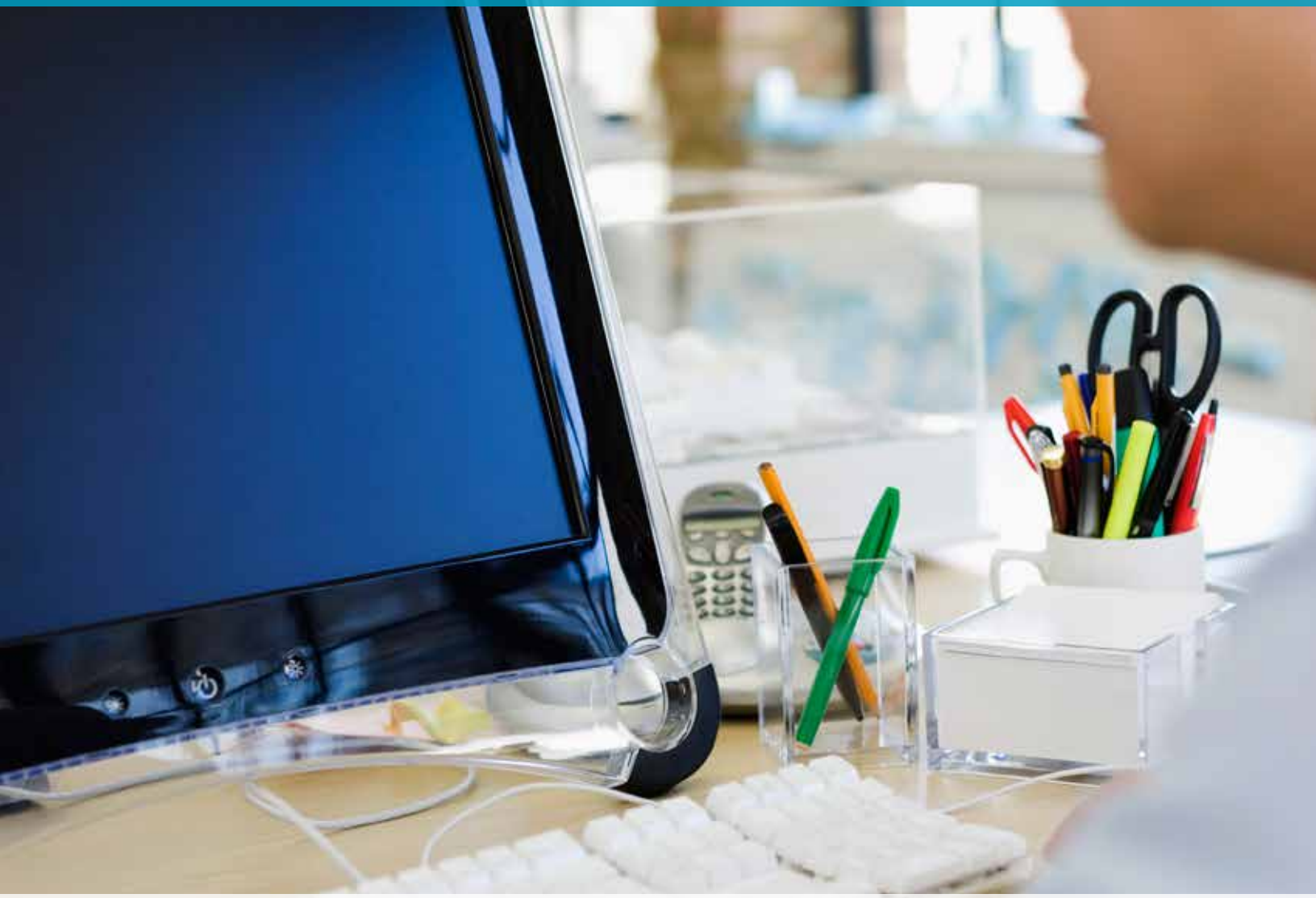
MITEL

FINDING A CONNECTION ON CAMPUS



Collège Édouard-Montpetit upgraded its digital phones to an IP phone system—without having to flunk its old infrastructure

AN OFFICIAL MITEL KNOWLEDGE HUB CASE STUDY

AT A GLANCE:

PARTNER: Incotel

CUSTOMER: Collège Édouard-Montpetit was established in 1950 near Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Today it has an enrollment of approximately 7,300 students in its pre-university and technical study courses on two campuses.

CHALLENGE: Upgrade both campuses from an outdated digital phone system to an application-rich, unified IP telephony system that handles everyday voice traffic, along with mission-critical crisis communications—on a tight budget and schedule.

SOLUTION: A robust IP telephony system that employs a new form of Ethernet LAN switch that utilizes existing legacy (two-wire/twisted pair) wiring to deliver IP telephony across the organization.

RESULTS:

Lower upfront costs. By leveraging rather than abandoning existing legacy infrastructure, the College saved wiring costs estimated at approximately 30 percent of the overall project budget.

Reduced total cost of ownership. By eliminating expensive infrastructure, the College allocated more of its budget to applications, driving a better overall return on investment (ROI).

Time savings. Seamless "plug and play technology" enabled swift deployment on an existing network, minimizing disruption to campus users.

Increased functionality. With a dedicated voice path for each IP phone, end users across the enterprise gained new productivity-enhancing applications, improved voice quality and continuity, and advanced security.

MITEL EARNS TOP MARKS WITH CANADIAN COLLEGE BY TRANSFORMING FROM DIGITAL TO IP TELEPHONY IN A FAST-TRACK DEPLOYMENT

When it comes to technology infrastructure improvements, educational institutions face a double whammy: funding challenges and a tight window for implementation. Getting the go-ahead in a cash-strapped environment requires seeking out smarter, more nimble solutions; otherwise a project could drag on and run into millions of dollars.

Realizing it needed to overhaul its outdated and increasingly costly to maintain telecommunications system, Collège Édouard-Montpetit engaged a local consultant to write a request for proposal (RFP) with a caveat: the solution provider would have to utilize existing wiring to migrate 1,700 phones from digital to IP. In addition, the migration would need to be quick and painless in order to minimize disruption to students and staff.

With these constraints in mind, Mitel partner Incotel submitted a winning proposal that leveraged the college's proven voice infrastructure to power a path to IP telephony. With an $800,000US budget, the college began its transition from a Nortel digital phone system to a total IP solution.

Game-Changing Switch Technology Simplifies Migration

Until recently, data switch reach limitations (typically 1,200 feet) and rip-and-replace wiring requirements restricted the options available to businesses interested in converging voice and data on local area networks (LAN).

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The Mitel Streamline is the centerpiece of a new approach that creates a separate network path for voice communications, complementing an existing data network, while optimizing an organization's IT infrastructure for voice and data convergence.

The Mitel switch offers a single point of central convergence delivering Ethernet and PoE over a single pair of telephony grade wire with four times the reach of traditional switches. LAN convergence is simplified by moving the convergence point from every desktop, with the IP phone acting as a switch for the data device to a single point in the central closet. Call it convergence in a single closet.

This innovation eliminates barriers to migration, supports business requirements and redirects the focus to activities that will drive a better ROI—all without compromising the user experience. And it couldn't have arrived at a better time.

"Collège Édouard-Montpetit's digital system was on respiration," says John Michaud, vice president of sales for Incotel. "They were asking for the Mitel technology which had just been released to the market."

Established Goals Guide On Campus "Test Drive"

In conversation with the College's project managers, Incotel's Michaud learned that they had a number of guidelines for this high-visibility project:

- Optimize their current LAN
- Reduce operating expenses
- Eliminate product-related risks
- Increase security
- Minimize campus disruption
- Remain on budget
- Minimize future costs

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Understandably, the college wanted verification that the proposed Mitel solution would deliver. So three weeks prior to deployment, the College requested a mandatory Proof of Concept (POC) as called for in the RFP. This "test drive" would ensure that the specified solution met its real-world requirements.

"The on-campus demonstration proved to us that the Mitel solution worked from end to end," says Roger Lefebvre, telecommunications manager for Collège Édouard-Montpetit. "And having a single supplier helped simplify the process tremendously."

During this time, College and Incotel team members also confirmed that the majority of current phones were working, thus saving the expense of new equipment.

It was a powerful demonstration that sealed the deal, emboldening the College to move forward with confidence.

Deployment in a Single Weekend

For a migration of this magnitude, planning was essential. The deployment team—17 people from Incotel and 8 from the college in two locations—scheduled the cutover to begin on a Friday evening that kicked off a week-long winter holiday. But in the end, they needed less than two days to achieve operability.

Though the scope was daunting—change 1,700 phones in 1,200 (confirm number) classrooms—the task was made easier because the Mitel Streamline was simply plugged into the existing network, acting like an IP router between the LAN and IP phones. Because wiring in the walls remained untouched, a simple adapter delivered the power, converting two-wire to Ethernet signaling.

"Though projects of this scale don't come along very often, we know how to manage the transition," says Incotel's Michaud. "It went very smoothly. We had no issues, no surprises. Honestly, it was incredible for the volume of phones involved."

The client concurred.

"Everything went as planned," says Lefebvre. "It was amazing—in 15 minutes the system worked. The planning was harder than deployment."

After connectivity was established, Incotel representatives remained onsite at the College for a portion of the following week to answer questions, provide administrator and user training, and troubleshoot any potential issues.

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Says Incotel's Michaud of this period, "Once the phones are installed and the people are using the applications, that's the litmus test."

The College's Lefebvre agree, emphasizing the ease of the transition for the system's users. "A phone is a phone. People are not afraid of it. It rings, you answer."

Future-Proofing Their Network

This implementation was not about equipment. Rather, it was the ability to facilitate a high-level, unified communications solution without spending unnecessary dollars in rewiring or acquiring premium phones.

"Technology investments made today are no longer an event, they are an evolution," says Richard Kasslack, Vice President of Strategic Accounts for Phybridge. "Collège Édouard-Montpetit made a strategic investment that will last the lifetime of their communication system. The software applications add additional business value, future-proofing their network from obsolescence."

That's a clear competitive advantage, especially in the education sector, which is increasingly under economic pressure.

Not only did the College realize substantial upfront saving, it's now well-positioned for years to come with a best-in-class backbone that supports increased bandwidth needs and will allow for elegant future upgrades.

"That's a huge benefit," says Lefebvre.