operate on separate networks.

Enger assisted in meeting with all the agencies to integrate their needs into the County's footprint. The move-in completed over the course of two weeks, requiring operations at the existing administration building and the new building to be conducted at the same time. Even a Gigabit point-to-point circuit was installed to make sure everything ran optimally no matter which building the user was located or the data center was located.

Seamless coordination

Enger coordinated for both sites to be operational at the same time, allowing for a seamless transition for staff and business units, including the newly added agencies. Enger also negotiated with the County's vendor to pay early termination penalties so the agencies could be reeled into the county's network compared to being siloed on their own.

Enger and ATC continue to be a valued partner of Kenton County as it relates to all things IT. Enger assists in sourcing vendors for the County's IT needs and provides an unbiased vCIO-opinion on what makes the most sense for the County.

"I love working with Nick and ATC because they are my 'one-stop shop.' Not only for researching new services and technologies and getting multiple vendor bids," says Desmarais, "but handholding during implementation and support after the solution is installed. They are my go-to party for all things telecom and next-gen IT!"

Kenton County's interim technology services director, Jessica Ramsey, who served on Desmarais's staff during the project recently responded to the following questions:

- **How well did the solution improve the client employee and end-customer experience?**

"Communication between our multiple sites has improved drastically through extension-to-extension dialing, and we now have a better disaster recovery system," says Ramsey. "These are significant improvements for our end users, though they are not always visible improvements. Our upgraded phone system has made daily functioning and collaboration much easier—we use it for Web and video conferencing. Even something as simple as voicemail-to-email has been particularly helpful. Call recording has been handy for the Sheriff's office as well."

- **How well did the project help the customer transform its processes through a combination of technology, services, and out-of-the-box thinking?**

"These projects were pivotal to bringing Kenton County into a modern office environment, which reflects well on our entire organization and for our constituents, and how constituents interact with the County," says Ramsey.

- **Revenue: Did the project result in new revenue?**

"As a public sector organization, our primary source of revenue was not impacted by this project," states Ramsey. "However, some agencies sharing the new site with the Technology Services department were so pleased with the way the project was handled by Enger and so impressed with the services newly made available to them that those other agencies are now utilizing our Technology Services department along with ATC and CBTS to be their primary IT service providers."

"The project was so complicated—standing up a new site with multiple other sites and business units and external agencies involved—and yet so seamless, that I am sure we avoided very large expenditures in the process," adds Ramsey.

- **Did the project result in demonstrated cost savings, productivity gains, or efficiency improvements?**

"Absolutely—we are now able to provide faster and more reliable network connections for our end users, our backups are more secure, and we can work more smoothly across our multiple sites," says Ramsey.

Kenton County is also leveraging ATC's Super Support™. Super Support provides a direct line of highly "personalized" support—above and beyond the provider. The ATC Super Support™ team knows the particulars of Kenton County's account and can immediately start assisting. Often, this saves Kenton County countless hours reaching out to "ticket takers," spending time on hold, and getting no resolution when a problem occurs.

Super Support can also be reached for day-to-day moves, adds, changes, and disconnects (MACDs) as well as for questions and escalations. If the ATC Super Support team cannot solve or answer Kenton County's issues on their own, they will open tickets with the provider on Kenton County's behalf and escalate accordingly.

Why CBTS?

Due to next-gen telecom and IT projects like this, CBTS recently announced that Advanced Technology Consulting (ATC) won Channel Partner of the Year for 2019. CBTS awards this designation based on key performance indicators for overall business impact. CBTS recognizes partners that excel in selling strategic services, specifically UCaaS, SD-WAN, and NaaS.

"ATC is certainly among the best when it comes to being a trusted advisor," says Rob Messmer, CBTS Channel Chief. "We are very excited to have such a strong relationship with them. By helping clients navigate the rapidly evolving technology world, ATC functions as an extension of their customer's organization."



Contact us today for more information on how a managed transition solution can help modernize your enterprise's network at cbts.com