

E-initiatives at Seneca College powered by Toronto Hydro Telecom's Ethernet network

Toronto Hydro Telecom provides the affordable bandwidth and reliability that are critical to Seneca's vision for e-learning, e-services and e-living at the college.

TORONTO - Thursday, September 30, 2004 – Today's educators are embracing the power of technology to deliver everything from admission and registration services to online classes and distance learning programs. Forward-thinking organizations are using the Internet to provide these services through Internet Protocol or IP-based applications.

Toronto's Seneca College is a leader in this regard, delivering extensive Internet-based services and resources to its staff, faculty, and more than 100,000 students on campuses across the Greater Toronto Area. In the future, they are looking to expand their IP-based services to include Voice-over-IP (VoIP) or Internet telephony. Committed to leveraging IP-based technology to better serve and support its students, faculty and administration, Seneca College has recently secured the required network capacity and reliable network service through Toronto Hydro Telecom.

Seneca recognized the potential of delivering services over the Internet early on and focused their development on Internet Protocol (IP) - based applications and system architecture. Today the college, through my.senecacollege.ca, provides online services for students, faculty and staff. Every class, subject and section is represented at this web site, furnishing a personalized portal for doing research, completing assignments, and communicating with others at the college. More than 100 subjects are fully available online. "Everything we do at Seneca is supported by technology so it's absolutely vital to the college's operation," says Chief Information Officer Terrence Verity. "Without network service, people simply cannot access the college."

Seneca began the search for a more powerful network solution when they moved their data centre from the Newnham Campus to York University. "Moving our main data centre underscored our need for increased bandwidth between college locations. In addition, we had too many different suppliers, which meant too many potential points of failure — a risk to reliable service. At the same time, we were planning to open a campus in Markham in 2005 where high bandwidth service was difficult to secure," explains Verity. Like most educational institutions today cost was also a key factor. Analyzing the results of a Request for Proposal,

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Verity was surprised at the breadth of services Toronto Hydro Telecom could provide at a cost that was much lower than other suppliers.

Toronto Hydro Telecom's proposal met Seneca's current needs and provided them with room to grow. Ian Miles, President of Toronto Hydro Telecom explains the proposal, "We

presented Seneca with a seamless solution where Toronto Hydro Telecom manages the connections with other suppliers. Through our Gigabit Ethernet service we addressed their bandwidth needs today and provided built-in flexibility to handle demand for greater capacity down the road.”

Another component of the Toronto Hydro Telecom plan was the use of VLANs (Virtual Local Area Networks) to offer focused network capabilities for specified areas at no additional cost. Through an arrangement with then Markham Hydro, (now PowerStream Inc.) Toronto Hydro Telecom was able to secure high bandwidth service for the new Markham Campus.

Verity has been impressed with the quality of service Toronto Hydro Telecom provides. “The team at Toronto Hydro Telecom really listened to our needs and gave us a number of options to consider. When dealing with them you always have access to their senior people,” says Verity.

Toronto Hydro Telecom is staffed with seasoned telecom professionals and specializes in custom network solutions — the majority of their business involves some degree of customization. “We like to take an entrepreneurial approach to business — listen carefully to a client’s needs, learn what they are trying to accomplish and provide them with a range of options and price points to choose from,” says Miles.

As Seneca looks to the future, VoIP (telephone service over the Internet) is the next big step and with the Toronto Hydro Telecom network solution Seneca has the foundation in place. “For VoIP you must have the appropriate bandwidth and a very good network - low latency and no packet loss. The network that Toronto Hydro Telecom delivered already fits the bill,” concludes Verity.

Seneca College is the largest college in Canada with more than 100,000 full and part-time students on campuses across the Greater Toronto Area. Seneca provides internationally and nationally recognized career education and training key to graduate success. Every Seneca degree, diploma and certificate program is developed to a high academic standard, in consultation with industry, integrated with information technology, combined with technical and transferable skills, and reinforced by opportunities for ongoing education and retraining.

Established in 2000 as a subsidiary of Toronto Hydro Corporation, Toronto Hydro Telecom Inc. has quickly grown to become a highly specialized and innovative provider of telecom services to businesses in Toronto. The company is the sole owner of its vast fibre optic network, which spans 450 kilometres and connects 400 commercial buildings in Toronto.

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Through arrangements with other utility-affiliated telecoms, Toronto Hydro Telecom can offer network connections throughout Ontario. Today, Toronto Hydro Telecom counts many of Canada’s leading businesses and institutions among its clients, including financial institutions, mutual fund companies, broadcasters, hospitals, colleges and universities. George Brown College, Humber College and Seneca College are among the post-secondary institutions served by Toronto Hydro Telecom.

Note to News Media:

At IP World (October 4th to 6th), hear President Ian Miles speak on the Advantages Utility-Affiliated Telecoms bring to IP-based Applications at 2:45 on October 5th and visit Toronto Hydro Telecom at Booth # 110.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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