

# Borough of Quakertown Finds Reliability and Efficiency with Wave IP



## Background

The efficiency of government agencies can often be measured in simple terms: ease of access, consistency, responsiveness, thoroughness, and of course, ability to stay within budget. All stakeholders – be they residents, businesses, employees, suppliers and other constituents – rely on government to be accountable, trustworthy and cost-effective. Delivering services in cash-challenged environments is not an easy process, but fall short of voter expectations, and there's every chance that the electorate will demonstrate their displeasure in the voting booth.

The administrators of Quakertown, Pennsylvania, a borough located just outside Philadelphia, found itself in just this predicament. With a population of around 10,000, the municipality was relying on an old communications system that was completely unsuited to serve the needs of a growing community. The old network consisted of several standalone communications platforms with no interconnectivity. As a result, calls between agencies could not be transferred, and staff had to dial through the local telephone exchange to reach co-workers, which was a cumbersome and expensive process.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Customer: Borough of Quakertown
- Industry: Municipality
- Locations: Southeastern Pennsylvania

## CHALLENGES

- Replace outmoded and unreliable communications system
- Integrate multiple facilities into a single communications network
- Enable redundancy and disaster recovery capabilities
- Improve efficiency and productivity through unified communications tools
- Reduce capital and operating expenses

## VERTICAL SOLUTION

- Wave IP
- Wave ViewPoint
- WaveNet

## RESULTS

- Reduced communications-related costs
- Improved internal and external call handling
- Consolidated voice mail and email functions
- Installed failover options in case of emergency

More importantly, the system had no failover or redundancy capabilities. If an emergency situation occurred and one of Quakertown's facilities lost communications, it was virtually impossible to restore voice service to that department, meaning that a vital government agency would be offline and unable to communicate with other agencies in a time of crisis.

"The lack of redundancy was the tipping point for us to find a new and efficient communications solution," said Scott McElree, Borough manager of Quakertown. "Our constituents can't afford to have any agency or facility impaired in the event of an emergency. We needed to find a solution that was modern, reliable, efficient, and that would serve our needs well into the future."

## Solution

During its search for a new communications system, Borough officials met with Jim Gallagher, senior consultant with Galco Business Communications, Inc., a Vertical Communications® dealer based in Quakertown. Gallagher put together a plan that built upon Vertical's Wave IP unified communications solution to meet Quakertown's requirements for network redundancy, rich features and low operating costs.

"The Wave IP is probably the most flexible and best engineered communications platform in the industry," explained Gallagher. "It allows organizations of all types to improve productivity, enhance business processes, reduce costs and improve service delivery. In the case of Quakertown, the Wave IP hit all the tick boxes in terms of features, costs and failover. We knew that the platform would make a tangible impact on the efficiency of Borough operations."

Borough officials readily agreed with Gallagher's assessment, and decided to deploy the Wave IP solution at several of its key facilities, including Borough Hall, and several departments scattered around the township.

## Results

Immediately after installation, Quakertown officials knew they made the right choice. Staff and administrators can now easily dial extensions in other departments without having to go through an outside line. Not only did this

greatly improve the Borough's efficiency, it helped enhance customer service and reduced toll calls on the public telephone network.

"There has been real cost savings with the new system," said McElree. "In just the first few months of operations, we estimate that we've been able to cut our communications expenses by some 20 percent, primarily by reducing the number of telephone lines that we needed to support the old system. And those are just the hard savings. The Wave IP system gives us much more powerful communications tools, which is benefitting users throughout the organization."

Among these features is Vertical's ViewPoint unified communications application, which delivers all voice mail and email messages right to the desktop, and enables users to see the availability of colleagues across the network.

"ViewPoint has been extremely popular with the staff," said McElree. "It requires practically no training, giving our employees the ability to utilize the system's features on the fly."

In addition to its powerful functionality, the Vertical solution provides Quakertown with complete redundancy in the event of an emergency.

"The system can be administered from multiple locations. If one system goes down, another Wave IP box instantly restores all connectivity," explained Gallagher. "For any business or organization, this is a critical feature, but for government agencies whose constituents rely on them for mission-critical services, it is an absolute necessity."

"Vertical's technologies have transformed the way we communicate," concluded McElree. "We've become more responsive, more efficient, more productive and certainly more reliable. Every one of our stakeholders has noticed the difference. It's like we've been given an entirely new way to communicate with the world."



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### Corporate Headquarters

3940 Freedom Circle  
Santa Clara, CA 95054  
Phone: (408) 404-1600  
FAX: (408) 969-9601

### RMA and Technical Support

4717 East Hilton Avenue  
Suite 400  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
Phone: (480) 374-8900  
FAX: (480) 374-8852

### Europe

Vertical Communications  
GmbH Domagkstrasse 785551  
Kirchheim Germany  
Phone: +49 89 90779460  
Fax: +49 89 90779488

