



Technology Upgrade Modernizes Non-Profit's Main Campus

Client: Goodwill Columbus

Project: Update technology infrastructure; install new audio system

Client Need

Goodwill Columbus provides services, community living experiences, and employment opportunities to assist individuals who have disabilities or other challenges to enjoy full participation in the community. Each year their personal, social, vocational and community services assist more than 1,500 people with disabilities or other special needs to attain a new level of independence.

Although the nonprofit had completed a technology upgrade ten years previously with Integrated Building Systems, by 2006, rapid growth and expanded service offerings led the non-profit to remodel their existing building and update their existing technology infrastructure once again to accommodate even more employees and clients .

"IBS had quite a vision to push us forward when they installed our original cabling infrastructure backbone. We were very antiquated at the time—we didn't even have voice mail. We needed desk and switch equipment and the infrastructure to go along with that, in our retail stores and our offsite office locations," said Brian Hammen, Property Manager, Goodwill Columbus.

"From the very beginning, IBS really took an interest in our project and wanted to provide us with the best system they could at the lowest cost."

The second renovation included upgrading existing cable and wiring a new art studio and client training rooms, as well as converting existing conference rooms to offices.



The Solution

IBS installed new cabling for an updated voice and data system; and a new paging system with an upgraded amplifier. The upgrade was completed in three phases, each taking about four months and conducted in a pre-specified order. During the first phase, client space, the art studio, packing warehouse and basement were converted. IBS started with tracing out cabling that had been cut by accident during demolition and wasn't salvageable. The process of re-cabling and testing began, space by space.

Challenges

Two words summarize the biggest hurdle of the renovation—open ceilings. Kraig Pritchett, Project Manager, IBS, explained: "Goodwill Columbus' Main Campus building is a warehouse-like structure; and building a pathway to connect cabling from one side of a hallway to another along an office corridor was an issue. The technology closet was located in the basement, so the conduit pathway had to be built to run all the way to the ceiling. Not only were the ceilings open, but walls were built all the way up to the ceiling, doubling the effort on the installation, since drilling was now necessary,"



The open ceiling posed another problem for the installation of the public announcement (PA) system. How would speakers be hung without a ceiling to attach them to? IBS project managers researched options and found a square, in-wall option, much like those used in schools, which did the trick. They also fit into the overall aesthetics of the building. IBS also installed an upgraded amplifier to prevent future speaker blow-outs.



The Results

Success at the main campus building led to IBS securing additional infrastructure work at two new neighborhood Goodwill retail locations as well as their new Client Training Center.

According to Hammen, "If we've ever needed anything, from telephones to data cabling, IBS has done it, in our retail stores and our offsite office locations.

"IBS has done anything that we've ever asked and their work has been done professionally and very well. Because IBS has worked with us so long, if there's ever an issue that crops up, they know right where to go to get things fixed and that helps out a bunch. We haven't been disappointed at all."

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