

Telecom Reseller

Vertical and education

Vertical has had a large customer base in the education market for several years as a result of their channel presence and introduction of Wave IP 2500 and 500. They are building on this foundation by delivering cost-effective, flexible telephony solutions that offer built-in custom applications.

Educational institutions' core needs for phone systems are reliability and a broad and flexible feature set which can be administered easily across multiple sites.

They have many unique needs, from budgeting processes including leveraging existing infrastructure and reasonable migration strategies to multiple buildings with highly-mobile users. Demands for security such as mass notification and expectations of parents and students for daily information on school status, assignments and activities pose many challenges.

With their Vodavi and Comdial phone systems, Vertical has historically addressed these challenges with custom applications like ChalkTalk, an outbound IVR. It includes Homework Hotline, allowing parents to call teachers and hear an announcement for the week's homework, Absentee Notification, Substitute Teacher Locator,

and Emergency Blast Notification for an emergency shutdown.

With Wave IP they are increasing capabilities. It offers a flexible and feature-rich system with support for legacy and IP networking and handsets, centralized remote management, and built-in applications including a vXML IVR platform for outbound dialing.

The 2500 and 500 work with both TDM and IP and are highly modular, single-server systems that support a wide variety of endpoints and trunks. Base applications include call recording, auto-attendant, visual voicemail, unified messaging, presence, and ViewPoint, a desktop management tool. They support text-to-speech and other newer technologies and offer APIs to integrate the system with third-party software including education management systems.

Peter Bailey, Senior VP of Product Management and Business Development, says, "Application integration is the key strength of our Wave IP strategy, enabling educational institutions to integrate their telephony system with student tracking systems without the need for additional servers and other components, and without long deployment schedules and disruption."

The systems can result in improved communication among teachers, staff and parents, increased productivity, reduced maintenance and administrative costs, and reduced cost of maintaining separate voice and data networks with a single-vendor solution.

"We SIP-networked our sites allowing for 4-digit site-to-site communication, utilized ViewPoint for message management, and installed a centralized PRI now shared by all buildings, cutting our monthly phone bill by almost 50%," said Doug Meinhard, IT Manager for Saydel Community School District.

"Wave IP has enabled Simi Valley Unified School District to be cost-conscious while employing the latest in technological advances. The system enabled us to provide rapid support and more timely service through its remote management features," said Brian Richards, President, Serban Sound and Communications.

Bailey added, "We are working with our certified partners to develop solutions to address future needs in this growing market with applications like ChalkTalk and the custom call rules and routing lists of ViewPoint." □

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