



Connections—February 2006

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The Connect Group Finds Success With Bozeman Office

On July 1st, 2005 Connect Telephone & Computer Group officially opened for business their Bozeman office. "The Bozeman market is a natural migration for our business," stated Russ Palmer, Director of Sales & Marketing at Connect. "Besides being one of the fastest growing markets in the northwest it gives us same day access to the Butte and Helena markets."

The office located on Shawnee way, is made up of two account representatives

and Connects Sr. Engineer Randy Begger. Begger, a highly certified data systems and telecommunications engineer is the technical anchor of the new office, with over 10 industry recognized certifications and 10 years experience in the telecommunications business.

Tom Lawrence a long time Bozeman native with 10 years experience in voice systems and Tom Holmberg another Bozeman local round out the rest of the team.

Connect Enhances Service with Customer Advocate

Is your Telecommunication Technician Certified?

Would you let a mechanic that wasn't properly trained work on your car? Probably not. So why not treat your voice and data system with the same care?

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Connect Telephone & Computer Group has developed a Customer Advocate Department to provide our valued customers with an even higher level of service and satisfaction. The Customer Advocate Department will help businesses of all sizes take advantage of leading communications technology to increase profitability, enhance productivity, and give them a competitive advantage in their marketplace.

"We conducted a thorough needs analysis of our vast customer base and found that companies were interested in learning more about the latest developments in communications, find creative ways to reduce costs, and obtain a better understanding of how to efficiently utilize technology to grow their organizations. However, these same companies didn't have the means,

resources, or expertise to stay at the forefront of advancements in technology," said Matt Duray, Owner of Connect Telephone & Computer Group. "This attitude is very different than recent years when executives were only concerned with plugging in the equipment and letting them run on their own. Technology is changing so rapidly that in order to remain competitive one has to adapt and maximize it to the fullest extent or they may not be around tomorrow."

The mission of Connect Telephone & Computer Group's Customer Advocate Department is to engage the telecommunication company's customers and proactively make them aware of technologies that they haven't currently adopted which could greatly benefit their business. Some examples of these technologies include Voice over Internet

Avanta Credit Union Chooses Cisco IP

Anyone who has driven down Central Ave in Billings can not help but notice the striking new addition to the neighborhood, Avanta Credit Union. Avanta Credit Union is a full service Credit Union with two locations in Billings, one in Laurel, one in Columbus and one in Red Lodge. When Avanta committed to building their new location one of the issues they tackled head on was communications.

Based on discussions with communication professionals both inside and outside of their organization, Avanta settled on Cisco's Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) solution. This solution gives Avanta the ability to unite all of their locations under a unified system capable of carrying voice, video and data under a single, easy to manage network. "Having multiple locations can be a real challenge when it comes to communications" stated Vance Lorenz, Information Systems Officer at Avanta. "This solution has allowed us several cost measures, starting with the reduction of 15 phone lines and a single phone number that we can publish to our members." Consolidating the voice system into one system will save Avanta nearly \$7,200.00 in line charges over the next year. Beyond line savings Avanta can now better handle calls that come into the credit union. Being able to direct a call to any phone in the organization seamlessly and quickly is one way that Avanta is giving their members a higher level of service.

Other enhancements the Cisco VoIP system brings to

Avanta is the ability to have a remote worker log in from off-site locations and have the same experience as sitting at their desk. The user is able to access Avanta's internal data systems, e-mail, voice mails as well as make local calls remotely as if they were sitting at their desk.

Meetings are an important part of operations at Avanta and logistics don't always allow for face to face meetings. "We used to subscribe through the phone company on a per minute basis to handle our conference calls," Said Lorenz, "now I have the ability to use the 'Meet-Me' function of the system as our own conference bridge." This feature gives Avanta the ability to set up and tear down voice conferences as their needs dictate, allowing more spontaneous conferences at no additional fee.

"The biggest advantage I see is the ability to do a move, add or change to the system myself. With the old system I was tied to our phone vendor for this type of work, incurring a service fee anytime I needed to move someone to another desk," said Lorenz.

He continues to point out that the system install went fairly smooth. "Any problems or questions we have had Connect has responded to very well."

Line cost saving, enhances meeting capabilities as well as streamlined email and voice mail integration as made IP Telephony a solution that brings savings and advantage to Avanta.

Customer Advocate Continued...

(VoIP), call accounting, web and audio conferencing, GPS tracking systems for company vehicles, voice recognition, and digital surveillance systems. Through its strategic partnerships with leading industry providers

like Cisco Systems, BandTel, Ultimate Software, IPx Connect, Network Car and MG Security Systems, Connect Telephone & Computer Group can easily coordinate and implement numerous solutions, which in most cases will have

an immediate impact on the performance of any company. Each Customer Advocate will communicate critical information via online technology seminars, ongoing email newsletters, and one-to-one communication.

"We strongly believe that our Customer Advocate Department will keep our customers educated on an ever changing technological environment and enhance the performance of their business," added Mr. Duray.

"We strongly believe that our Customer Advocate Department will keep our customers educated on an ever changing technological environment and enhance the performance of their business,"

"Our objective is to assist our customers in bridging the gap to technology and design a game plan to successfully implement it within their companies. Our success depends on those businesses we serve and I feel it is Connect

Telephone & Computer Group's duty, as their strategic telecommunications partner, to provide an avenue that will help them experience significant success."

IS YOUR TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNICIAN CERTIFIED?

IF NOT, YOUR VOICE & DATA SYSTEM COULD BE IN BIG

Telecommunications is a very dynamic industry that is constantly being enhanced by new technology. The technology is changing so rapidly that it's vital for companies to ensure that their telecommunications provider stays on top of it. Unfortunately, too many businesses today continue to overlook this topic and do not ask a simple yet crucial question, "Is my telecommunication technician certified?" If the answer is a resounding yes, then you can probably put your mind at ease. However, if the answer is no, your company's vital voice and data system could be in for a very painful surprise.

Would you let a mechanic that wasn't properly trained work on your car? Probably not. So why not treat your voice and data system with the same care. It is just as important to make sure that your provider's technicians understand the details behind their technology so they can properly install, service, and maintain your system to ensure its future reliability.

All too often businesses experience damaging affects by providers who don't understand the technology they sell. The most common include:

- Lost revenue due to system downtime
- Increased costs from making repairs
- Permanent damage to system components
- Inability to effectively run the business

In order to combat these types of problems, leading telecommunications providers such as Connect Telephone & Computer Group incur substantial costs to guarantee that highly certified industry technicians are tending their clients' voice and data systems.

Connect Telephone & Computer Group requires hours of rigorous educational training for sales people, management and most importantly technicians, so they can fully understand today's state-of-the-art voice and data systems. Connect Telephone & Computer Group believes certification is an extremely valuable investment for both their employees as well as each one of their clients.

Brent Parks, Director of Service & Support at Connect Telephone & Computer Group, said that its service technicians are comprised of professionals who enjoy being in the forefront of new emerging technologies. Their dedication, combined with the body of knowl-

edge acquired from certified trainings, ensures Connect Telephone & Computer Group's customers that their voice and data system will be serviced quicker, faster and better, all in a cost-effective manner.

"Connect Telephone & Computer Group understands that it takes a high level of commitment and dedication to provide our technicians with the latest education and certification on convergent technologies," said Matt Duray, Connects owner. "Our customers can rest assured that when one of our technicians comes to their place of business to service or repair a voice and data system, that they will be able to diagnose the problem quickly and provide unsurpassed service in a timely and cost-effective manner."

Duray said service technician training and certification benefits the end-user. "Today, when our clients require service assistance they can expect less downtime for their telecom system, which translates into greater revenue for their business."

So if you don't know the answer regarding your technician's level of certification it may be time to ask. It's much easier to prevent problems from occurring than take your chances with technicians who are less than knowledgeable about their technology.



Meet Phil



This is Phil the company book keeper.

Three years ago Phil's boss asked if he knew anything about computers... Unfortunately for Phil, he said yes.

Today Phil handles 15 Computers, a server, an integrated e-mail system, the corporate web page, the phone system and, oh yea, the books.

Some how Phil's just not as efficient as he used to be.



Our partner programs are structured around the production of our clients.

Our Partner Program will get Phil back to what he was hired for!

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